

Committees

Confronting Racism and Building a Foundation for Change

The BCPVPA's Ad Hoc Anti-Racism Committee is Ready to Encourage Action-Oriented Change



L to R: David Johnson (SD23), Carla Rourke (SD52), Iram Khan (SD36), BCPVPA Director Sanj Johal (SD44), Tu Loan Trieu (SD40), BCPVPA President Brian Leonard, BCPVPA Director Sid Jawanda (SD57), BCPVPA Director Darren Danyluk (SD6), Kenneth Headley (SD40), Wayne Chow (SD42)



by

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Staff Directors

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Being an anti-racist association involves taking a series of steps to actively challenge and deconstruct racism both within the association and in society at large. Principals and Vice-Principals play a key role in both combatting racism and teaching acceptance, which are critical components in creating these societal changes. As one works towards becoming anti-racist, education is important. Your journey can start with learning about the history and impact of racism, and its various forms: read books, attend workshops, and engage in discussions with experts and members of racialized communities. Being anti-racist and engaging in anti-racism is an action-oriented stance, committing the anti-racist to actively participate in activities that prevent, address, reduce, and eliminate racism in their environments.

Late in 2022, several members acted when they put their names forward to be a lead member of the BCPVPA Ad Hoc Anti-Racism Committee. This committee was established in response to our commitment as an Association to build a more inclusive community of educators. The Committee – which held its first meeting in January 2023, and is

Wayne Chow

Vice-Principal

District Vice-Principal of Racial
Inclusivity and Equity

*on the shared, traditional, and unceded
territories of the Katzie First Nation and
Kwantlen First Nation
SD 42 (Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows)*

Wayne has been an educator and administrator in British Columbia for more than 20 years, starting in the Mission School District and, at present, in the school district of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

Wayne was an English Language Learners teacher and transitioned into the administration role, working at both the middle school and secondary school level. Currently, he is focused on supporting his school district with their antiracism goals and framework for learning that supports all learners.



" As an anti-racist educator, I believe in the value of a shared commitment to address systemic oppression, whether that be in the classroom, school community, or curriculum. More importantly, I believe in highlighting hope, joy, and racial brilliance as much as possible in all our schools. I am looking forward to being a part of this committee to help and support all BCPVPA members in their journey towards being an anti-racist educator."

"As one works towards becoming anti-racist, education is important."



comprised of six BCPVPA members, two BCPVPA Directors, and the BCPVPA President – encourages discussions about racism, power, accountability, and involvement at all levels.

The role of the Ad Hoc Anti-Racism Committee is to:

- Advise the Board with respect to the ways in which the Board can support effective school leadership for racial equity and anti-racism

Kenneth Headley

District Vice-Principal for Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion and Anti-racism

*on the traditional and unceded territory of the
q̓iq̓éyt (Qayqayt) First Nation and other
Coast Salish Peoples
SD 40 (New Westminster)*

Kenneth has been an advocate for marginalized students, and their families and communities during his 15 years in K-12 education. In collaboration with Beth Applewhite (SD 41) and James Morton (SD 43), Kenneth has focused on providing meaningful learning opportunities to discuss issues of inequity and racial discrimination with educators and community organizations throughout the Province.



“Anti-racism work is hard work because it is the heart work. When we become more equitable, we change hearts and minds. Engaging in this learning and unlearning requires courage and will lead to discomfort. With a community of Critical Friends, we are able to walk with grace, love, humility, and community accountability. Most of all, we can walk together with HOPE and JOY!

When we work together to remove barriers and create spaces where we allow students, staff, and families to show up as their true, vibrant, and authentic selves, we can reimagine community and humanity.”

David Johnson

Vice-Principal

Watson Road Elementary

on the traditional and unceded territory

of the Okanagan (Syilx) People.

SD 23 (Central Okanagan)

David has been an educator for 20 years, 11 as a teacher and nine as an administrator, and is currently the Vice-Principal of a large elementary school in the central zone of Kelowna. David has had the fortune of experiencing a variety of school settings and getting to serve students and families in each of these settings. He has also had the opportunity to work with students and families from a wide variety of socio-economic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. For the past two years, David has been part of leading an equity team at his school where they engage staff and parents in the important work of inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism.



"I wanted to put my name forward for the BCPVPA Anti-Racism Committee to contribute to this important work and learn with colleagues from around the province to help shape the work that is happening in my district and school. The stories I have had the opportunity to hear from students and families where racism is at the core have inspired and motivated me to become an advocate, ally, and voice for this critically important movement towards equity. I am very excited to join this committee with such an amazing group of individuals to drive change in our schools."

