

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Reporting to Public Session on Tuesday, June 22, 2021

1. Honouring Our Youth

Each year, the accomplishments of youth in the Burnaby School District are recognized and honoured in ceremony and celebration. This year, many Indigenous youth across the district shared their own reflections and learning, as they celebrated and supported their peers. Students performed with song and a valedictorian address at the district's Honouring Our Youth ceremonies.

The Burnaby South Indigenous leadership students wanted to perform a song to honour the graduating class and decided to learn the "Song for Courage", written by Sherryl Sewepagaham, a Cree-Dene artist from the Little Red River Cree Nation. Elder Latash Nahanee of the Squamish Nation, Uslahan village offered drum protocol and teachings to the students.

Through the care and guidance of Indigenous Youth Support Worker, Gena Sanderson, and Indigenous Success Teacher, Matthew Mitchell, Burnaby South Secondary and BC School for the Deaf Indigenous youth led a performance of the song to recognize the important transition that high school graduation represents.

The performing group included Burnaby South grade 12 students, Joseph Marion and Angel Lewis, grade 9 student Chloe Morgan, grade 8 student Lucien Bogar, and BC School for the Deaf grade 12 student, Jonas Felix.

And at Moscrop Secondary School, grade 12 student, Nathaniel Frank-Piche, delivered a powerful and poignant valedictorian address to his Indigenous peers. Nathaniel is a proud member of the Dene and Lil'wut First Nations. His courage in sharing his personal reflections provides hope and inspiration far beyond the class of 2021.

This evening, trustees will see a video of the powerful "Song for Courage" and hear the valedictorian address shared by Burnaby Indigenous youth.

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Education receive this information.