

Will our South Fraser Region have the Post-Secondary Graduates we Need for a Healthy Future?

We need to Increase Access to Post-Secondary Education in the South Fraser Region

British Columbia has benefited greatly from its sixteen regional post-secondary institutions¹, its five major universities, and its various institutes. The education provided by these bodies of higher education has made it possible for residents of B.C., and for B.C. as a whole, to succeed in and enjoy the benefits of today's global economy.

Our post-secondary system is and will be even more important for B.C.'s future.

- "About three quarters of all future jobs in B.C. will need at least some post-secondary education", according to Cabinet Minister Ida Chong (*The Province*, February 28, 2011).
- Already, almost 60% of the employers surveyed recently by the Surrey Board of Trade as part of their "Education Today – Productivity Tomorrow" effort would prefer their employees to have some post-secondary education.
- According to David H. Turpin (President of UVic), Andrew Petter of SFU (President of SFU), and Geoff Plant, "... over the coming decade we will need to fill a million jobs. An ever-growing proportion of these jobs will require post-secondary education and training. With only 650,000 individuals currently in our education system, we clearly have a challenge. If nothing changes, we may find that many of the jobs created in the new economy will go unfilled, while at the same time unemployment will increase for those who do not have post-secondary education." (*The Vancouver Sun*, December 30, 2010).

But residents of the South Fraser region are at a huge disadvantage with regard to their access to post-secondary education. Our regional post-secondary institution, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, has and continues to be funded to provide only about half the level of access to post-secondary education that residents of the rest of the province enjoy²:

- B.C.'s other regional post-secondary institutions are funded to provide, on average, seats for 20 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students for every 1,000 residents of their regions. Kwantlen is funded for only 10 FTE students per 1,000 residents of our region. [If SFU-Surrey is included, the south Fraser region gets 13 FTEs per 1,000 residents, which is still at the very bottom of the list for B.C. regions.]
- In the Lower Mainland, with all its public universities, colleges and institutes³, people north of the Fraser have access to five times as many post-secondary FTE student spaces per resident as are available to those of us south of the Fraser⁴.

As a result,

- If Kwantlen were funded to provide the level of accessibility that is provided to the regional post-secondary colleges and universities in the rest of the province, 9,000 additional residents of our region could attend Kwantlen full time each year (many more if they attend part-time). [SFU-Surrey⁵ adds

¹ BC's regional post-secondary institutions include Camosun, Capilano, Douglas, Fraser Valley, Kwantlen, VIU, New Caledonia, North Island, Northern Lights, Northwest, Okanagan, Rockies, Selkirk, Thompson Rivers, and Vancouver's VCC and Langara. Our major universities are UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC and Royal Roads.

² Data from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development: 2010 populations from the Ministry's Environmental Scan, 2008, p117; FTEs and funding allocations from the Ministry's 2010/11 Letters of Expectation to each institution

³ Capilano, VCC, Langara, Douglas, UBC, SFU, BCIT, Emily Carr, and the Justice Institute are north of the Fraser; Kwantlen and SFU-Surrey are south.

⁴ Of course, some institutions offer specialized or advanced programs that cannot be available in all locations, and so some students will always have to commute or move north of the river. Nevertheless, large numbers of students from the south Fraser region are forced to commute or move to take general college and university courses because not enough of these are offered in our region.

⁵ Including SFU may make for an unfair comparison: including the institutions with a province-wide mandate [UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC, BCIT, etc] in all their local college regions increases the inequity faced by the south Fraser region from 2:1 to 5:1!

access for 2,500 full-time students, but this still leaves the south Fraser with less than two-thirds the access provided to the rest of B.C.]

- Most respondents to the Surrey Board of Trade survey mentioned above also commented that their employees had difficulty finding the educational upgrading they needed in our region.

The social costs of this low access to post-secondary education are huge: people with lower levels of education are much more likely to be homeless, to be abused or abusing, to be incarcerated, to be on social assistance, to be involved with addictive drugs. People with lower levels of education are less healthy, and put more stress on our health care system. According to a study by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, people with less than high school provide only 8.8% of the federal government's revenues from income tax, but consume 35.1% of government transfers such as employment insurance or social assistance; university graduates provide 33% of income tax and consume only 9.1% of government transfers⁶. On the positive side, every year of postsecondary education boosts a person's earnings by 8-12 percent⁷. So there are significant social and economic costs to our region as a result of our lack of equitable access to post-secondary education.

