

The District's elementary school basketball season wrapped up last week with tournaments held at Burnaby Central. All teams played their very best, cheered on by dedicated coaches, teachers and parents alike. The boys team from Second Street Community School and the girls team from Nelson Elementary were the victors, proud moments for Coach Dennis Mealha and Kevin Morrison respectively. All students demonstrated excellent sportsmanship, demonstrating that it doesn't matter if you win or lose – it's how you play the game.

Byrne Creek Secondary School celebrated Black History Month with its annual showcase on February 27. Organized by students and staff in the schools' African Dream Club, it included music, Spoken Word performances, dancing, a fashion show and lots of wonderful food! Over 200 students, parents, staff and community members attended the event and raised money to support educational initiatives in Africa.

The City of Burnaby proclaimed March 5, 2014 as "Embracing Cultural Diversity Day" and hosted an intercultural celebration at the Hilton Hotel Metrotown for the occasion. One of the highlights of the event was Byrne Creek Secondary's "African Dream Club." They gave a spirited performance of drumming, song and dance much to the delight of Board Chair Narang and Trustees Chia, Hayes, Pandher and Wang who attended.

Students at Burnaby North, Central and Byrne Creek are enjoying a cultural exchange experience - and they didn't even have to leave Burnaby! Last Tuesday the schools welcomed 88 Japanese students, and connected them with "buddies" who are taking a Leadership or Japanese course. When they aren't sight-seeing, they enjoy shadowing their buddies for that authentic Canadian school experience. On Friday the schools hosted a cultural fair, and tomorrow is a student summit. The exchange program is creating memorable experiences for all – with the hope that this will become a new tradition for Burnaby Schools.

On March 6, 60+ students from all Burnaby secondary schools had the opportunity to lend their voices to the SFU Youth Voices Dialogue on Reconciliation. The goal of the event was to inspire students to take action in their communities, and to make them stronger for the future. In his address to the group, Chief Robert Joseph emphasized that "The voices of our youth must be involved in reconciliation dialogue to create a better tomorrow for all." The event was co-planned with SFU Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation Canada.

The two weeks leading up to Spring Break have been amongst the busiest in Burnaby Schools' history with respect to theatrical performances. Five secondary schools staged shows to packed houses. They included 7 Stories/Les Belles Soeur at Burnaby Central, Rocky Horror Show at Burnaby Mountain, Grease at Burnaby North, Zombie Prom at Moscrop and Guys & Dolls at Burnaby South. Congrats to the cast, crews, and directors for their enthusiasm and dedication.