

**February 27, 2017**

We know that recent world events have had an impact on our classrooms and communities. On behalf of the Board of Education and senior staff we want to share with you that Burnaby School District remains committed to creating cultures of belonging in our schools.

When students feel welcome, supported, respected and safe, they are more engaged in learning. We pride ourselves in providing just that - engaging, inclusive environments that support the unique learning needs of each child. It is part of the very thread of our fabric embodied in our mission statement where we prepare and support an inclusive, caring community of learners for the challenges of a changing tomorrow.

Our schools reflect the increasingly global nature of the Burnaby community where 48% of our students speak a language other than English at home. Such diversity provides unique educational opportunities.

Learning first-hand about world perspectives on culture, politics and economics enhances class discussions and provides students with deeper connections to the world around them. It also provides a chance to explore, at a basic level, what makes us similar and what makes us unique.

As a District, we continue to promote the ideals of diversity and inclusion through policies and initiatives that promote respect and understanding. The District Code of Conduct guides these behaviours to ensure that our schools are safe and caring learning environments for all.

Last week, many schools participated in Pink Shirt Day activities. It is one of many initiatives that teaches about kindness and respect for others, attributes that help to build a sense of belonging. By keeping you informed about initiatives such as these, you in turn, can support your child. As parents and educators, we share a unique opportunity to work together, to have conversations and model positive behaviours, so that each child grows up to be a socially aware and responsible adult who will thrive in an inclusive society.

Thank you for supporting us in our efforts to ensure that all of our schools remain safe and caring learning environments. For while there are many faces in Burnaby schools – we are truly one community.

**Baljinder Narang, Vice-Chair**  
**Burnaby Board of Education**