

October 14, 2014

SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Chair
Baljinder
Narang

Vice-Chair
Ron
Burton

Meiling
Chia

Larry
Hayes

Harman
Pandher

James
Wang

Gary
Wong

Today we take the time to reflect on the accomplishments Burnaby School District has achieved during the last Board term.

Creating success for each learner is at the heart of our district. With graduation rates above the provincial average, 63% of our graduates seek post-secondary opportunities, a transition rate that is 13% higher than the provincial average. The appetite to learn one of Canada's two official languages is one of the strongest in the province, and as a result, our French Immersion program enrolment is at an all-time high of 2,143 students.

As the Province emphasizes personalized learning, we continue to enhance program choices to meet our learners' needs. Since being elected, this Board has introduced the AP Capstone Diploma Program at two secondary schools; Multi-Age Cluster Classes (MACC); Take a Hike Program; Burnaby Winter Club Hockey Program; Basketball BC Academy; Customized Employment Programs; and a wide array of career and industry training programs.

These programs are just some of many achievements. And they have been implemented while maintaining a balanced budget, despite incredibly challenging fiscal times. To do this we have had to find efficiencies in new models of program delivery and energy use – the latter that has resulted in savings to date of 2.3 million dollars.

And while we have expanded and enriched the learning opportunities for our students, they in turn, continue to make us proud. They excel academically with more than \$6 million dollars in scholarships awarded annually. They demonstrate impressive global responsibility through their leadership activities in United Nations clubs, the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network, or coming together organically as a district to support Philippine Typhoon Relief or by making a difference in their own backyard. And they make their mark artistically through choir, band, theatrical and dance performances, or test their skills in the pursuit of athletic excellence.

We are grateful for generous community partnerships, many of whom support the more vulnerable learners in our district who need basics like food, clothing and welcoming places to go to after school. Dedicated staff and a supportive parent community complete the circle, working together to create a district that makes us all proud.

In closing, I'd like to acknowledge, with sadness, the sudden passing of David Groome, who has been a regular at our Board meetings since 2008. He wasn't a regular on camera, but behind the camera. He shared with us that he enjoyed covering Burnaby School District's public Board meetings as he had come from a family of educators. A Technical Director at Shaw Cable Television, David Groome was just 44 years old.

Thank you, Shaw Cable, for sharing one of your best with us. David's gentleness and shy humour will be greatly missed and our condolences go out to his colleagues, his family and friends.

Thank you for your interest in public education in Burnaby Schools.

Baljinder Narang, Chair, Burnaby Board of Education