

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

October 28, 2014

SCHOOL TRUSTEES

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Gary Wong Burnaby is a diverse community of many faces. Our goal in our schools is to embrace this diversity and create engaging and inclusive communities. This evening to reflect on some of our accomplishments, with a particular emphasis on creating inclusive, safe and welcoming learning environments.

Meeting the unique needs of each community goes back 30 years when the first of 7 elementary community schools was established. Their integrated focus on academics, child and youth development, family support and community development has led to improved student learning, stronger families and vibrant healthy communities. This year, we were proud to officially designate Byrne Creek as the first secondary community school in the District.

Many students have barriers to learning that need to be overcome before they can be successful. A unique example of an innovative district program used to ease stress is . The program works specifically with immigrant and refugee students who have experienced trauma and supports them in their transitions to school. In 2012, this program received an Award of Innovative Excellence by the BC Representative for Children and Youth.

As we continue to create more inclusive school communities, students from abroad are showing an increased interest in attending Burnaby schools, with a 35 % growth in student enrolment over the last three years. While this means additional revenues to support District programs and services, from a global perspective it is enriching our school communities. International students provide opportunities for new friendships and the sharing of cross-cultural knowledge. This broadens the perspectives of our Canadian students and staff who otherwise might not get the chance to meet people from other countries.

We are also proud of the work that has been achieved in supporting Aboriginal student success. Since the signing of our first Aboriginal enhancement agreement in 2008, the six year completion rate for Aboriginal students has increased 11%. The District has spent the past two years in consultation with staff, parents, students and the community to look at ways to build on the foundation of the first agreement. A direct result of this collaborative partnership is the formation of a new Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement to ensure that all our students of Aboriginal ancestry have the opportunity to maximize their full potential. We look forward to signing it on November 6 at Burnaby Central Secondary School.

Thank you for your interest in public education in Burnaby.

Baljinder Narang Chair, Burnaby Board of Education