

Meeting Note

Advice to Minister Melanie Mark

Date: January 4, 2018

Cliff #: 111832

Prepared for: Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Date , Time of Meeting and Location:

- January 15, 2018, at 11:45am
- Melanie Mark, MLA Constituency Office, 1070-1641 Commercial Drive, Vancouver

Attendees:

- David Black, President, MoveUP
- Christy Slusarenko, Member, Executive Board
- Catherine Pope, Communications Director

Issue(s):

MoveUP identified the following agenda items:

- Health of post-secondary institutions
- Capilano University budget
- Other issues (no further information provided)

Background:

- MoveUP (Movement of United Professionals) is the BC/Yukon branch of the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE).
- MoveUP is a federation of unions with a diverse membership. MoveUP's only post-secondary education sector representation is almost 400 support staff at Capilano University.
- MoveUP's collective agreement with Capilano University ends June 30, 2019.

Discussion:

Health of post-secondary institutions

- MoveUP has raised concerns about the level of funding for Capilano specifically, but may also raise concerns about funding for post-secondary institutions generally.
- CUPE, which represents support staff at a number of other post-secondary institutions, has also raised concerns regarding institutional funding, including that the proportion of tuition revenue is growing faster than core funding for programs and staff.
- In 2017/18 funding to institutions will increase by \$100 million. This increased funding will support negotiated salary increases as well as several key initiatives including Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning and expanding tech programming.

Suggested response:

- *The Ministry is aware of the fiscal pressures on all public post-secondary institutions.*
- *This government is committed to making life more affordable for all British Columbians.*

- *Our immediate focus has been on reducing costs for students and addressing student debt. This fall we have implemented a number of commitments including: reducing interest on provincial loans; eliminating ABE and ELL tuition and expanding tuition-waivers for former young people in care.*
- *Our overall goal is to ensure all British Columbians have access to the education and training that they need for a bright future.*
- *The work we're doing as a Ministry is aligned with that goal.*
- *We also have a number of new initiatives in development, from supporting student mental health to increasing opportunities for students in co-op.*

Capilano University budget

- MoveUP has previously raised concerns regarding the level of funding that Capilano receives. In particular, MoveUP has argued that Capilano receives lower per-student funding than other public post-secondary institutions.
- In 2013/14 and 2014/15, Capilano had projected budget shortfalls. As a result, in those years, the Board approved budgets which resulted in service delivery impacts across a number of program areas.
- Capilano's general financial health has improved in recent years. Capilano had a surplus in both 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- More generally, Capilano has expressed concerns about the level of funding it receives from the Ministry given its mandate as a special purpose, teaching university. However, when Capilano College was designated as a teaching university in 2008, it was agreed that no additional funding would be provided.

Suggested response:

- *While the Ministry provides core funding for British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions, under the University Act, Capilano has the responsibility for the management of its financial affairs.*
- *Government expects Capilano, and all public post-secondary institutions, to make responsible budget decisions while ensuring a continued high standard of education for students.*

If asked about FTE funding:

- *The Ministry does not use an FTE funding formula to determine operating grants.*
- *The allocation of government operating funds is historical and based on various factors such as the cost of programs offered, institutional size, and geographic location.*

Other issues

- One possible issue that may be raised is the "Justice for Janitors" campaign currently underway across Metro Vancouver. The Capilano Students Union and a student club, the Student Workers Alliance Group (SWAG), have spoken in support of a living wage for all employees working on campus, including cleaners at Capilano employed by contractor Best Service Pros. On November 30, 2017, MoveUP tweeted its support for SWAG and SEIU Local 2, the cleaners' union.
- The cleaners are working under contract with a private employer and are not employed or paid by the University. Capilano indicates that the wages and benefits paid by the University to its direct employees do meet the living wage threshold as defined by the Living Wage for Families Campaign.

Suggested response:

- *Thank you for sharing your views on this matter. This is a matter between a private employer and its employees.*

Attachment(s): N/A

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