

## SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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During this past spring break, I was fortunate to be able to take a personal vacation to China and enjoyed the privilege of visiting many cities, including Zhongshan, Foshan, Xi'an, Hangzhou and Lin'an. Zhongshan and Lin'an are the City of Burnaby's friendship cities and, as a school trustee, I was reminded of the importance of partnerships in global education and the important role our International Education Program plays for all students.

During my visits to education bureaus and schools in these cities, I experienced many teaching and learning methods that are different from what we see in Western public education systems. I was very fortunate to meet several delegations from school districts across BC and was reminded how important it is to broaden our global perspective on education and widely promote the many innovative programs our school district has to offer.

With continued limited resources and funding from the provincial government, districts are forced to look for creative solutions to deal with budget shortfalls. Exploring creative ways to engage in the Asian market, the International Ad Hoc Committee is reviewing potential opportunities for short-term visits and programs for Chinese students visiting Burnaby. Continued participation in international, cultural and educational activities will enhance our education system and encourage students to explore new opportunities in an increasingly fast-paced and ever-changing world.

I believe it is incumbent upon us as trustees of the Burnaby Board of Education to continue to set new goals and to reach new milestones in International Education. I am looking forward to the school district's involvement in the creation of an enhanced platform for both Canada, China and many other countries to exchange ideas about learning and teaching. I strongly believe that by broadening our global perspective and using creative opportunities to build relationships and partnerships, the district will not only enhance learning and develop more competitive advantages for our students, it will also increase revenue and improve learning opportunities for all.

Meiling Chia

Trustee, Burnaby Board of Education