The direct, immediate financial impact of this shortchanging of our region is also huge:

- Taxpayers in the South Fraser region will contribute, in 2010/2011, almost \$126,000,000 to the province for its regional post-secondary institutions. And yet Kwantlen is scheduled to receive less than \$65,250,000. Most of this will be spent in our region, by Kwantlen employees who live here and by the University in its contracts with suppliers. As a result, over \$60,000,000 is being lost to our region. The multiplier effect of this loss of income to our region's businesses makes this loss even greater.
- The spending by students in our region is of course affected also: for every post-secondary student who has to go outside of our region for their post-secondary education, our region's businesses lose a customer.

B.C. residents are aware of the importance of post-secondary education. A recent Harris/Decima poll⁸ found that

- 66% of B.C. residents agreed that "Governments should invest more in universities and colleges, even if that means I have to pay a little more in taxes", and
- 58% thought that "Governments in Canada are not doing enough to make sure that everyone who is qualified has a chance to get a university or college education."

The recent re-naming of Kwantlen as a Polytechnic University has not fixed the problem. Very few additional FTEs have been allocated to Kwantlen for the implementation of its degree programs, so that these programs may be coming at the cost of reduction in the number of preparatory and first-year courses⁹.

This inequitable, long-standing shortchanging of our region can't be fixed quickly. A long-term plan is needed, for both operating and capital funding. But the first step must be that government recognize the problem and support the development and implementation of a plan to fix it.¹⁰

⁶ Junor S. & Usher A. (2004). "Price of Knowledge. Access and Student Finance in Canada", Millennium Research Series, Millennium Scholarship Foundation

⁷ Gates Foundation, "Pathways to Boosting the Earnings of Low-Income Students by Increasing Their Educational Attainment", January 2009

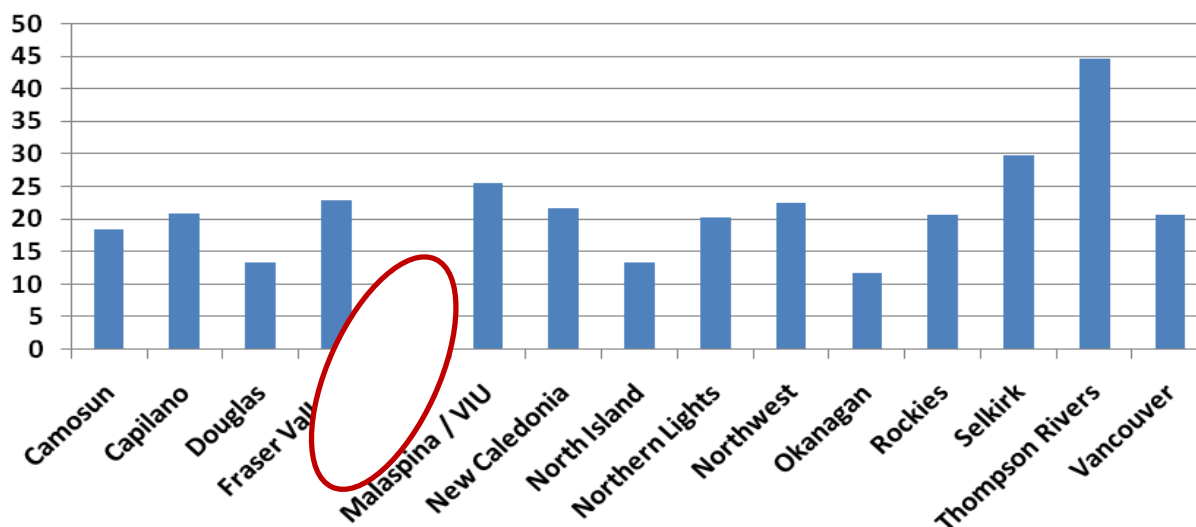
⁸ Harris/Decima poll on Politics & Education, November 11-21, 2010

