

# NEWS

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## **Board fears 'massive' program cutbacks**

The College Board has stayed with its January contract offer to the VCC Faculty Association to avoid "massive" program cutbacks for students, President John Cruickshank told *The Exchange* in an interview following Monday's Transition Council meeting.

"The Board has sought alternate funding solutions with the Minister and Ministry officials, but they were told there would be no new money available for 1993-94," said Cruickshank.

"Board members are aware that a Ministry report shows that instructor workloads in ESL and ABE are competitive with other Lower Mainland colleges. But after a long and sincere discussion on March 11th, they decided that they must continue their position on salary and workloads or students would face massive program cutbacks."

The College has received strike notice from the VCCFA. The union has told the College that unless an agreement is reached, a strike will begin on all campuses in the VCCFA jurisdiction on March 18. Those campuses include City Centre, KEC, KEC North and KEC West.

Meanwhile, during the public session of Monday's TC meeting, Cruickshank said that he had been told by the VCCFA's Dalton Kremer that the union would not participate in TC meetings or VCC Planning Steering Committee meetings if there is job action. Representatives of the other two unions on the TC--Lawrence Warren of the LFA and Jo Hansen of the VMREU--said that they possibly would continue to participate, but only if the TC meetings were held at a site that was

not behind picket lines and they have the support of their respective executives.

The TC will also be recommending to the Board that, in the event of job action, the Board's March 25th meeting be held at a site other than the fifth floor boardroom, possibly Langara.

## **Centres of Excellence**

The College has received a letter from Gary Mullins, Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, stating that his staff is reviewing VCC's proposal for Centres of Excellence and that the Ministry's thoughts will be made available by March 25.

The letter was in reply to a College request for details on the Centre of Excellence concept.

Mullins wrote that while no additional money would be available for 1993-94, there may be extra revenues for the following year.

Wrote Mullins: "...this should not be taken as a commitment that additional funds will be forthcoming (in '94-95). Ministry staff are prepared to analyze the financial aspects of the proposal...subject to the Legislature's approval of our 1994-95 budget."

Added Mullins: "The issue will have to be considered within the context of the modifications required to the funding formula that are necessary to accommodate the two new institutions. The formula was designed to meet the needs of comprehensive colleges and since neither of the new institutions (VCC or Langara College) will fit that definition, modifications will be required."

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