

## **Voice New Westminster**

For Immediate Release

October 11, 2011

### **Voice New Westminster endorses Brenda McEachern-Keen for school trustee**

**New Westminster, B.C.** - Voice New Westminster has announced that it will be endorsing and supporting Brenda McEachern-Keen as a fifth Voice candidate for school trustee.

McEachern-Keen and her husband have been New Westminster residents for 23 years and have two sons who both attended public school in New Westminster from Kindergarten through grade 12.

McEachern-Keen has a Bachelor of Commerce degree and a Law degree from UBC, and has been practicing law for over 20 years. She is currently a consultant to the financial services industry, providing estate and tax advice to financial advisors.

McEachern-Keen says she values Voice's "willingness to approach issues in a fresh new way" and agrees with the group's emphasis "on improving process and governance to deliver the best environment for learning."

"We don't have the luxury of conducting business as usual in SD40," McEachern-Keen said. "The auditor general is knocking at the door. One can surmise he's not going away any time soon. As a lawyer I have the training and experience to interpret and implement his recommendations in a way that is appropriate for our community."

McEachern-Keen believes the role of a school trustee is to seek input from all stakeholders, develop policy, communicate it clearly and then step aside and let teachers do what they do best – inspire our children.

"The role of the Board is to allocate resources effectively to create a culture where teachers love to teach and children love to learn," McEachern-Keen said. "Education matters now more than ever, and I want to build on my passion for education."

Voice President Neil Powell, himself a teacher, says he's pleased that a candidate of McEachern-Keen's calibre is running under the Voice banner.

"Brenda [McEachern-Keen] brings attributes and experience in areas that are badly needed given the issues the school district is currently facing," Powell said.

McEachern-Keen has been a community volunteer and leader for as long as she can remember, and over the years has gained valuable experience on the boards of various charitable organizations and service clubs.

She was a member of the Rotary Club in Surrey for 10 years, becoming club president and receiving the Paul Harris distinguished service award.

She also served as treasurer for Queen's Park Preschool and spearheaded a major renovation campaign.

McEachern-Keen also served on the Massey Theatre board for 6 years, again stewarding the organization through a major renovation and fundraising campaign.

Professionally, McEachern-Keen has been a director of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (Vancouver) and a member of the professional advisory committee for the Vancouver Foundation.

She has developed a niche in philanthropy with a particular emphasis on insurance funded legacy planning. She has also lectured and authored extensively on estate planning issues.

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