



November 20, 2015

Open letter to the College Community

Over the past several months, there has been a public campaign that implies that VCC needs to be 'saved.' We have tried to discuss the campaign with its leaders but it has not seemed to dissuade them from their course. Our own members have asked us what our stance is. We have therefore decided to make this statement in an attempt to be as clear as possible.

The campaign has had an effect. It has caused a number of organizations to contact me and ask if VCC is closing its doors. We have assured these organizations that VCC is not closing. These are often the folks who refer and direct students to us as their best-possible alternative. It does lead us to consider the many other organizations, members of the public, future employers, and potential students who do not ask but simply assume by this campaign's messaging that VCC is closing.

It's true that Vancouver Community College has endured a number of major setbacks over the past two years - the loss of ESL funding, the implementation of tuition for Adult Basic Education programs, the rapid turnover at the College Board and senior administrative levels, and overall uncertainty and delays in much-needed capital projects. The Provincial Government does need to properly fund this College but to state that it needs to be 'saved' implies its imminent demise. That is not true. There is no evidence for it. We believe this campaign is causing more harm than good.

This year we are celebrating 50 years of teaching, of community service and the success of our students. Many of the faculty and support staff at VCC have worked together for decades. We have supported each other in difficult times and together we have celebrated the good times. In fact, together we are what makes this place work. We are the one constant that our students see year after year and one of the main reasons students refer their friends and family to VCC.

Because registration is especially fragile in our ABE, ESL and some other programs, I am writing to the entire College community today to ask that you not support this campaign by signing a petition or participating in the social media drive.

If we ever learn there is anything more than conjecture or rumours driving this campaign, the VCCFA will pull out all stops but until then, let's move forward as a united community college and keep doing the good work we do.

In solidarity,


Karen

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