

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Chair
Baljinder
Narang

Vice-Chair
Ron
Burton

Meiling
Chia

Larry
Hayes

Harman
Pandher

James
Wang

**Good Evening and Welcome to Education in Burnaby
Inaugural Meeting of the Board - December 10, 2013**

***We begin by acknowledging and thanking the Coast Salish Nations of
Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish on whose traditional territories
we teach, learn, and live.***

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for the privilege of serving as Board Chair for the year 2014. I am committed to working hard and serving our school district with integrity to the best of my ability. I am delighted that Trustee Ron Burton has agreed to serve as Vice Chair for the second year. Also, thank you to Trustees Larry Hayes and Meiling Chia for taking on roles of Provincial Councillor and Alternate respectively; and Trustees Ron Burton and Gary Wong for representing the Board as BCSTA/BCPSEA Bargaining Representative Councillor and Alternate respectively.

In 1950, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 10 December as Human Rights Day to bring to the attention 'of the peoples of the world' the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. On this day it seems fitting that we pay tribute to the late Nelson Mandela, a great man who dedicated his life to making the world a better place for all.

He was a man who was well admired for his beliefs and strong convictions – many of which guide the work that all of us do for public education and our community.

On poverty, he said:

***It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right,
the right to dignity and a decent life.***

Sadly, BC's rates of child poverty are one of the highest in Canada. We see it every day in our schools, and we know that without food or proper clothing, learning cannot happen. We are fortunate for the generosity of staff who go above and beyond to find community partners who can provide snacks or breakfast, clothing and other necessities for our students who are in need.

And on Education, Mandela had this to say.

"Education is the most powerful weapon