

April 25, 2023

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Day of Mourning this week on April 28. It is a day designated across Canada to remember and honour workers killed or injured in the workplace. On behalf of the Burnaby Board of Education, we would like to recognize all workers who have been injured or killed in tragedies and/or accidents with a moment of silence.

Thank you.

The work of this school Board and this school District intentionally incorporates consultation in our decision making. In recent years, we have incorporated consultation directly into our governance model. The previous board, whose work we stand on, brought our partner groups directly into our governance model through a committee of the whole structure. A structure that takes feedback on an ongoing basis from students, teachers, staff, and parents on items before the Board.

This Board has enhanced the consultation process through expanded engagement processes on larger overarching items such as the Long-Range Facilities Plan. A plan that is on tonight's agenda for approval.

The Long-Range Facilities Plan is a document that provides a framework for facilities planning and investment decisions for school district facility infrastructure. The development of the Burnaby School District's facility plan incorporated several public consultations and engagements. The District met with Elders and received input on the direction for development of future facilities in the district.

This Board consulted, through in person open houses, meeting presentations, and via online surveys to obtain input and comments from students, staff, parents, teachers, and from members of the general public. We shared the reality that we face as a school district in a rapidly growing city. It was a wonderful opportunity to have conversations one-on-one and share the challenges we face in school site acquisition, the infrastructure funding process from the provincial government, and the lack of current provincial support for portable classroom costs - among others.

This Board is committed to continue the conversations that we have already started with government both on the bureaucratic and political sides. A discussion based on fact. The fact that the current way of planning and building schools, and funding those schools, needs to change to fully support the Burnaby School District.

This is work that cannot be done without the information, the feedback, and the input of all of you that took the time to engage with us. On behalf on all of the Trustees, I would like to thank our Elders, our students, our teachers, our parents, and our staff for engaging and for sharing with the Burnaby Board of Education.

I would also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board, to thank District staff for all the time and effort put in to supporting our Long-Range Facilities Plan engagement process, and for producing a document written by Burnaby for the future of Burnaby schools.

Bill Brassington, Chair
Burnaby Board of Education