



Student Ambassador

Lasse Aaltonen

- Äänekoski, Finland



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**Whistler
Secondary
School
2016-2017**

Lasse came to Whistler Secondary School for the 2016-2017 school year from his home country of Finland.

He studied in the Outdoor Leadership program with Mr. Kevin Kung and took Mr. Train's Physical Education class. Lasse fondly remembers his talks with Mr. Train. These are some of the highlights of Lasse's experience at Whistler Secondary.

Lasse had a very positive experience with his host family in Whistler. He had a seven year old "sibling." He also had Freddy the dog, who was always with Lasse. Lasse found it very hard to leave behind his Canadian canine. The family treated Lasse like one of their own. This included taking him at Christmas to Parksville, on Vancouver Island, where he had what he believes was a Scottish-Canadian Christmas!! Where else do you wear crowns at Christmas time? Lasse says that other than this trip, he was happy to stay home in Whistler and ski whenever possible.

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of snow fell and the schools were closed. It allowed him and his Outdoor Leadership peers to go and ski together as a group. Even locals said they had never had a day like this when the schools were closed.

Lasse had a variety of food experiences in Canada. As is typical with many Sea to Sky families, they ate healthy foods at home. But when Lasse was on the mountain with his friends, the thing they loved most was to have Poutine . . . doesn't get much more Canadian than this!!

In the Spring, Lasse travelled to Saltspring Island with the Outdoor Education Leadership group. There, they hiked around Saltspring, stayed in tents, and awakened at 5:00 am to take the “school boat” from Saltspring to Saturna Island. There, on Saturna, they hiked to the east point where it was very beautiful. While it was a rainy day – the only rainy day—they experienced the beauty of the ocean and forest surrounding Saturna Island. While Lasse



thought that this would be a challenging trip, spending one week in a tent, and cooking his own food, indeed it was! But, Lasse says without hesitation that he would do it again in a heartbeat.

While in Canada, Lasse took his CSIA certificate to teach skiing. Since returning to Finland to complete grade 12 and graduate, he has used his new skiing instructor certification to teach foreign students to ski. Lasse’s strengthened English skills allowed him to give skiing lessons to young Singapore visitors in Lapland.

Lasse will attend mandatory Military service following his high school graduation in Finland. Then, it is his hope to take a gap year and return to Whistler, BC, Canada as a ski instructor.