

Board of  
School Trustees

*Chair:*  
*Larry Hayes*  
*604-341-0197*

*Vice Chair:*  
*Baljinder Narang*

*Ron Burton*

*Meiling Chia*

*Harman Pandher*

*James Wang*

*Gary Wong*

## **INAUGURAL PUBLIC BOARD MEETING – DECEMBER 6, 2011**

Good evening and thank you all for coming out tonight. Firstly, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the people of Burnaby for the strong mandate you have given us to move forward on the good work that the Board and District staff have done over the past three years.

A special thank you to Trustees Tony Coccia, who served two terms and Diana Mumford, who served three terms and who also made a significant contribution as former Board Chair, for their dedication and commitment to the Burnaby School District. We all wish them well in their future endeavours. I welcome back my fellow incumbent Trustees and I introduce and welcome our two new Trustees to the Board, Meiling Chia and Harman Pandher.

### **Highlights of the last three years:**

This is a good time to reflect for a moment on the accomplishments this School District has achieved in the last Board term and to look forward to the term ahead.

We were honoured to share with the Ministry of Children and Family Development the 2011 “Award of Excellence for Innovative Services” from the Representative of Children and Youth for the Tamil Migrant Education Program that the District provided at the Burnaby Youth Custody Centre. Among the many impressive programs and initiatives that the district unveiled during our last term, the District collaborated with a number of community partners to open the YOUTH Hub, a unique multi-service facility to support vulnerable youth. And in recognition of the tremendously diverse community that is served by Burnaby public schools, it is worth noting that in the past three years our 11 settlement workers and one coordinator served more than 13,000 clients.

Literacy is a foundation for all learning so we continue to actively partner with the community in literacy planning and to implement targeted reading interventions and programs in our schools. Since learning begins at birth, we have focused resources over the last three years on early childhood education. In addition to introducing four new StrongStart Centres for a total of 12 in the District, we phased in full-day Kindergarten throughout the District in all of our elementary schools.

As the Province develops a clearer focus on personalized learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we continue to enhance choices and will also embrace new opportunities to provide our students with many pathways to success. However, we need to acknowledge that Burnaby already services the needs of a diverse community of learners from the very young to our adventurous, open-minded community of adult learners in Community and Continuing Education.

In the last three years, we introduced the Mandarin Language Program at the kindergarten and grade 1 level and expanded our popular French immersion program to three new schools. We also established the Primary and Intermediate Advanced Learning Challenge programs and a Twice Exceptional Program at the secondary level. Expansion of our ACE-IT and Industry Connect programs provide students with a broader range of opportunities to receive work experience and/or industry certification.

We not only build exceptional programs, we also build welcoming learning environments. The last three years saw the largest capital project program every undertaken by the District. It included:

- seismic upgrades at 6 schools,
- expansions at 6 other schools,
- the opening of the LEED Gold University Highlands Elementary and its unique partnership with the community and Simon Fraser University,
- and a stunning new replacement school for Burnaby Central Secondary.

In addition, we are a Provincial leader in energy management and environmental sustainability and are recognized as one of BC Hydro's Top 10 PowerSmart customers in all sectors. It is important to acknowledge the commitment, resourcefulness and innovation of District staff who achieved these accomplishments while maintaining a strong financial position and a transparent budget process.

While we expanded and enriched the learning opportunities and environments for our students in the last three years, they also made us proud. Not only do our students continue to excel academically in Advanced Placement and other programs, with more than \$6 million in scholarships awarded annually, they also demonstrate impressive global responsibility through their leadership activities in United Nations clubs, the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network, the many impressive choir, band and dance performances, their athletic achievements and their community involvement.

### **Looking Forward to the Next Three Years:**

With these achievements in mind, we as a Board look forward to building on this strong foundation.

We are proud of the work we did in the last year to build a more inclusive, accepting and respectful School District, one in which all students and staff can feel respected and safe.

We welcomed input from our entire community through an extended public input period on Policy 5.45 Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity. It was at times a difficult, but definitely a valuable, process for us – and a very important one for our entire educational community. We look forward over the next three years to getting to know our large and diverse community even better and to discover more ways of connecting with all our educational partners.

We will continue to look at the feasibility of re-introducing the IB program to Burnaby and to working with the District Parent Advisory Committee to enhance consultation with parents and to increase parent and community involvement. We also want to continue to build our strong working relationships with all of our other partner groups ... staff, administration, students and parents ... and welcome representatives from all of these groups here this evening.

There are many reasons to be proud of Burnaby's public schools. And, as the Board of Education, it is our honour, privilege and great responsibility to continue to serve the citizens and students of Burnaby and to encourage all of us to actively embrace life-long learning.

Thank you.

Larry Hayes  
Board Chair / Trustee  
Burnaby Board of Education SD41