



April 21, 2008

VCC College Board  
1155 East Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 4V5

Dear Board Members

**Re: Board Forum of April 17<sup>th</sup> and Request to Communicate with the Public**

Even though not all affected areas were heard from on the 17<sup>th</sup>, the Forum was effective in demonstrating the great effect the Education Plan/Budget will have on successful programming at VCC. This is programming mandated by the current strategic plan and programming which is placing people in successful work or further along their learning path.

For Board members who were not there we would re-iterate our main points:

- The degree of comprehensiveness that VCC is currently offering is completely justifiable. Student/Citizens should have the right to affordable public education options of the type VCC has been offering. Those options should not be restricted further. A program slated for cancellation at VCC may be being offered elsewhere, but that does not mean that the other institution is adding any capacity to take up the need.
- In our analysis, VCC is planning to do too much financially in 2008/09. We grant that the government has created a structural funding problem for VCC's finances but we suggest that it is a problem created by Victoria which should not be VCC's to solve completely, especially at the cost of successful programming and student learning opportunities. Since there will be a provincial election in 2009 and funding reductions would be unlikely, it seems prudent to keep VCC as large as possible, not to reduce it more than absolutely necessary.
- The fiscal room created by the massive VDI program, a small deficit; and, rather than the increases now found in the proposed budget, no increases or even small reductions to budget lines not related to instruction or instruction support should allow VCC to be able to get through 2008/09 with fewer cuts than it is now planning. (In this regard and in light of the statements from the

International Education Department Head, we still find it puzzling how in non-leased classrooms VCC can't make most of a million dollars from IntEd ESL programming.) This approach would be more consistent with a Board ethos that seeks to conserve as much as possible; which, as we have mentioned should be the Board's guiding principle.

- We ask again that the Board explore these other options; that it has the financial people present other options that would result in fewer cuts in learning opportunities.
- We also ask that the Board take a modest public stance in part to help us and others in our advocacy. In line with the motion Charmaine has presented we would request that the Board pass an enabling motion that would have it do the following:

*"That this Board write an open letter to the Minister of Advanced Education and express its concern over the funding of VCC and how it is negatively affecting affordability and access for students from our community and VCC's ability to continue serving its students and potential students."*

If such a letter was posted on the VCC website, we and other constituent members could point to it as evidence of the seriousness of the funding issue. Despite the good behind-the-scenes efforts of the President, Board Chair, and Board members, the wider general public has to date had no way of knowing how this Board, the representatives of the public, is dealing with the funding crisis. We feel the general public has the right to know this much.

Thank you for your attention to this letter. As Mark pointed out, the Forum was evidence that final decisions have not been made and that is what we have been telling our members.

We are encouraging members to get their names forward to speak to the Board and to have community members speak as well. As mentioned, if demand warrants it, we would trust that the Board would be able to schedule enough speaking opportunities as necessary, even if that means another forum-like session.

Yours truly,

**VCC Faculty Association**

Frank Cosco  
President

