

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2006AE0032-000949  
July 17, 2006

Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Advanced Education

### **PROVINCE LAUNCHES CAMPUS 2020: THINKING AHEAD**

VANCOUVER - The government of British Columbia launched a major initiative focusing on the future of post secondary education today at the Burnaby campus of BCIT.

Campus 2020: Thinking Ahead is designed to build on the strengths of B.C.'s post-secondary education system while discovering new approaches to expand the network of learning opportunities across the province.

"We all have to challenge ourselves to meet the needs of the next generation of students as well as the needs of life-long learners ready to expand their educational horizons," said Premier Gordon Campbell. "There have been seismic shifts in the demographic, knowledge and economic landscapes. Our job here is to be sure that the strengths of our universities, colleges and institutes are reinforced while we discover new innovations that will help shape the learning landscape of the future. We want a learning landscape that is as rich and diverse as this great province."

The province has undertaken the largest expansion of post secondary opportunities in the last 40 years with its commitment to create thousands of new spaces in colleges and universities across B.C. and millions to fund research. Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education, said the province's expansion of both capital investments and research provides a foundation for the province's advanced education strategy.

"We are now asking students, faculty members, educational leaders, public and private educational institutions, Aboriginal and multicultural organizations, labour, business and the public to help develop a new educational framework that will take us beyond the needs and approaches of today to the needs and approaches that will be required for years to come," said Coell.

"A new generation of students is Internet savvy and demands new learning environments. In many ways, today's students want the classroom and lecture hall to be the world in which they live. Trades, skills development, research and open enquiry are critical components of the education network which responds to the real needs of students."

"Our institutions must serve the needs and fire the imaginations of the learners in all parts of the province," said Campbell. "Our goal is to establish an advanced education network that touches every region and every learner in B.C."

To help the Province look at the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead Geoff Plant, QC, will be named special advisor to the leadership team for Campus 2020: Thinking Ahead. Plant will be assisted in the examination by international advisors including Dr. Harold Shapiro, former president of Princeton University; Sara Diamond, president of the Ontario College of Art and Design; and Graham Smith, a world leader in the area of post-secondary education for indigenous and First Nations peoples. A final report will be delivered in spring 2007.

Campus 2020: Thinking Ahead will be supported by a ministry secretariat. The consultation process will include a series of specially commissioned “think pieces” and a review of key literature on the topic. Its broad range of topics will include:

- A framework for to assure post- secondary leadership in B.C. that supports excellence within a sustainable framework.
- Effective transitions along the continuum from K-12 to post-secondary to the workplace.
- Support for lifelong learning in the academic, technical, skills training and continuing education realms.

Coell said the resulting recommendations will help government to map creative, innovative policies for the future.

“Thinking ahead is an essential part of maximizing benefits from our significant ongoing education investments in people and infrastructure,” said Coell. “We are combining a compelling long-term vision with meaningful resources. Everyone has a stake in our post-secondary system.”

-30-

Contact: Mike Morton  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Premier  
250 213-8218

Paul Woolley  
Communications Director  
Ministry of Advanced Education  
250 952-6508  
250 213-1171 (cell)