- Advise the Board to assist in the Association's liaison with the Ministry of Education and education partner groups to promote anti-racism education
- Advise the Board to assist in the Association's liaison with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and education partner groups, to support implementation of the Ministry's K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan
- Support members on how to best deal with issues of racism in their schools



Iram Khan

Principal

David Brankin Elementary
SD 36 (Surrey)

Member of Surrey's Racial
Equity Advisory Committee

*Iram works, learns, and plays on the
shared traditional territory of the Katzie,
Kwantlen, Semiahmoo, and other
Coast Salish Peoples.*

Iram has been an educator for 25 years
and an administrator for 15 years.
She has worked in Surrey for most of
her career, but was also a teacher in
Kamloops and Dease Lake.

Iram enjoys spending time with her
husband and two children exploring
nature and playing video games. Iram
also enjoys reading and has a 'waiting to
be read' pile of books that threatens to
fall on her while she sleeps.

"My experiences as a person of colour learning in the BC education system and an educator in one of the most diverse communities in BC has made me committed to supporting staff and students through equity and inclusion. I put my name forward to serve on this committee because I am passionate about racial equity and supporting diverse education leaders and learners. I believe that the BCPVPA has the potential to play a great role in creating anti-racist schools and encouraging more diverse leaders to become school leaders. I look forward to the work ahead."



"Being anti-racist and engaging in anti-racism
is an action-oriented stance..."

The Committee will also offer recommendations to the Board on creating better working environments for IBPOC (Indigenous Peoples, Black Peoples, and Peoples of Colour) members, and ways to grow diversity in the membership of the Association.

Members of the Committee are dedicated to supporting the BCPVPA and its members in addressing racism in BC schools, while helping to create an understanding of the links between oppression and the barriers that are presented. BCPVPA is accountable to our members, and we acknowledge the need to identify and address systemic racism that affects all facets of society. The Association values diverse perspectives, and wants to afford all members equal opportunities to engage. With the support of the Committee, we strive to empower all members through distributed

Carla Rourke

Principal
Charles Hays Secondary
SD 52 (Prince Rupert)

Carla has lived and worked as a guest on the traditional and unceded territory of the Ts'msyen and Sm'algyax speaking peoples for the past 16 years.

She has been blessed to be in a leadership role for the last nine years as part of a diverse high school community with wonderful staff, students, and families. Carla is also grateful to be a part of a collaborative administrative team of critical and supportive colleagues and friends.



"Last year, our district reflected on the results of our Equity Scan. It was powerful and honest work, and from this process we have identified areas that require growth. One of our goals is to declare that all 'learners are confident and have a profound sense of belonging', and we are not there yet. We know that racism exists, and that a profound sense of belonging isn't possible until we are an anti-racist school. Anti-racism has to be the foundation for systemic change. I am new to this work and I am learning and unlearning every day. I put my name forward for this committee to be active in this important work and to bring the experiences and perspectives of a smaller Northern district to the conversation."

Tu Loan Trieu

Vice-Principal

Ecole Glenbrook Middle School

on the traditional and unceded territory of the

q̓iq̓éyt (Qayqayt) First Nation and other

Coast Salish Peoples

SD 40 (New Westminster)

Tu Loan is in her 24th year of teaching. Prior to becoming a VP, Tu Loan was a middle school teacher-librarian and wore many hats as Athletic Director, Resource/ELL Teacher, and classroom teacher. She has participated actively in professional development committees at every school she's been with, and has given workshops at the school, district, and provincial levels.

In addition to being an active member of her chapter's PD committee, she also chairs the Social Committee for the NWPVPA because she enjoys organizing events that bring people together. When not at school, Tu Loan enjoys being unplugged and reading, climbing mountains, and running.



"In our line of work, it is so important to not only address racist acts at school, but to also actively work to engage students and staff to be anti-racist. Having experienced racism growing up and as an adult, the term 'anti-racism' really transformed my thinking about how to deal with racism. I have been learning with colleagues and engaging in personal professional development around anti-racism and believe that I can contribute positively to this committee."

leadership, shared decision-making, co-construction of strategic plans, and authentic opportunities to provide input into how BCPVPA services are provided.

Anti-racism is an ongoing process that requires continuous education, self-reflection, and action. As we strengthen the anti-racist voice within the Association and our membership, we continue to foster a culture of inclusiveness that encourages open and honest discussions about race. Becoming anti-racist takes time, effort, and a willingness to challenge the status quo. We believe that together, we can make the change necessary to create a culture of anti-racism within the Association, and to bolster efforts to make this change throughout the public education system in BC.