

**DRAFT PRESS RELEASE**

**C. Peter Jones, Chairman North Shore Regional College Committee**

The School Boards of Sechelt, Howe Sound, West Vancouver and North Vancouver have been waiting for thirteen months for the Minister of Education to reply to their request to be allowed to put a Community College plebiscite. Passage of this plebiscite would allow an effective start on planning of the North Shore College.

The only indication of a reply is a press report that the Minister stated in the Legislature last Wednesday that plebiscites will be allowed in the Prince George area and in that part of Vancouver Island between Duncan and Campbell River.

We commend the Minister for his action in unlocking the development of the two new Community Colleges in B.C. and congratulate the people in these two areas on being able now to move forward.

In answer to questions in the Legislature on the status of the North Shore College request, the Minister is reported to have indicated "North Shore residents will have to muddle in with Richmond, Coquitlan and other Greater Vancouver Areas".

If we compare the reports that were prepared to study the needs of the North Shore and of the Vancouver Island area, and which were used to support requests to the Minister for permission to hold a plebiscite we will note:

1. Total population of the two areas is similar - approximately 120,000
2. School populations are similar - approximately 30,000
3. The number of Grade Twelve students in the North Shore is, at 1637 in 1965-66, about 10% more than the number in the Vancouver Island area

4. The predicted enrollments if the two proposed colleges were in existence for 1967-68 are about equal at some 800 and for 1972 are higher for the North Shore.

There is clear evidence that the need for a college, the number of students it will serve and its probable growth is every bit as great in the North Shore as it is in the Vancouver Island area.

The Minister of Education is reported to have said "We have to take into consideration facilities for a broader regional area than just the North Shore". The geographical area to be served by the ~~KANAKAN~~ ~~ISLAND~~ North Shore College is not as large as that to be served by the Vancouver Island area or the Prince George area. However, it is substantial and extends from Deep Cove to Squamish and the Sechelt Peninsula. However, geographic size is a relatively insignificant criterion and this has been recognized by many authorities and by the Minister himself in authorizing development of the Vancouver City College run by the Vancouver School Board and serving a much smaller area - The City of Vancouver.

The financial feasibility of the colleges is comparable - the tax base for the Vancouver Island area is "over \$400,000,000", for the North Shore is "in excess of \$377,000,000". Here it might be noted that the cost of providing the same program will be lower on the North Shore because of the more compact area served.

A start on planning is more urgent on the North Shore because suitable sites are scarce and are rapidly being developed for other purposes. Continuing the current delay imposed by the Minister of Education will cost the Province and the local taxpayer dearly not only because extra

money will be required for land purchase but the best sites may be irrevocably lost.

No arguments or evidence have been given to the North Shore boards by the Minister or anyone else that in anyway support his decision to delay approval of the request for a plebiscite. We do not believe there are any educationally valid arguments for such action.

We protest the discrimination against the hundreds of North Shore students who would benefit from the establishment of the North Shore College.

CPJ/nec

February 20, 1967