

# INSIDE BURNABY SCHOOLS

March 28, 2023



## TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE NEEDS

For the first time since the pandemic began, the District's **Transition Information Evening** was held in person. Youth, parents, and caregivers came together with other families and explored ways to best support students' aspirations for independence and dreams for the future. High school students in Burnaby and New Westminster from Grades 8-12 with diverse needs – such as physical and social employment challenges – were invited. They had a chance to ask questions of the approximately 30 organizations there that offer help with post-secondary, employment, and leisure opportunities. The evening began with a panel of presenters including a Burnaby Schools grad. **Katie Zhang** shared how she can cook, budget, work, solve problems and travel.

## SHARING CULTURE AND CELEBRATING EXPRESSIONS OF WHO YOU ARE

More than 120 youth attended the **Diversity Dance**, which was back on for the first time since the pandemic began. Held at **Byrne Creek Community School**, the event is hosted by the District's **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee**. In the spirit of celebrating diversity and inclusivity, the dance is open to all high school students. Still at **Byrne Creek**, festivities, music, and dance were enjoyed as students gathered for **Nowruz**. Associated with a variety of traditions, Nowruz also marks the arrival of spring. At **Twelfth Avenue Elementary**, Nowruz celebrations were planned by families and District staff from the **Settlement Workers in Schools** team. Big smiles were shared by students at **Burnaby North Secondary**, as they threw multicoloured pigments at one another to mark **Holi**. One of the most popular festivals in Hinduism, the festival of colours is celebrated by millions across multiple continents, marking the beginning of spring.

## SCHOOLS LEAD FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

Sisters **Alisa and Alinda Tunc** came to Canada from Turkey two years ago. When the earthquake struck their former home country and Syria, they wanted to help. The Grade 3 and 5 students at **Brentwood Park Elementary** got together with their friends, made posters, and launched a campaign: Toonies for Turkey and Syria. They went from class to class explaining why they wanted the school community to help. Students, families and staff responded with generosity. The group of 24 students raised over 2500 dollars for the Red Cross – more than double their original fundraising goal. Many schools – such as **Kitchener** and **Buckingham** seen here – participate in **Jump Rope for Heart**, which includes fundraising for the **Heart and Stroke Foundation**. **Twelfth Avenue Elementary** doubled their fundraising goal – raising nearly 1000 dollars – after staff promised to take part in a Water Bucket Challenge.

## VOLUNTEERS POWER HIGH SCHOOL SPORT

**Moscrop Secondary** was host to the 50<sup>th</sup> annual **Provincial Table Tennis Tournament**. Nearly 100 student-volunteers sprang into action to make it happen. They set up tables, did scorekeeping and more. There were 14 tables – the most in the competition's history, as more than 180 athletes competed over two days. The Girls Table Tennis Team from **Burnaby North Secondary** won the provincial title. Following a season of hard work and the support of volunteer coaches, Burnaby Schools students stood out in many competitions – such as Provincial champion **Marley Jackson** from **Burnaby Mountain Secondary**, who was also awarded the **Outstanding Female Wrestler** title. **Alpha Secondary**'s **Tianna Medieros** took home gold in her wrestling weight category.

## TECH SKILLS, CREATIVITY, AND TEAMWORK

Students from the District's **Robotics (Mechatronics) Program** are competing at the **VEX Robotics World Championships** next month in Texas. The Grade 10 students from **Alpha** and **Cariboo Hill Secondary** are part of the **Program of Choice** held at **Alpha**. The team will compete in Dallas with more than 5000 teams from 50 countries. Three of the eight Robotics teams that are part of the District program qualified for Provincials this year, where students also won the Amaze and Judge's awards. Still at **Alpha**, a group of students ranked 2nd place in the province at the **University of British Columbia Physics Olympics** in the Air Resistance Lab, and 6th place with the Marine Ambulance Pre-build Project. Two Grade 6/7 classes from **Maywood Community School** had a chance to experiment with technology at **Burnaby South Secondary**. The younger children worked with Media Arts students while filming and editing. They used forced perspectives and green screens. And Grade 5/6 students at **Inman Elementary** had fun replicating their school in Minecraft.

## HITTING A HIGH NOTE: VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS OPPORTUNITIES

For the first time since the pandemic began, **Primary Days of Music** were back on at host elementary schools. Grade 2 and 3 students came together to sing as a group and with other schools. High school arts performances are in full swing, such as **Burnaby South Secondary**'s play called *The Audition*. Visual and Performing Arts students at **Cariboo Hill** held a special evening showcasing their talents in dance, drama, choir, band and art.

## SPRING BREAK CULTURAL EXCHANGE IN JAPAN

Students from **Moscrop Secondary** and **Byrne Creek Community School** had the trip of a lifetime when they traveled to Japan over Spring Break. The one-week, all expenses paid exchange is sponsored by the Japanese government as part of their **Kakehashi** or **Bridge Project**. The students from both countries got to know one another initially through virtual visits. In January there was much joy, as they met in person for the first time here. The Burnaby students showed off key cultural, tourist, economic, and political sites in Metro Vancouver earlier this year. In preparation for their trip abroad, **Byrne Creek** students learned the **Yew Yews Slumen** or **Killer Whale Song**, created by **Squamish Nation Elder Latash Nahanee**. With permission, they performed it in Japan for 100 students as part of sharing culture. While there, the Japanese students taught their visitors about glass blowing and painting wind bells, as well as traditional Japanese cloth wrapping or Furoshiki. Much more learning was had as students experienced several culturally significant sites, including a shrine on **Enoshima Island**, and the **Imperial Palace** in Tokyo. Participation in the program is by invitation only, and the 28 Burnaby students and their schools were selected over every other high school in the country to participate in this unique program.