

October 23, 2017

This morning I delivered greetings on behalf of the Burnaby Board of Education at the opening of a Curriculum Implementation Day of professional learning entirely focused on Aboriginal Education. And as I did, I reflected on my rich experience as part of the working group to build the District's second Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, entitled "Stronger Together." It was signed in 2013 – and four years later, the Board can certainly see that highlights in Aboriginal Education have been bountiful.

This year, on September 24, more than 75 staff and students proudly represented the District in Vancouver's second Walk for Reconciliation. The following week, many students and staff came together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope, donning orange shirts in recognition that "every child matters" – and will continue to matter.

The year has only just begun and I know, as in years past, that our Burnaby Schools are just getting warmed up creating learning environments dedicated to educational practice and discovery focused on "Truth and Reconciliation" at all grade levels.

Each year, we marvel at the talent of the First Nations artists who become part of our Burnaby Schools communities. They share their talent, traditions and stories working alongside students and staff on so many projects, that last year included a wall relief at Morley Elementary, a Welcome Post at Burnaby Central Secondary and a community drum at Alpha Secondary. These projects bring the redesigned curriculum to life through all subject areas.

The teaching of traditional Aboriginal culture and experiences has value for all District learners. And as an educational community, we play a key role in the process of true reconciliation in creating a better future for all peoples, a future based upon mutual respect and understanding. We are indeed "Stronger Together." Hai Ch Ka!

Baljinder Narang, Vice-Chair
Burnaby Board of Education

Trustee Larry Hayes commented on the Burnaby Public Library quiz night that trustees had participated in as a team on October 21. He shared some sample questions and provided answers.