

President's Update to the College Community

Serving the communities of Northwestern BC

April 7, 2008

Stewart Campus

For the past five years we have been monitoring the educational activity levels in Stewart and noted no significant use of the campus or the programs and services we have attempted to offer. The costs of renting and maintaining a campus can not be justified given this very low student activity and we have made the decision to close the existing Stewart campus and explore other, more cost effective ways of responding to educational needs as they arise.

It is important to state that this decision is not a reaction to, or result of, the recent budget cutback. It has been made in reaction to the low levels of community educational demands and needs and the related fiscal accountabilities of the College.

The College is still committed to providing educational programming to the town of Stewart. While we are closing the campus, we are not closing our efforts. We will still be working with local business, industry and community groups to develop and deliver training and education opportunities as requested and required.

We are in discussion with the Mayor of Stewart and will be meeting with the Stewart Secondary School in late April to explore ways in which the College and the School might work together to enhance educational opportunities for students and residents of Stewart.

Budget Deliberations Delayed

The budget news from the Ministry has stalled the progression of the development of our 2008-09 budget. Given the 2.6% decrease and the expectation of a higher FTE target delivery, we are being challenged to find further savings and ways to deliver new FTEs with insufficient funds.

Over the past week a further allocation of 33, one-time Aboriginal Health FTEs was assigned to the College; these FTEs will be fully funded unlike the previous 107. This allocation raises our new FTE target to 140 FTEs.

An in-depth review of cost centres at the College is underway as we seek to identify further possible savings. This work is delaying budget deliberations, as is the lack of funding information from the Industry Training Authority which supports the majority of our Trades training.

The 2008-09 budget will necessarily rely on a structural deficit and thus the closing of year end for 2007-08 is required to ensure that sufficient funds are available to balance the budget and maintain a safety net for the College. As the 07-08 financial year end work will not be complete until April 21st, a final draft budget for 08-09 will not be possible until late April or early May.

Centre for Health, Wellness, Sport & Recreation

Over the past week, Diane Clements, Dean of Health & Human Services and I held discussions with several Ministers and staff as well as Grand Chief Ed John about the new Centre concept proposed for the Mountainview School in Terrace. The response to date has been very encouraging and work is accelerating as we continue to seek a decision that would enable us to open in September 2008.

Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art - First Nations Fine Art Student Exhibit

On Friday, April 25th, the students of the Freda Diesing School will be hosting their annual year-end exhibit and sale from 6 pm to 8 pm. Opening ceremonies begin in Room 2001 followed by the exhibit in the Freda Diesing Studio.