⁹ Adding to this is a further inequity: even though there are over 150,000 English speaking adults with low literacy levels in the region, and Kwantlen's legislated mandate includes service to this population, Kwantlen receives funding for less than a quarter of the ABE seats per illiterate person in our region that the rest of the province receives. And it's worse for people for whom English is a new language: Kwantlen receives only one-fifth of the funding for ESL seats relative to the number of people in our region who don't speak English at home

¹⁰ One model for fixing it may be found in the historical development of the California post-secondary system. There, funding increases in the 1960s for the University of California (Berkeley, UCLA, etc.) were frozen while those planned increases were re-allocated to build up its regional post-secondary institutions.

Accessibility to BC's Regional Colleges and Universities

(in FTEs/1,000 regional population)



*Note: Okanagan's FTEs are low because many of its FTEs were transferred to UBC-Okanagan.

Region	Population	FTE Seats	Access (FTEs/1,000)	% of B.C. Avg
Camosun	373,055	6,893	18.5	103.2%
Capilano	260,971	5,450	20.9	116.6%
Douglas	612,816	8,205	13.4	74.8%
Fraser Valley	286,615	6,535	22.8	127.3%
Kwantlen	904,247	9,041	10.0	55.8%
Malaspina / VIU	259,587	6,636	25.6	142.8%
New Caledonia	143,527	3,119	21.7	121.4%
North Island	157,777	2,118	13.4	75.0%
Northern Lights	73,501	1,481	20.1	112.5%
Northwest	74,675	1,680	22.5	125.6%
Okanagan	398,863	4,665	11.7*	65.3%
Rockies	78,338	1,624	20.7	115.8%
Selkirk	77,569	2,312	29.8	166.5%
Thompson Rivers	177,166	7,896	44.6	248.9%
VCC & Langara	650,503	13,448	20.7	115.4%
Total B.C.	4,529,210	81,103	17.9	
rest of B.C.	3,624,963	72,062	19.9	
Kwantlen relative to the rest of B.C.				50.3%

Data from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development: 2010 populations from the Ministry's Environmental Scan, 2008, p117; FTEs and funding allocations from the Ministry's 2010/11 Letters of Expectation to each institution

**Can Richmond residents
get **access** to the post-
secondary education they
need for the future?**

**Why is this an important
question?**

Geoff Plant, David Turpin (UVic President), and Andrew Petter (SFU President), recently wrote that

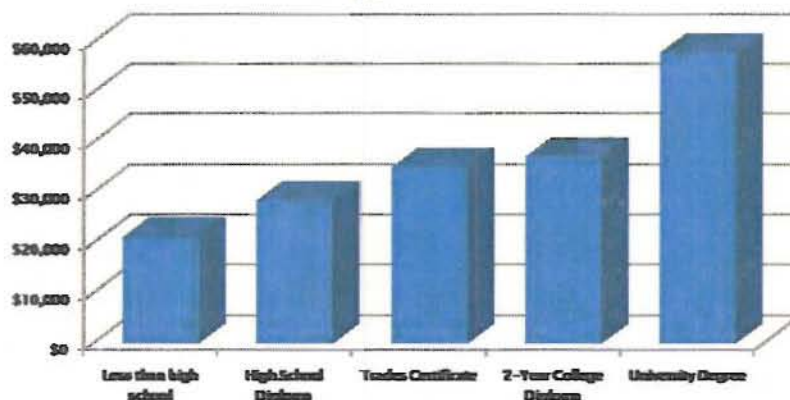
“... over the coming decade we will need to fill a million jobs. An ever-growing proportion of these jobs will require post-secondary education and training. With only 650,000 individuals currently in our education system, we clearly have a challenge.”

They go on to say...

“If nothing changes, we may find that many of the jobs created in the new economy will go unfilled, while at the same time unemployment will increase for those who do not have post-secondary education.”

