

President's Update to the College Community

Serving the communities of Northwestern BC

January 25, 2006

Administrative Changes

Dean Portfolios

In my last memo to the College community I outlined some temporary changes to the portfolios of our Deans. The portfolio shuffle was a result of Katherine McIndoe's recent injury and the subsequent absence from work she will be taking to attend to her recovery. The exact length of absence is not known at this time but program areas will be returned to their original Dean upon Katherine's return to work.

There is much work to be done as the College expands, reviews, and realigns its program offerings to meet emerging markets. Our community consultations, education planning and needs assessments over the past two years have indicated a number of new program areas for us to consider. Discussions are also underway with many of our existing program areas to explore and implement program changes, revisions, and new initiatives. Much of the program development work will be overseen by Margo Van der Touw.

Update on the Communications Plan and Telephone Replacement/Renewal

We received three bids in response to our tender for the replacement of the College's telephone system. The bids were very technical and detailed with respect to proposed configurations, replacement of the backbone of the system (switches and network), as well as hardware requirements (new telephone sets). Each bid was formally evaluated by two independent telecommunications consultants and reviewed by an internal college committee comprised of faculty, staff, and administration. All proposals included Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) as part (or all) of the bid. This is the latest technology in telecommunications and will reduce the cost of long distance and eliminate line charges between campuses.

The Board has approved the Mitel bid as the most viable proposal for purchase. Implementation is slated to begin this spring - 2006. All going well, the entire system will be completely installed (including new hardware on everyone's desk) by the start of classes in September of this year. Please call Paul, Dave, or Diane if you have any questions with respect to this.

Essential Skills for Work (ESWK)

Created through the Developmental Programs portfolio, ESWK has been developed as a 'foundational' program aimed at helping participants improve literacy, math and computer skills while investigating personal attitudes, interests and strengths. In partnership with First Nations communities, this new program will be piloted in three different areas of the region this spring - Lax Kw'alaams, Kispiox/Glen Vowel and Laxgalts'ap.

Budget Process for 2006/07

We are once again in the budget process for the new fiscal year. A budget timeline will be published shortly and there will be two or three meetings of the budget task force to finalize the 2006-07 budget submission.

Capital Budget Process

We're through the first two rounds of the capital budget analysis and prioritization and have one more meeting to get to our final list. We received over \$1 million in requests with only a budget of \$400,000 to work with. Staff will be advised once the final capital purchase list is approved.

Culinary Arts in Hazelton

Last fall the College's cooking program expanded into the Hazelton Secondary School. The program is being very well received by the high school students and is experiencing high student retention rates. Its experiential approach to education is attracting many students who are showing marked academic improvement through this style of teaching and learning.

All Native Basketball Tournament - Sponsorship

The College has come on board as an event sponsor for this year's All Native Basketball Tournament happening in February in Prince Rupert. This event draws large crowds and participation from across the northwest and beyond. As part of the sponsorship the College logo will be displayed on audience wrist bands being used for open seating games between Feb 5 and Feb. 11.