

President's Update to the College Community

Serving the communities of Northwestern BC

February 29, 2008

2008/2009 Federal Budget - Points of Interest for Colleges

The Federal budget continues to overlook the chronic underfunding that limits colleges and institutes from effectively responding to the demands for a skilled workforce. While more money was outlined to help students access post-secondary education, colleges and institutes were seeking federal investment in facilities and infrastructure. Most institutions were built in the 1960s with considerable federal financial support and a projected life span of 40 years. We are well beyond that 40 year timeframe.

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) notes that the budget did announce the following points of interest to colleges:

- Supporting Canadian students with a \$350-million investment in 2009–10, rising to \$430 million by 2012–13, in a new, consolidated Canada Student Grant Program that will reach 245,000 college and undergraduate students per year when it takes effect in the fall of 2009. The Millennium Scholarship Foundation mandate ends in 2009. (The alternative funding arrangements for non-participating jurisdictions currently in place for the Canada Student Loans Program will apply to the Canada Student Grant.)
- Committing \$123 million over four years starting in 2009–10 to streamline and modernize the Canada Student Loans Program.
- Enhancing the flexibility of Registered Education Savings Plans by increasing the time they may remain open to 35 years from 25 years, and by extending the maximum contribution period by 10 years.
- A Textbook Tax Credit amount of \$65 per month of full-time study, or \$520 for a typical full-time academic year, and a full exemption of scholarship, fellowship and bursary income.
- Concurrently, the Government will continue to engage Aboriginal groups and other stakeholders on a successor approach to the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy, expected in 2009. The new approach will better place the skills and training available for individuals in the context of employer and labour market demands.
- The Government will also continue to review its First Nations and Inuit post-secondary education programs to ensure they are coordinated with other programs and that they provide the support that First Nations and Inuit students need to stay in school and complete their education.

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Changes to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program announced

The Provincial Budget speech outlined that this program will be changed from 4 years to 3 years. A meeting is planned for March 3 with the Deans of Health Sciences across the province; at which time we will learn more. No further information is available at this time.

Expansion of Home Support Resident Care Attendant (HSRC) offerings

Additional one-time funding from the provincial government has enabled us to offer a third HSRC program this academic year. This program is being offered in *Haida Gwaii in Masset*. The program began January 14 with 10 students enrolled.

— NEW —

Aboriginal Home Support Resident Care Attendant

We received a grant for the development of an Aboriginal HSRC program. Upon completion we anticipate additional one-time delivery funding to pilot this program in 3 locations in 2008–09: *Lax Kw'alaams, the Nass and Haida Gwaii*.

Federal Budget con't...

The Budget documents also note:

- \$3.2 billion earmarked for post-secondary education in 2008–09 to provinces and territories through the \$10.6-billion Canada Social Transfer, increasing by 3 per cent annually as announced in Budget 2007.

Centre for Aboriginal Health, Wellness, Sport and Recreation Education

A stakeholder meeting was held January 11th with representative attendance from across the region. It was a very positive meeting and we received strong encouragement to proceed.

Subsequent positive meetings have occurred with the School District regarding our use of the Mountainview School facility to house the Centre and discussions are proceeding with the Ministry of Advanced Education, the Ministry of Health and Indian and Northern Affairs. Hopefully by late spring we will have some clear direction as to whether this proposal will have the support of the various government stakeholders. For information on the Centre concept, please refer to the College Web site:

http://www.nwcc.bc.ca/AboutNWCC/President/Reports_Reviews.cfm

Haida Gwaii programming starts to take off.....

College staff in Haida Gwaii is starting to show positive results as communities respond to their efforts. Several program initiatives are underway on the islands:

In Masset

Career and College Prep (in partnership with the School District), Essential Skills for Work and Foundation Carpentry (in partnership with the Old Masset Village Council Economic Development and the Gwaii Trust)

At Qay Llnagaay

Career and College Prep is being offered two evenings per week and the Coastal Guardian Watchman program began February 25th

In the Village of Queen Charlotte

Continuing Education courses and Literacy are available (in partnership with the Haida Gwaii Learning Circle Society).

Exploring a Partnership with the Marine Institute, Newfoundland

Gerald Anderson, Vice President at the Marine Institute, spent a week with us in early February to follow-up on my visit in late fall. We are specifically looking at the possibilities of working together in the areas of fisheries, marine transportation, and food technology, as well as initiating student exchanges in coastal zone management and environmental marine studies.

Various Deans, Principals and faculty had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Anderson, and follow-up discussions will be planned.

— New —

Public Administration Certificate

Our new Public Administration certificate in Local Government Administration has passed Education Council approval and the first course is scheduled to start in March.

Twenty employees from Northern municipalities and the Nisga'a Lisim's Government have enrolled and local Municipal Administrators are engaged in the support and delivery of the program.
