

**October 27, 2020**

Good evening and welcome.

I want to begin by acknowledging the rising number of COVID-19 cases throughout BC, including here in the City of Burnaby. Since our last board meeting, our district sent its first letter notifying families about a COVID-19 exposure at one of our schools. More schools have received notices since then. Despite the best efforts of all, and with multiple precautions and protocols, schools are not immune to what's happening in the community.

As Trustees, we appreciate the work of school and District staff who support our response and liaise with the Fraser Health Authority, which takes the lead on matters of public health in Burnaby. When we receive an exposure notice from Fraser Health the District ensures that the entire school building gets a deep clean – over and above the vigilant cleaning already taking place. We thank our custodians and cleaning crews for their diligence and hard work at all hours. Additionally, I want to express our gratitude for the compassion that school communities have shown to one another when they have received an exposure notice. As Trustees, we join them in wishing the person who tested positive a safe and speedy recovery.

I want to encourage everyone to continue to care for and protect each other by: wearing a mask when required, washing your hands frequently, and staying home when you are sick. Our individual actions matter. Please continue to use the daily health check to determine if you should come to school or work each day. These small things make a big difference in keeping our school communities healthy and safe. On behalf of the Board, thank you to students, families, and staff for your vigilance.

As Trustees we are proud of the many ways our school communities are preserving annual traditions in these unusual times. Schools have found new ways of having parent-teacher interviews, holding photo day, and maintaining annual events that benefit the community and create discussion in our schools, such as running for Terry Fox and honouring Indigenous peoples on Orange Shirt Day. We continue to applaud all of our dedicated staff, our incredible students and their supportive parents.

We are also deeply appreciative of all of our partners. Burnaby Family Life is an example. As a District, we supported their Parenting Learning Event in the last school year. We were pleased that at Burnaby Family Life's recent Annual General Meeting they recognized the Board's support of that event and, in particular, Trustee Larry Hayes who was on the planning committee, with a "2020 Community Partner Award."

**Gary Wong, Chair**  
**Burnaby Board of Education**