

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Laurier helps hundreds of students get a JUMP on university

Program lets students experience university life and academics first hand

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WATERLOO – It's not every day you see 12- and 13-year-olds attending university, but this summer the halls of Wilfrid Laurier University will be filled with students enrolled straight out of elementary school.

About 30 students from Elizabeth Ziegler Public School in Waterloo will visit Laurier from May 12 to 14 as part of the Junior University Multi-Disciplinary Preparation (JUMP) program. JUMP, now in its fourth year, introduces about 800 elementary school students to post-secondary education.

Elizabeth Ziegler Public School is one of twenty Ontario schools participating in the series of three-day sessions. Some schools are coming from as far away as Windsor and Huntsville to live on campus and participate in subjects ranging from archeology to athletics.

"They come here to experience what university is like, from living in residence to attending classes. The program lets them know it's not so frightening and that they can do it too," says Glennice Snyder, Laurier's conference services co-ordinator. "They get a lot of things out of it and want to do better in school so they can go to college or university."

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JUMP participants in each session choose seven courses from a list that includes athletics, archaeology, biology, business, chemistry, computing, fine arts, geography, music, psychology, social work and theatre. Social work is proving to be this year's favorite. Snyder believes it is because kids are getting becoming more socially minded and are more aware.

Students also sample university life. Participants stay in residence, eat in the dining hall, and use the academic and athletic facilities. The three-day sessions end with a graduation ceremony, complete with diplomas handed out by Laurier deans and administrators.

JUMP started with just eight schools in 1996 and has grown through word of mouth. "Without a doubt, the JUMP program is the best off-campus field trip I've ever been involved in," says Don Oberle, a teacher at Northlake Public School in Waterloo.