

INSIDE BURNABY SCHOOLS



May 26, 2020

Connecting with Each Other and Creating Community

Even as COVID-19 has changed how people come together, schools continue to find creative ways to build community. Several elementary schools are holding virtual sports days, including [Inman](#), [Kitchener](#) and [Rosser](#). A teacher at [Burnaby North Secondary](#), who normally gives her Advanced Placement students a little goodie bag to encourage them during exam time, got them their own theme song this year, instead. The AP English Literature teacher commissioned a talented friend and trumpet player to create a song just for them. Meanwhile students from [Second Street Community School](#) paid a heartwarming and virtual visit to two local seniors' homes: Normanna and George Derby. Building on another project, their history of service in the community, and their school tradition of a "joke of the day," students created a "virtual visit" in the form of a video for residents, which can also be seen on our website. Several schools have also created videos for students and families. The scenes here are from greetings by school staff at the [British Columbia Provincial School for the Deaf](#). A video was also created by district **Elder Roberta Price**, who works in schools sharing teachings with staff and students. She and **Elder Glida Morgan** share music and teaching for students and families in the video – all with a view to lifting their spirits and building connection through cultural sharing. Let's watch...

Inventiveness Maintains Long-Standing Traditions

This is the 38th year of **Arts Alive** – an annual showcase of exceptional student art that's held in partnership with the Burnaby Art Gallery. Working with art teachers from all eight of our secondary schools, the BAG took the exhibition virtual this year. Fifty pieces of art from talented students in Grades 8 through 12 were chosen for the online display. Also online this year, is the annual **Words Writing Project**, which celebrates the best in student writing. Unique to Burnaby Schools, Words began in 1985. More than 100 pieces of poetry and prose are available to read on the district's website – along with images of the incredible cover art created by Elizabeth, a Grade 12 student at [Byrne Creek Community School](#). A full page ad, sponsored by the Burnaby Now, that included a letter from the Board congratulating the student authors on their achievements, was published in the paper. Each writer also received their limited edition print anthology and certificate in the mail. Both Arts Alive and Words provide career exploration opportunities for student artists and writers.

Inspiring Assignments

Creativity and innovation continues in the assignments from teachers and the results from students. There are many powerful examples. Students at [Burnaby South Secondary](#) are featured in a video compilation “making music at home” with a variety of instruments, original lyrics and even using their hands and knees as percussion instruments. Meanwhile, a Social Studies class at [Burnaby Mountain Secondary](#) was challenged to make their own personal COVID-19 time capsule. Evann, a Grade 8 student, employed his newfound animation skills cultivated in his weeks at home. He created and narrated a video that can be seen in full on our website and will surely make you smile, even in these challenging times. Speaking of smiling, the school community at [Lyndhurst Elementary](#) began a “Happiness Challenge” this month. Each day, students get a video – with a challenge delivered by a puppet – along with activities to improve their happiness and well-being. You can see the amazing result here shared by one family for the week focusing on gratitude.

Virtual Assembly Supports Grads with Safe Choices

Kevin Brooks is a Road Safety Speaker who travels to schools during grad season, sharing his personal story, and how after making the choice to drink and drive, he's now permanently paralyzed. Brooks was scheduled to speak at [École Alpha Secondary](#). It would have been his third year having frank conversations with Grade 12s there about the consequences of intoxication and driving. Rather than cancel because of COVID-19, Alpha arranged for Brooks to speak with all students from across the District in a way that has never been done before by him or us. During the virtual assembly, students posted questions for Brooks in the chat. He talked about perseverance and supporting each other during tough times – messages all the more poignant as students manage living through a pandemic. Film students from [Burnaby North](#) recorded the talk for future viewing and so closed captioning could be added later.

IDAHAAT Reimagined

Each year, the District recognizes the International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia – or “IDAHAAT” – with a student breakfast and speakers. Our **SOGI Committee** re-imagined its annual event for 2020 in light of COVID-19. On May 22, it held a virtual “breakfast,” which was broadcast live and recorded by [Burnaby North](#) students. More than 100 people registered to watch. The event was emceed by the District's SOGI leads Dan Adrian and Bryan Gidinski and included BC's Minister of Education, Rob Fleming, and our own Board Chair, Gary Wong. The virtual event also featured a collection of pre-recorded videos from a diverse group of local, queer community members ranging from prominent authors and trailblazing politicians to Burnaby's own students. Let's watch some of the highlights...