

INSIDE BURNABY SCHOOLS



February 25, 2020

“ReconciliAction” at Moscrop

Moscrop Secondary held a Blessing Ceremony for its newly completed Spindle Whorl, which was carved under the guidance of Indigenous artist and **Squamish Nation Elder Xwalacktun [pronounced: Hw-LACK-tun]**. He and the entire school community spent many months creating the project. Each element of the design was chosen for its meaning to the school, such as the Coast Salish canoe with a Moscrop black panther carved into it. This represents the journey the community is on together. As students carved, the artist shared stories and Indigenous learnings. The blessing and ceremony acknowledges the work of all and is a traditional way for the artist to pass responsibility for the carving on to the community who is receiving it. Protocol was led by members of the Squamish Nation. Special guests were invited to join. The Vice-Chair was among the official witnesses at the ceremony. The finished Spindle Whorl will be mounted at the front entrance as a symbol of Moscrop's journey together. It also proudly acknowledges the Coast Salish land on which the school stands.

Drumming Project Supports School-Wide Indigenous Education

Students at **Montecito Elementary** spent many months on their Indigenous Drumming Project, gaining an understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge through experiential learning. They created traditional drums under the guidance of Indigenous leaders who shared stories, sang, and danced with the students. Every child was involved – from soaking and punching holes in the hides or lacing the drums, to making drumsticks. It was a true community project with staff also learning through professional development and Indigenous secondary students from **Burnaby North** sharing some of their teachings with students.

Our Students Earn Silver Medals for Canada at Science Fair

Grade 11 **Burnaby North** students **Claire and Vanessa Scrimini** came home with a second place win from the International Science Fair held in Taiwan earlier this month. The twin sisters competed with nearly 300 students representing 20 countries and were the only representatives for BC. Their project “Algae Meets Fungi” explored which combination of fungi and algae would be most effective for making biofuel – a renewable energy source.

Secondary Students Win Big at Debates

Alpha Secondary's Debate Team won the “Top School” honour at Regionals earlier this month. Additional titles included “Top Junior” and “Top Senior” speakers. Alpha represents 6 out of the 14 teams from our region advancing to Provincials next weekend. For students, the wins are doubly sweet as they coach each other – the entire team is student run.

Graduates Return to School in Support of Mental Health

Two **Moscrop Secondary** alumni and brothers went back to their former school to talk about the importance of grit and resilience, as it relates to personal well-being. Speaking with Grade 8-10 students, **Gurvinder and Harvinder Sihra** shared their challenging journey toward becoming professional WWE wrestlers and champions. This is one of many examples of creative ways our schools are working to increase understanding of mental health, which is a key goal in our strategic plan.

I Read Canadian Day

The very first "I Read Canadian Day" took place on February 19 across Canada and in Burnaby Schools. The day encourages reading books by Canadian authors and District participation was unanimously endorsed by Trustees in December. Students marked the day by reading some of our rich literature, and some classrooms invited guest readers.

Sports Highlights

Basketball season is nearing its end. **Elementary students** had a great time at their final play days. Meanwhile several of our high school teams are enjoying a banner season. **Burnaby South's Senior Boys** took the number one spot last weekend at the Fraser North Zone Championships. The Rebels head to the 75th annual Provincials this weekend. Their **Senior Girls** are also in Provincials tomorrow. There are many other examples of basketball success, including **Burnaby Central's Grade 8 Girls** who earned the Fraser North Championship banner.

In other sports, **Burnaby Central** held a signing ceremony for rugby star, **Lynden Duggan**, who will play with the Trinity Western University Spartans next year. And **Burnaby North's Mika Kurahashi** has been named Ultimate Canada's "Junior Female Athlete of the Year." In noting why they chose her, Ultimate Canada described how Kurahashi helped North's team get to provincials for the first time, coaches younger girls, and works to inspire people to care about the environment.

Environmental Action: Thinking Locally and Globally

Our students and schools show their stewardship and passion for the environment in many ways. At **Twelfth Avenue Elementary**, players from the BC Lions were invited to come as part of their role as "Energy Champions" with FortisBC. Students explored with the athletes what we can do in our daily lives to take care of our planet. Meanwhile, **Armstrong Elementary** joined a global initiative to plant trees in Sudan. Elementary students at **Inman** recently planned their own sustainable communities as a classroom assignment. Additionally, as part of their school's environmental efforts, students have been focusing on bringing "litterless" lunches from home. Similarly, a group of students at **Brantford Elementary** are leading a campaign to reduce lunch waste. They're part of a province-wide student contest putting "environmental education into action." The students made a video about their goals and challenges so far. It's featured on Science World's BC Green Games website. **Let's watch... [video]**