

From: Melissa Chang <melissaforsd41@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 30, 2018 11:01 PM

To: Burnaby Homeless

Subject: Re: Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness Questionnaires on Homeless Issues

Good evening,

My name is Melissa Chang. I am running for School board trustee. Growing up I have lived at many different levels of wealth. Thankfully I have never had to worry about a roof over my head, although I was in the uncomfortable position of having to choose between paying my rent or my MSP premiums when I first moved to BC. I am trying to raise my kids to respect all people no matter their situation in life and although they are only 3 and 5 years of age I have already had many conversations with them.

I hope that you accept this format for answers to your questions.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chang

School Trustee:

1) What will you do and what have you done in the past to bring awareness on homelessness in schools?

Homelessness is a large issue that has multiple issues within it. It isn't just poverty or mental health or even substance abuse but those are often part of the issues. I will encourage schools and teachers to fully engage in mental health awareness week. As well as have specific talks about poverty and the effects of child poverty during the annual UNICEF and United Way campaigns as well as other pertinent times of the year.

2) How can you help reduce stigma and myths on homelessness and poverty to school-aged children and youth?

Of course all education has to be age appropriate, I feel that if students have better understanding of how easy it can be to become homeless it would help. I would like to see children participate in multiple awareness initiatives much like those mentioned above as well as the 30 hour famine.

3) If elected as School trustee what strategies would you use in Burnaby to first be able to identify and then reduce the number of children/youth living in poverty?

The first thing that I would like to do is bring in a hot meal plan to all schools. It isn't just the community schools that have students that can't concentrate because they haven't eaten. If everyone is eating the same thing then nobody is getting teased about what they brought or didn't bring to school. This would be able to identify students living in poverty as it would be an expansion of the current community school system which works on a sliding scale.