

## SCHOOL TRUSTEES

### Chair

Ron Burton

### Vice-Chair

Harman  
Pandher

Katrina  
Chen

Meiling  
Chia

Larry  
Hayes

Harman  
Pandher

Gary  
Wong

February 24, 2015

Tonight's Board Chair Report focuses on leadership in the Burnaby School District. And not leadership that flows from the top down, but, rather, from the bottom up. I'm speaking of the type of leadership demonstrated by our students.

In a few moments, in the Superintendent's report, we'll be hearing about three student-centred leadership opportunities: Pink Shirt Day, the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network's "Do it Green Conference", and the District Student Advisory Council's "Burnaby's Got Talent" fundraiser.

Each of these district-wide leadership initiatives is not only an example of Burnaby students showing pride in their school district, their community, and themselves, they are also a source of pride for the Burnaby School District itself.

Whether it's a collective stand against bullying, a forum to protect the environment, or a philanthropic showcase of talent, these examples of student leadership make us kinder, stronger, greener; they make us more connected, more inclusive, and more informed. Most importantly, they make Burnaby Schools even better places to learn.

That's because student leaders bring forward real issues that matter to them and their peers "on the ground": in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds all across Burnaby. And they inspire other students and community members to action. That includes the Burnaby Board of Education.

On our committees, in our budget consultations, and in all our decision-making processes: we value student voice. We encourage it. We invite it. And we depend on their perspectives, as true partners in education.

In closing, as the Trustee Liaison to the District Student Advisory Council for the past couple of years, I've learned so much from these dedicated youth. But perhaps the biggest thing I've learned is that our students aren't just the leaders of tomorrow...they're the leaders of right now.

Harman Pandher  
Vice-Chair, Burnaby Board of Education