

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
Reporting to Public Session Tuesday, April 8, 2014

1. District Grade 7 Public Speaking Challenge

The District's Public Speaking Challenge, open to all Grade 7 students in the district, began in 1983 when then Burnaby principal, Dave Carter, thought of creating a district-wide public speaking challenge for elementary students. Every year since then, hundreds of students have participated in the competition designed to develop confidence and pursue excellence in public speaking skills. Students compete at the school level after which they are selected to move forward to the zone level. A final two from each of the four zones then advances to the district finals. This year the district finals were held on Wednesday, March 12th at Byrne Creek Secondary with the theme of "**We Matter**".

This evening, Literacy Consultant, Ben Pare, will provide an overview of the Public Speaking Challenge. The 2014 Challenge champions were Juliana Valerio (Brentwood Park), Sidharth Suja Sudhir (Cameron) and Mariantonella Picon (Cameron) who placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. The students will share their winning speeches.

Recommendation: THAT the Board receive this information.

2. Punjabi Program at Burnaby South

Burnaby is a diverse community with cultural and economic ties to many countries, including Punjab. As a school district we celebrate our diversity in many ways.

Students attending Burnaby South Secondary School have the unique opportunity to study Punjabi. The students need no prior knowledge of Punjabi to begin the introductory 9 or 11 programs. Students learn the Gurmukhi script, which is the Punjabi alphabet and by the end of the first year will be able to read simple Punjabi texts. As well, they will be able to communicate to others, in both written and spoken forms at a basic level. The students learn about Punjab, its culture and its history. They study Punjabi customs, celebrations and festivals.

This evening, Lee Anne Kristmanson, Principal Burnaby South Secondary will introduce teacher Dilpreet Ghtuara and four of her students currently participating in the program. The students will share what the Punjabi program means to them and how it has engaged them in better understanding of the Punjabi culture and language.

Recommendation: THAT the Board receive this information.