

**June 28, 2022**

Good evening and welcome to our final Board meeting of this school year.

Earlier this month, I presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services with other Board Chairs regarding K-12 Education funding.

With respect to operational funding, it was recommended that government consider additional targeted funding to school districts to advance their Action Against Racism strategic directions in order to ensure necessary changes occur without redirecting funding from the classroom. While supportive of the Ministry of Education and Child Care mandate of anti-racism and anti-Indigenous racism, a significant level of funding is required to support districts to do this important work at the district level.

Other issues that were touched on in the subsequent discussion included examples where K-12 Education funding is not increasing commensurate with actual costs. Concerns with funding for supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities was raised, as was funding for refugee students, earlier assessments and interventions, as well as mental health supports.

Downloaded costs to districts is a concern as it redirects dollars away from classrooms. Examples that were given included inflationary pressures and funding the 5-day sick leave.

The issue of Capital Funding Support - including capital contributions - was also raised with a recommendation to increase capital funding for K-12 schools – both major project and minor building maintenance, and to implement a funding model that allows the School District, Ministry of Education and Childcare, and Ministry of Finance to review the Capital Project Funding Agreement, at the point of tender, to determine if adequate funding was originally provided to fulfill the original project scope.

*Funding in the K-12 Education sector for major and minor capital projects is not keeping up with building needs. Deferred maintenance on school buildings is increasing which is negatively affecting the learning environment. The Annual Facility Grant provided to schools to support minor capital needs is inadequate. While the School Enhancement Program has helped to address minor capital needs, combined resources are needed to address the deterioration of school buildings.*

The highlight of the last month, however, has been participating in year-end events – either virtually, or in-person – to celebrate the many accomplishments of students, and to recognize the people who have supported our school communities throughout the year including teachers, EAs, administration and staff, as well as families and volunteers. On behalf of the Board - Thank You. We recognize your commitment and your willingness to give so much of yourselves in supporting not just our student learners but our community.

I would also like to thank our partner groups who have supported the work of the Board through conversation and collaboration on working groups, Committee of the Whole, and regular meetings with the Superintendent. Thank you to Ashley Sandquist from DPAC, Hannah Qin, Elsie Li & Daniel Hong from DSAC, Frankie DeVita from BPVPA, Daniel Tetreault from BTA, and Paul Simpson from CUPE for your leadership, and for providing input and insight on behalf of your organizations.

Although there will be some new faces, we look forward to continuing to work with partner groups on the board priorities: The Path to Reconciliation, Action Against Racism, and Environmental Sustainability in the year ahead.

On behalf of the Board, we hope all Burnaby school staff, students, and families enjoy a happy, healthy, and restful summer break with your friends and family.

**Jen Mezei, Chair**  
**Burnaby Board of Education**