

INSIDE BURNABY SCHOOLS

June 22, 2021



HONOURING THE CHILDREN

People throughout the District have been coming together to honour the 215 children found at the former **Tk'emlúps Indian Residential School**. Displays of hearts, feathers, and more adorn walls and gardens – as students, educators, administrators, and staff continue to reflect, learn and embark on a journey of healing together.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

Burnaby Schools honours and celebrates the strength of Indigenous Culture and the contributions of Indigenous People, during **National Indigenous History Month** and beyond. Several schools unveiled art projects that were created over many months in the spirit of reconciliation. These banners were made under the guidance of **Squamish Elder Latash Nahanee** by students in the **Graphics & Media Arts Program**, held at **Byrne Creek Community School**. The **City of Burnaby** is showcasing them in several places, including beside City Hall. This window art was installed prominently above the entrance doors at **Burnaby Mountain Secondary**. It was created under the guidance of artist **Trenton (Rain) Pierre** from the **Katzie First Nation** with **Studio Arts** students in Grades 10 to 12. After seeking permission from the Nations, the word “welcome” is included in both the **hənq̓əmin̓əm̓** and **Squamish languages**, as well as in English and French. The display symbolizes, for all who enter, the strength of the school's commitment to reconciliation. **Clinton Elementary** also worked with **Trenton (Rain) Pierre**. The artist incorporated student art – as part of his vision of Indigenous culture and student voice joining together. An unveiling ceremony and virtual assembly were held this month, for both the art and a new Indigenous garden.

WE'VE GOT PRIDE

June is also **Pride Month** and marks 10 years since the Board passed the **Sexual Orientation /Gender Identity policy** – making the District one of the early leaders to do so. **Byrne Creek Community School** held a student-led virtual event called **We Talk Youth Conference** about everything from awareness to being an ally. At **Burnaby Central Secondary** wildcats showed their pride and shared information. Several classes at **Second Street Community School** explored the meaning of the rainbow flag, while celebrating what makes each of us unique. **Marlborough Elementary** held **Pride Day**, where students showed their support for all. Over at **Cascade Heights** and **South Slope Elementary**, the school communities are enjoying their new **rainbow walkways**. Installed at the request of student leaders, they serve as powerful symbols of inclusion and belonging.

WORDS WRITING PROJECT – SINCE 1985

This year's cover art for the **Words Writing Project** is by **Skye Gratton**, a Grade 9 student at **Byrne Creek Community School**. The Words experience provides students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 a chance to explore becoming a published author.

AWARDS AND COMPETITIONS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

Burnaby Mountain Secondary's Math Department Head, **Jen Reily**, received the **Ivan L Johnson Memorial Award** from the **BC Association of Math Teachers**. Also from **Burnaby Mountain**, **Eric, Sasha, Anthony, Rian** and **Michelle** won silver and bronze medals at the **BC Chemistry Olympiad**, securing the place of top ranked school in BC. The **City of Burnaby's 2021 Environmental Awards** recognized the work of the **Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network** – a student-led group from across the District, and a multi-year winner. Each year BYSN organizes, plans and executes conferences to build awareness of sustainability. **Alpha Secondary** student **Lilah Williamson** – seen here speaking and posing for pictures with peers at the District's We Mean Green Conference in early 2020, was also awarded. She is a founding member of **Sustainabiliteens** – a local youth climate action group. **Cariboo Hill Secondary** Grade 12 student **Rosa Warkentin** took second place at the **Microsoft Office Specialist National Championship** in the PowerPoint category. Secondary track and field athletes competed differently this year as part of the **Virtual Burnaby/New West Track Meet** with results shared online. And many elementary schools maintained the tradition of **Sports Days**, with variations for health and safety – such as these at **Capitol Hill Elementary**, **Montecito Elementary**, and **Stoney Creek Community School**.

BRINGING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

With building access restricted, the pandemic has changed how families can connect with schools. They're finding creative ways to come together, such as this fence art project at **Second Street Community School**. It was created and installed by the entire school community, and is made up of 400 wooden pieces, spanning quite a distance with several themes throughout – including inspirational messages, a community section and Indigenous plants. This community cookbook at **Forest Grove Elementary** is another of the many examples this year of collaborations with families, students, and staff.

STUDENTS COME TOGETHER TO SUPPORTS LEARNERS A WORLD AWAY

At the instigation of an international student at **Burnaby Central Secondary**, a group of students collected almost 1200 used books. The "**Pages to Places**" group is planning to send them to children in Vietnam who are learning English and have barriers to getting books that make learning fun. The students are fundraising to transport the books, and they're already planning future efforts to inspire children's learning in more countries.

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2021 IN A PANDEMIC

Students, families and school staff are working together to make graduation as special as possible. All high schools have both a virtual and small in-person event, strictly adhering to health and safety protocols. In the buildup to graduation, schools have tried to maintain tradition, as much as possible, including opportunities for students to take photos with friends while dressed in their graduation finest and socially distanced. **Moscrop Secondary** also hosted a car parade. Special additional **Honouring Our Youth** ceremonies, as seen here at **Cariboo Hill** and **Burnaby North Secondary** schools, are being held for Indigenous graduates – including a welcome, opening and blanketing teachings provided by Elder **Latash Nahanee** and Elder **Roberta Price**. And this week, the **Burnaby Now** is publishing a special feature, with excerpts from all valedictorians, and congratulations to the Class of 2021 from many, including the Burnaby Board of Education.