

Netherlands exchange trip 2016

The Netherlands trip is an exchange between Canada and the Netherlands, dedicated to improving the abilities of students in the French immersion program. This is the third annual trip done between William Aberhart and Maurick College. During the exchange students partake in a multitude of activities that are both engaging and helpful. The trip, a language and social studies program, prepares the participants for the DELF exam, or *diplôme d'études en langue française*. Once completed, this exam serves as recognition of our French language skills and is recognized in 173 countries worldwide. The test evaluates the four language abilities. The international language institution *Regina Coeli* from Vught and *L'Alliance Française* from The Hague offered us a workshop in preparation for our DELF exam. Students took many excursions to iconic and historical sites, learning about the culture and a different lifestyle than their own. Sites visited include the Monument Kamp Vught (concentration camp), Anne Frank's house and the Mauritshuis, art museum and home to the famous painting, The Girl With a Pearl Earring. This past September, 14 students from William Aberhart spent 10 days in the Netherlands, staying with the families of their exchange partners in Vught and getting to know them very well. The exchange aspect of the trip allowed students to have a first hand look at cultural and societal differences of the Netherlands and Canada, as well as see the similarities and common issues that resound universally with today's youth. Furthermore, the students were able to experience what everyday life is like in a foreign country, and get a relatively raw and unfiltered look at the Netherlands. The trip doesn't just help students strengthen their French, but also helps them meet new people and step outside of their comfort zones. The students have made powerful connections and important friendships with the Netherlands and their exchange students. Overall it's a fantastic experience unlike any other and we would definitely recommend it. Alex R. & Joanna B.