



September 1, 2011

**Welcome to 2011/12: a Message from the Chair and the Superintendent**

Welcome to September! We hope you have many good memories of a rejuvenating summer and are feeling energized and ready to begin a new school year.

This year marks a dramatic stage in the renewal and revitalization of our school district. As we welcome staff and students back for the first day of school, we also re-open the doors of the newly rebuilt Ridgeway Elementary. The new school stands as a testament to all that is possible when people who care about history, community and learning combine their energies on behalf of public education and society.

As you are no doubt aware, the collective agreement between the BC Teachers' Federation and BC Public School Employers' Association expired at the end of June. Negotiations for a new provincial collective agreement have now resumed. While the bargaining process creates challenges for the school system and dramatic headlines in the media, the current commitment from the BCTF is to continue to provide core, quality education for students throughout the school day.

As discussions proceed, we will provide updates through our standard "Schools Connects" email system, as well as a new online channel: [The Superintendent's Blog](#). At this time, we are hopeful that a new contract can be achieved that is satisfactory to everyone and we approach our responsibilities to the bargaining process with professionalism and optimism.

While the BCTF has now served notice of Phase 1 job action to begin on September 6th, it's important not to lose sight of the strong position in which we begin this school year. In May, additional services and supports for students were approved for this year's budget. As well, the Board is pleased to announce the completion of a major planning initiative with the publication of the *2011-2021 NVSD Strategic Plan*. This document describes our focus for the next ten years and outlines how together, we can go beyond our core mandate to pursue the highest level of service we can provide to students and the community.

Welcome back! We look forward to working with you to support learning in the 2011/12 school year.

Sincerely,

NORTH VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Franci Stratton  
Chairperson

NORTH VANCOUVER  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

John Lewis  
Superintendent of Schools