

INSIDE BURNABY SCHOOLS



September 22, 2020

Summer School

Our schools were vibrant places over the summer, as nearly 4200 elementary and secondary students participated in Summer Session 2020. Alongside strict health and safety protocols, teachers and staff found creative ways to keep learning fun – with students building, designing, creating and learning. This year, in line with provincial objectives, registration priority was given to children of essential service workers and students who may be vulnerable or in need of courses for graduation. Principals and teachers referred students who could particularly benefit from summer courses, resulting in attendance from approximately 700 students who needed extra support.

Burnaby Students Co-Create Virtual Science Fair

Also over the summer, two sisters from [Burnaby North Secondary](#) were recognized for co-organizing the first-ever North American virtual science fair. **Claire and Vanessa Scrimini** were inspired to do this after seeing many science fairs being cancelled, due to restrictions on gathering size and COVID-19. The twins partnered with two other students from Ontario and New Brunswick, whom they met in February while participating at the International Science Fair held in Taiwan. The resulting virtual competition for \$2 million in prizes drew more than 400 submissions from students in Canada, the United States and Mexico.

Work underway at Burnaby North Secondary

Construction of our brand new Burnaby North Secondary is in progress. The new school, being built next to the old one, is expected to open for September 2022. It will house 1800 secondary students and there will also be space for childcare, adult education, and language development programs.

Showing our Pride

The Burnaby School District wants all students to show their true colours. Vancouver's annual Pride Parade went virtual in August. We joined in on the festivities with this submission that formed part of the official celebrations.

And our latest rainbow walkway was completed by staff in time to welcome back students in our [Royal Oak Learning Pathways](#) program at Canada Way Learning Centre. This brings the total to nine rainbow walkways across the District, collectively serving as powerful symbols of our commitment to celebrating diversity.

Partnerships Provide Support

With the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, people continue to face food insecurity. The District was proud to be able to help by providing **Byrne Creek Community School** as a site for one of Burnaby's six summer COVID-19 food hubs. Community School Coordinators volunteered their time to help run it, with others – including trustees – also lending a hand. It was a true community partnership, with the food hub serving more than 185 families from **Byrne Creek, Edmonds, Armstrong, 2nd Street, Stride, 12th Avenue, Morley, and Windsor Elementary** schools.

Additionally, we are grateful for the donation of 14,000 disposable masks and 140 bottles of hand sanitizer from grocery chain **Kuo Hua**.

These are just two examples of how partnerships strengthen our district, community and directly benefit students.

National Award for Supporting Immigrants & Refugees

The District's **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada** – or LINC program – is one of five from across the country to be recognised with a national award. The 2020 Canada Life Literacy Innovation Award is granted for delivering innovative adult literacy and essential skills programs. LINC classes are free for adult newcomers to Canada, with a view to linking them with the language and knowledge needed to start their new lives in Burnaby. Adult learners can access free childcare while they learn English, which in turn helps their children develop school readiness skills and learn English through play. LINC students also learn through community involvement and making connections to Canadian culture. The national award from ABC Literacy Canada includes a \$5,000 grant and will be presented at a virtual event in October.

School Start-Up

School and district staff were hard at work preparing for the start of the new school year. Extra cleaning and safety protocols were enacted and posters were placed throughout schools to remind students what they can do to help keep themselves and their school community safe. Students returning to class began the first week with a health and safety orientation.

While protocols are district-wide, schools are adding their own creative touches specific to supporting their school community. Students from **Taylor Park Elementary** proudly show off their new coloured bracelets. Every student was given one, which is inscribed with the school values: Taylor Park, Kind, Calm, Safe, Friendly. The colour helps students easily identify who is in their learning group and is particularly helpful for younger grades.

As in other years, leadership students called Grade 8s to welcome them to high school in advance of the first day. Families, students and school staff reconnected. Schools enthusiastically welcomed everyone back. And students inspired staff with their wise words and messages of positivity.

The District was honoured to begin the first full day of in-class instruction with a video message from local Indigenous elders. Elder Roberta Price and Elder Latash Nahanee gifted the welcome to all students, staff and families. In it, they share greetings as well as teachings – advising us to be compassionate to each other and have optimism about our future going forward together. We are grateful for their support and guidance.