

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**  
**Reporting to Public Session on Tuesday, September 22, 2020**

**1. 2019-2020 Governor General's Academic Medal Recipients**

Lord Dufferin, Canada's third Governor General after Confederation, created the Academic Medals in 1873 to encourage academic excellence across the nation. Over the years they have become the most prestigious award that students in Canadian Schools can receive.

For more than 140 years, the Governor General's Academic Medals have been awarded to students graduating with the highest grade point average from a high school, as well as from approved colleges or university programs. Each year the medals are presented on behalf of the Governor General through each of the district's secondary schools.

The Governor General's Academic Medal recipients for the 2019-2020 school year are: Catherine Wang from Alpha Secondary, Sarah Chow from Burnaby Central Secondary, Zahrah Khan from Burnaby Mountain Secondary, Ruiqi (Ricky) Xu from Burnaby North Secondary, Simran Garcha from Burnaby South Secondary, Giovanni Ferraresso from Byrne Creek Community Secondary, Callum Lehingrat from Cariboo Hill Secondary and Austin Ma from Moscrop Secondary School.

The Governor General's Academic Medal recipients have been notified by their respective secondary school. This evening, the Burnaby School District's recipients of this prestigious award will be recognized virtually.

Recommendation: THAT the Board of Education receive this information.

**2. Welcome to the 2020-21 School Year**

Earlier this month, the Burnaby School District welcomed students and families back to school. September start-up was unique this year as school districts across the province worked with guidelines and direction established by the Ministries of Health and Education in alignment with the Ministry of Education's K-12 Education Restart Plan.

The Burnaby School District's 2020-21 school year began with an orientation schedule for staff and students. With strict adherence to health and safety guidelines as outlined by the Provincial Health Office, Fraser Health Authority, British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, WorkSafe BC and the Ministry of Education, the school district created detailed return to school plans.

School start-up is traditionally a busy time for families, students and staff. With COVID-19, there has been an extra layer to what may already be a stressful time for some. Provisions for children and youth who may require additional support have been

established, along with a variety of outreach measures to best support individual student transition to school. In addition, mental health resources have been curated on the district website and school and district-based staff continue to provide support and training opportunities in this area where appropriate.

Superintendent of Schools, Gina Niccoli-Moen, will acknowledge the efforts of all school and district staff and recognize the support and insight provided by the district's partner groups.

Recommendation: THAT the Board of Education receive this information.

### **3. District Vice-Principal - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

In June 2020, the Burnaby Board of Education unanimously passed a motion designed to engage with, listen to, and learn from the community the Burnaby School District serves—in particular, Indigenous people, Black people and people of colour.

The Board's motion stated that the district use a consultative process to develop a district anti-racism action plan that respects and honours the voices and lived experiences of those affected by systemic racism, implicit bias and/or discrimination.

In August, the Burnaby School District was pleased to welcome Beth Applewhite, District Vice-Principal—Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, to assist in this important work.

Beth Applewhite began her teaching career in the Burnaby School District, later serving as vice-principal in both Surrey and Coquitlam School Districts. She holds a Master of Education Practice and Research Degree, Advanced Curricular Studies, with a focus on Teacher Inquiry in Anti-Racism Pedagogy from Simon Fraser University. She holds a Graduate Diploma in Advanced Professional Studies in Education and Bachelor of Education Degree and Bachelor of Arts Degree from SFU and UBC, respectively. In addition to being nominated for the Premier's Award for Excellence in Education, she has been recognized with the 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women Award and, in 2014, was presented with the National Congress of Black Women Lifetime Achievement Award.

Beth served as the Chair of the Metro Vancouver Anti-Racism Youth Symposium Committee, and has organized and facilitated many Anti-Racism Student Conferences. An accomplished presenter, Beth has already begun leading important conversations in the district, engaging the Burnaby Board of Education and school and district-based staff.

This evening, Superintendent of Schools, Gina Niccoli-Moen, will introduce and welcome Beth Applewhite.

Recommendation: THAT the Board of Education receive this information.