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CDDHS students learn about more than just history on trip to Europe

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A long flight delay from Toronto's Pearson Airport to Europe this month taught Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) students a lesson in patience. The plane was to leave Toronto around 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, but some students did not leave until 48 hours later.

CDDHS Prinicipal, Wendy McIntosh told the Free Press, ?The group, which consisted of 45 students, five teachers and three additional adults, boarded the plane on schedule around 5:30 p.m. and started to leave the terminal - however, the plane was then stopped.?

Linda and Joe Cruikshank's daughter Kayla was one of the students on the Lufthansa LH471 flight to Frankfurt. Reportedly the students were held up on the tarmac for almost four hours while mechanics tried to fix an engine that was giving codes. They say mechanics tried thawing the sensor and replacing electrical parts without luck.

Principal McIntosh says at ?9:42 p.m. the flight was cancelled by the airline? and ?around 11 p.m. students were taken to an area where a third party provider was to provide busing to a hotel and pizza. The bus arrived and got students to the hotel between 1 and 1:30 a.m. Unfortunately, the pizza did not arrive until 3:30 a.m.?

Ms. McIntosh says, ?In the morning, staff spoke to the third party provider to get information on flights being rebooked.?

However, finding a new flight during one of the busiest seasons at the airport proved challenging. ?Staff was informed that the group would be split into five groups in order to rebook the flights,? says Principal McIntosh. ?It was not possible for the entire group to be rebooked on the same flight.?

For example, Kayla Cruikshank went to Detroit, then Paris 24 hours later than originally booked. Her parents say, ?This was unfortunate, but you don't want to fly with only three engines.?

?Most students arrived in Paris one day late,? says Ms. McIntosh, ?a small group were delayed two days. School staff phoned all parents with the updated flight information, once we had it. It took some time for those details to get sorted.?

?Due to the delay and changes to flights, students were unable to participate in some of the planned activities on the trip.? She reports. ?The students represented CDDHS very well, the staff adapted as things changed and they all had a really great experience once they arrived.?

The school trip is an annual event for the History department, in which students with a 70 percent average or above, with a senior social science course, are invited to join. Principal McIntosh says, ?The goal for this trip was to have our students experience parts of Europe, the culture, and bring aspects of what they've learned in history class to life.?

Reportedly, the last group to arrive explored Paris, while the others, who had already had the opportunity to see the historic city, travelled to Normandy for the day. After Normandy, it was on to Milan, Italy by train, and then to Rome where students visited such landmark sites as the Pantheon, the Trevi Fountain, the Colosseum, and Vatican City.

The CDDHS students all returned home safe in Shelburne around 8 p.m. on March 15. Despite the delays, Linda Cruikshank says her daughter felt it was a wonderful historic trip overall.

She says, ?Kayla had a great time and can't wait to travel again.?