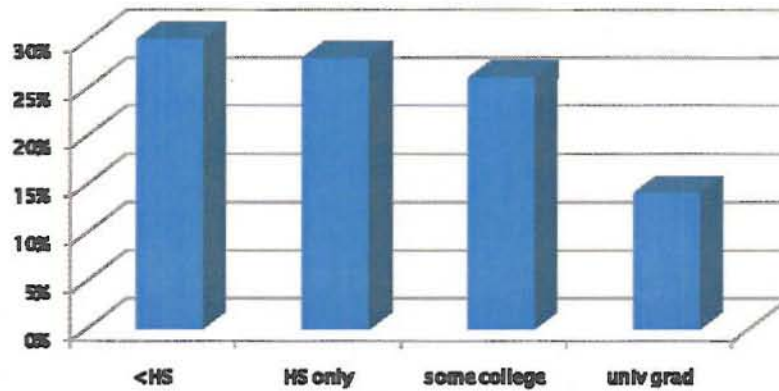
(*The Vancouver Sun*, December 30, 2010)

The connection between a person's education and their income is huge:



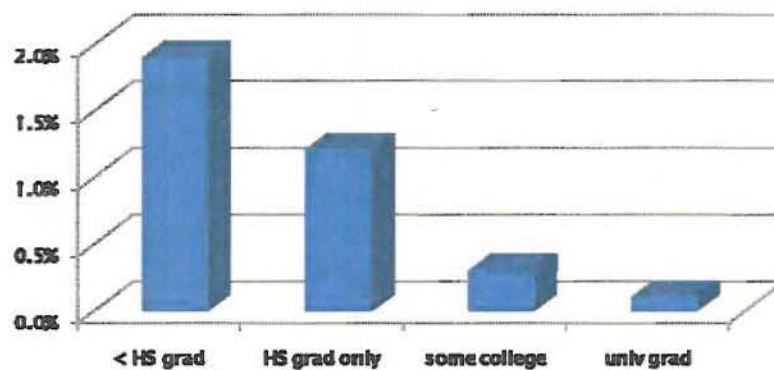
Average employment income (2005 dollars), by education level, 2006
Statistics Canada, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/edu/edu02_0019a-eng.htm

as it is with smoking rates:



U.S. data, from de Walque, D. (2003) *How Do Education and Information Affect Health Decisions? The Cases of HIV/AIDS and Smoking*. PhD Dissertation, U of Chicago

and with incarceration rates:



U.S. data, from Harlow, C.W. (2003). *Education and Correctional Populations*. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Department of Justice. NCJ195670.

As Craig Alexander, VP and deputy chief economist of the TD Bank says,

“Higher literacy can boost the economic and financial success of individuals and the economy as a whole.

“It can reduce poverty, improve health, lift community engagement and lead to a higher standard of living.

“In fact, it is hard to identify any other single issue that can have such a large payoff to individuals, the economy and society.”

from *Literacy Matters: A Call for Action*, by Craig Alexander, Vice President & Deputy Chief Economist, TD Bank Financial Group

What's Kwantlen's role?

Kwantlen's legislated mandate is:

- ▶ to **serve its region** (Surrey, White Rock, the Langleys, Delta and Richmond) with **accessible** post-secondary education
- ▶ to be a teaching university



So, unlike traditional universities,

- ▶ “Kwantlen’s commitment to open **access** is one of its cornerstones as a university.”
- ▶ “Kwantlen is committed to providing an opportunity to students who might not otherwise consider going to post-secondary.”

from Kwantlen’s Mission Statement:

“We view access to education as the pathway to citizenship.”

How is Kwantlen doing at this?

- ▶ almost 58 per cent of the high school grads who enrolled at Kwantlen in 2007/08 did not meet the admission requirements to attend UBC, SFU or other traditional universities.

and yet

- ▶ Kwantlen’s graduates have the highest rate of employment and earn more money two years after graduation than graduates of any other university in the province
- ▶ So for the students who can gain **access**, Kwantlen’s doing a good job.



