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## PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – JANUARY 24, 2012

For most Trustees around this table, not too many weeks go by that we aren't approached by bright, young and enthusiastic "twenty-somethings" asking us about teaching jobs in our great District. For them, the future seems to have endless possibilities to work in a profession that brings with it so many rewards. Usually it means pretty good working conditions, a comfortable salary, good benefits and respect in the community. But these aren't the reasons that they give in wanting to go into K-12 teaching ... it's mostly because they want to make a difference in young people's lives and to help them reach their full potentials. It's always very refreshing and promising to engage with those whose passion is so vibrant. Most of us, I know, can still remember teachers from our youth who had huge influences in our lives, just as those trying to start their new profession will as well.

These encounters make recent news stories about the health of Canada's education sector so heartbreaking. Job statistics taken over a three month period last year showed that for every ten unemployed workers in education, there was just one actual job vacancy. The second worst sector was in construction, which came in at a five to one ratio. Employment in sectors such as wholesale trade, health care and social assistance had the lowest ratio.

With the job market so tight and competitive in education, what makes young people flock to our universities for teacher training? It's really the one thing that we don't want to lose in our future educators ... that passionate desire to make a difference.

In the long run, statistics change, jobs come and go, people's priorities shift, but letting young teachers dream their dream is something we need to encourage. So much of the future of a healthy community relies on those people, like our teachers, who want to take on the world and make it a better place. Here in Burnaby, we're so fortunate to have so many who fit that description and deserve our thanks for committing their lives to such a noble and challenging responsibility.

Larry Hayes  
Board Chair / Trustee  
Burnaby Board of Education SD41