

## PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – MARCH 24, 2015

### *A rising tide lifts all boats - JFK*

To build a better society, we want the most disadvantaged to have not just the opportunity to participate in society but rather to fully contribute to society.

That was the premise behind funding adult education. It was intended to provide a vehicle for adults to upgrade in order to qualify for skills and trades programs, to obtain a high school graduation certificate, or to upgrade marks to qualify for post-secondary education.

As of May 1, 2015 the Provincial Government is going to stop funding portions of the Adult Education Program. A move that further alienates a vulnerable section of our society. People that are traditionally the lowest wage earners, Aboriginal students, single mothers and new immigrants to Canada. They can ill afford to start paying tuition fees. So, ironically, it does the opposite of what the Provincial Government is attempting to do with the B.C. Jobs Plan. It shuts out these people from the skills, training and education they so desperately require.

The Burnaby Board of Education is concerned that the funding changes will negatively impact enrolment for the High School Completion portion of our Continuing Education program. For several decades this program has provided an opportunity for thousands of adult students to pursue meaningful, well-paying careers that enhance our community. These funding cuts will do damage to an important service the Burnaby Board of Education provides. More than 12,000 adult registrants and over 300 instructors have made our Adult Education Program one of the largest in the Province.

Cutting the funding to Adult Education is not only poor economic policy, it is poor social policy. It creates a roadblock for the low income earners to allow for a successful implementation of the B.C. Jobs Plan.

We are saying to the Christy Clark Government and Minister Fassbender to restore the funding where it is most productive and return the opportunity for adult students to access tuition-free basic education for the good of us all.

**Thank you for your interest in public education.**

**Ron Burton, Chair, Burnaby Board of Education**

### TRUSTEES

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Ron Burton

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