KWANTLEN
POLYTECHNIC
UNIVERSITY

**But can Kwantlen
actually provide
enough access to
post-secondary
education for people
in Richmond?**

No

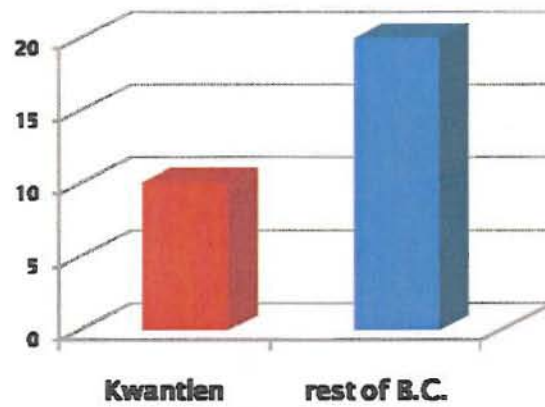
Let's compare post-secondary access ratios across B.C.

Comparing just B.C.'s regional universities and colleges (Kwantlen, Douglas, VCC, Capilano, Camosun, UVI, Fraser Valley, CNC, etc), which are mandated to serve their regions:

- ▶ Kwantlen gets funding to offer 9,041 FTE seats to serve the 904,247 people in its region
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **10.0** FTEs per 1,000 residents of our region
- ▶ for the rest of B.C., the other regional institutions are funded to offer 72,062 FTEs for 3,624,963 people
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **19.9** FTEs per 1,000

In other words, people in Richmond (and the rest of Kwantlen's region) have **half the access** to local post-secondary education as people in the rest of the province.

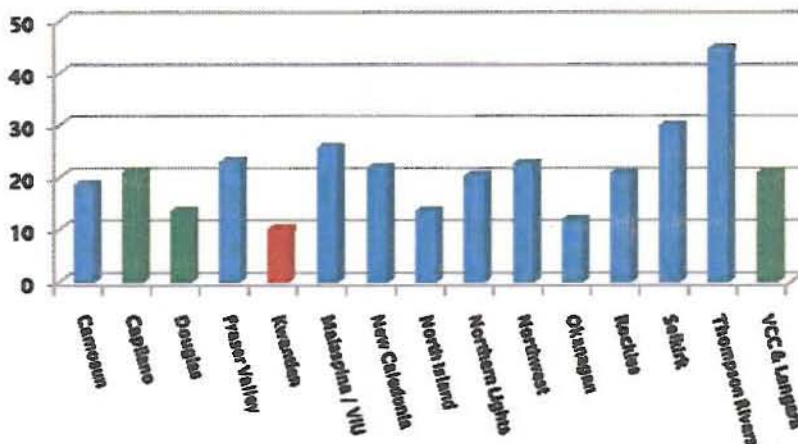
FTE Student Seats per 1,000 region residents



This has been the pattern for over 25 years!

Accessibility to B.C.'s Regional Colleges and Universities

(student FTE seats per 1,000 regional population, 2011)



I know post-secondary education isn't a direct responsibility of this Council...

- ▶ but guiding the social and economic development of Richmond is,
- ▶ and adequate access to post-secondary education opportunities is crucial to that development
- ▶ **In over 25 years, Kwantlen's Board of Governors has not been able to fix this inequity in access, nor been able to stop this shortchanging of our region.**
- ▶ So what can Council do to help fix this inequity? Let's see what the rationale for it is, and then let me ask you that again at the end.

How does our provincial government justify this inequitable access?

- ▶ They say that the whole of the Lower Mainland is one region, served by UBC, SFU, Emily Carr, BCIT, the Justice Institute, Capilano, VCC, Langara, Douglas, and Kwantlen
- ▶ Looked at this way, the Lower Mainland has 44 FTE student seats for every 1,000 residents – a pretty good ratio, almost equal to California's

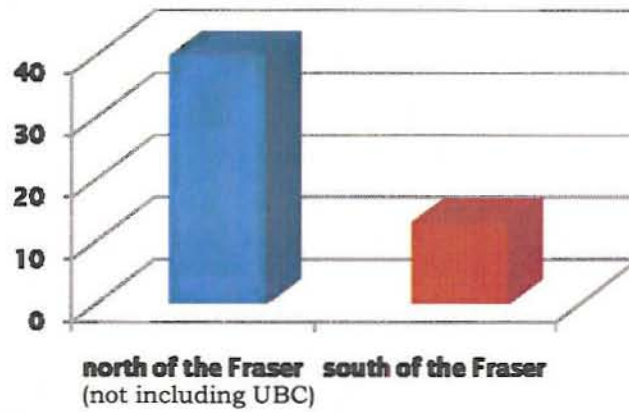
But think about the difference in access between the areas north and south of the Fraser:

- ▶ North of the Fraser, the 1,524,290 residents have access to 95,339 FTE student seats
- ▶ that's 62.5 FTE seats per 1,000 residents.
- ▶ South of the Fraser, Kwantlen and SFU offer 11,541 FTEs to the 904,247 residents in our region
- ▶ that's only 12.8 FTEs per 1,000 residents, about **one-fifth of the access** offered to people north of the river.

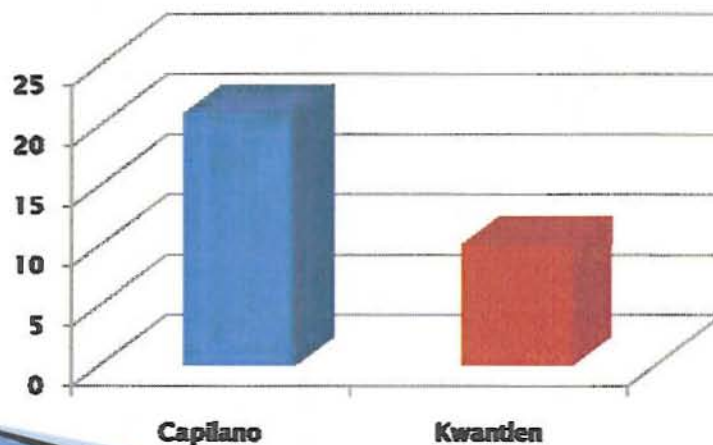
Maybe we should leave UBC out

- ▶ Leaving out UBC, the institutions north of the Fraser offer 60,358 FTE student seats to the 1,524,290 residents – for 39.6 FTEs per 1,000 residents.
- ▶ South of the Fraser, it's the same as before: Kwantlen and SFU still offer only 12.8 FTEs per 1,000 residents, less than **one-third of the access** offered to people north of the river, still an inequitable level.

So, for the Lower Mainland, here are the FTE seats per 1,000 residents, north and south of the Fraser



And even if the Lower Mainland should be viewed as one region, why can Capilano offer twice the access of Kwantlen?

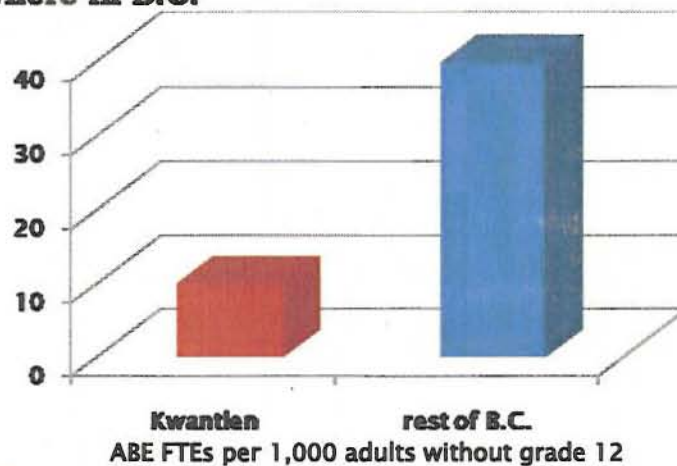


The inequity in **access** to preparatory programs is worse:

- ▶ there are 51,000 adults in Kwantlen's region who lack a grade 12 diploma; Kwantlen offered 505 FTE seats in its **ABE** programs
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **9.8 ABE seats** per 1,000 adults without a grade 12
- ▶ in the rest of the province, there are 223,466 adults without a grade 12; 8,852 FTE seats in **ABE** were offered to them
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **39.6 ABE seats** per 1,000 adults without a grade 12

...

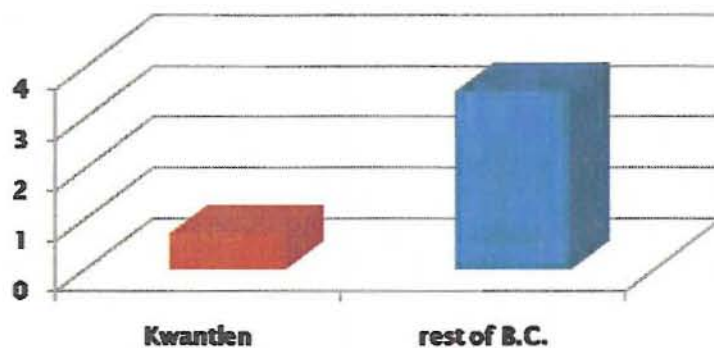
So adults in Richmond and the rest of the Kwantlen region only have one-quarter the opportunity to earn a grade 12 as do people elsewhere in B.C.



What about ESL?

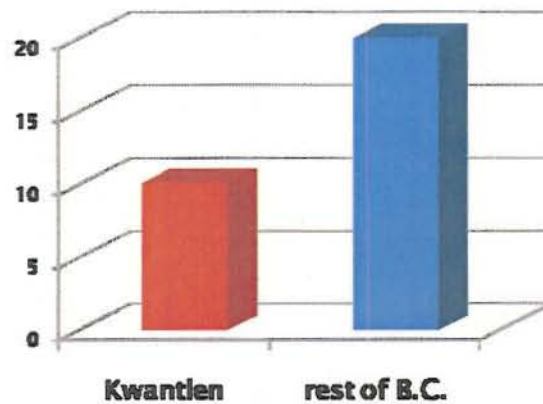
- ▶ there are 333,385 people in Kwantlen's region who don't speak English at home; Kwantlen offered 221 FTE seats in its ELT programs
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **0.7 ESL seats** per 1,000 people who don't speak English at home
- ▶ in the rest of the province, there are 1,198,645 people who don't speak English at home; 3,240 FTE seats in ELT were offered to them
 - ▶ that's a ratio of **3.5 seats** per 1,000 people who don't speak English at home

So people in the Kwantlen region who don't speak English at home have only one-fifth the opportunity to learn to speak English as people elsewhere in B.C.



ESL FTEs per 1,000 adults who don't speak English at home

Let's go back to the overall picture:



Can we fix this inequity?

Can we afford to fix it? Yes

❖ **66% of B.C. residents agree that**

"Governments should invest more in universities and colleges, even if that means I have to pay a little more in taxes"

Harris/Decima poll on Politics & Education,
Nov 11-21, 2010

Actually, more taxes may not be needed...

To bring our region's level of access up to the provincial average, Kwantlen's funding needs to increase from its current \$65,000,000 per year to \$125,000,000 per year.

(Sounds like a lot of money; it'll take a 7- to 10-year plan)

But people in the Kwantlen / south Fraser region already pay \$125,000,000 per year to the province in taxes to support B.C.'s regional post-secondary institutions.

The economic multiplier effect of Kwantlen spending an extra \$60,000,000 would mean that businesses in our region would gain almost \$120,000,000.

- There would also be a need for capital funding, to build additional classrooms and labs – that means even more spending in our region.
- **The savings and additional tax income from these factors** - from the decreased costs of welfare, health care and policing, from the increased income of more Kwantlen grads - **would be more than enough to pay for Kwantlen to provide that equitable level of access:**

**according to T. Scott Murray and others in
“Addressing Canada's Literacy
Challenge: A Cost/ Benefit Analysis”**

Raising people's level of education [from less than high school level] gives “a rate of return of roughly 251% in the first year. ... the investment would yield an approximate pay back period of 4.8 months.”

“...these estimates **exclude** a range of indirect economic benefits associated with lower health, social and educational costs and increases in consumption taxes.”

(Murray, McCracken, Willms, Jones, Shillington, and Stucker.
Addressing Canada's Literacy Challenge: A Cost / Benefit Analysis,
National Adult Literacy Database, 2009.)

Concluding...

- ▶ Richmond's economic and social development won't be nearly as strong as it could be until this inequitable shortchanging of **access** to post-secondary education in our region is fixed.
- ▶ **So how can Council best pursue this?**

**Thank you for considering
this issue!**

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