BRITISH COLUMBIA

Our Ref. 121833

June 1, 2021

Ms. Gloria Morgan, Board Chair
Okanagan College
1000 KLO Road
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 4X8

Dear Ms. Morgan:

On behalf of Premier Horgan and the Executive Council, I would like to extend my thanks to you and your board members for the dedication, expertise and skills with which you serve the people of British Columbia.

Every public sector organization is accountable to the citizens of British Columbia. The expectations of British Columbians are identified through their elected representatives, the members of the Legislative Assembly. Your contributions advance and protect the public interest of all British Columbians and through your work, you are supporting a society in which the people of this province can exercise their democratic rights, trust and feel protected by their public institutions.

You are serving British Columbians at a time when people in our province face significant challenges as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Recovering from the pandemic will require focused direction, strong alignment and ongoing engagement between public sector organizations and government. It will require all public post-secondary institutions to adapt to changing circumstances and follow Public Health orders and guidelines as you find ways to deliver your services to citizens.

This mandate letter, which I am sending in my capacity as Minister responsible for Advanced Education and Skills Training, on behalf of the Executive Council, communicates expectations for your institution. It sets out overarching principles relevant to the entire public sector and provides specific direction to institutions about priorities and expectations for the coming fiscal year.

… /2

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Office of the Minister

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9080 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Location:
Parliament Buildings
Victoria

I expect that the following five foundational principles will inform your institution's policies and programs:

- **Putting people first:** We are committed to working with you to put people first. You and your board are uniquely positioned to advance and protect the public interest and I expect that you will consider how your board's decisions maintain, protect and enhance the public services people rely on and make life more affordable for everyone.

- **Lasting and meaningful reconciliation:** Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility for us all. Government's unanimous passage of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was a significant step forward in this journey – one that all public post-secondary institutions are expected to support as we work in cooperation with Indigenous peoples to establish a clear and sustainable path to lasting reconciliation. True reconciliation will take time and ongoing commitment to work with Indigenous peoples as they move towards self-determination. Guiding these efforts, public post-secondary institutions must also remain focused on creating opportunities that implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through your mandate.

- **Equity and anti-racism:** Our province's history, identity and strength are rooted in its diverse population. Yet racialized and marginalized people face historic and present-day barriers that limit their full participation in their communities, workplaces, government and their lives. The public sector has a moral and ethical responsibility to tackle systemic discrimination in all its forms – and every public sector organization has a role in this work. All public post-secondary institutions are encouraged to adopt the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens to ensure equity is reflected in your operations and programs. Similarly, appointments resulting in strong public sector boards that reflect the diversity of British Columbia will help achieve effective and citizen-centred governance.

- **A better future through fighting climate change:** Announced in December 2018, the CleanBC climate action plan puts our province on the path to a cleaner, better future by building a low-carbon economy with new clean energy jobs and opportunities, protecting our clean air, land and water and supporting communities to prepare for carbon impacts. As part of the accountability framework established in CleanBC, and consistent with the *Climate Change Accountability Act*, please ensure your institution aligns operations with targets and strategies for minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and managing climate change risk, including the CleanBC target of a 50% reduction in public sector building emissions and a 40% reduction in public sector fleet emissions by 2030. I ask that your institution work with government to report out on these plans and activities as required by legislation.

… /3

- **A strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone:** I expect that you will identify new and flexible ways to achieve your mandate and serve the citizens of British Columbia within the guidelines established by the Provincial Health Officer and considering best practices for conducting business during the pandemic. Collectively, our public sector will continue to support British Columbians through the pandemic and economic recovery by investing in health care, getting people back to work, helping businesses and communities, and building the clean, innovative economy of the future. As a public sector organization, I expect that you will consider how your decisions and operations reflect environmental, social and governance factors and contribute to this future.

The Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office (CABRO), with the Ministry of Finance, will continue to support you and your board on recruitment and appointments as needed, and will be expanding professional development opportunities in 2021/22. This will include online training and information about provincial government initiatives to foster engaged and informed boards.

This Mandate Letter confirms your institution's mandate under the *College and Institute Act.*

The role of higher education is more than a pathway to opportunity for some; it is a prerequisite for anyone who wishes to access and succeed in most career-building jobs in our province. Now, with the added pressures COVID-19 has created, some populations have been disproportionately impacted, and we must take care to build a just recovery and prosperous society that benefits everyone.

Post-secondary education and training must be available to all who want and need it. It allows British Columbians to upgrade their skills, acquire new ones, and access new employment opportunities. B.C.'s economic recovery depends on an accessible and future-ready post-secondary system where all British Columbians gain the knowledge and skills to secure a good standard of living.

Government has identified its five foundational principles, listed above, and these are to be reflected in all aspects of your institution's operations (e.g. strategic plans, programming, services, and staffing practices). As the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Skills Training, I ask that you make substantive progress on the following priorities and incorporate them in the goals, objectives, and performance measures in your 2020/21 Institutional Accountability Plan and Report:

- Work with the Ministry to resume full on-campus learning and services for students, faculty and staff by fall 2021, following the direction and guidance of the Provincial Health Officer and the COVID-19 Go-Forward Guidelines for B.C.'s Post-Secondary Sector, and support your academic communities throughout 2021/22 as you respond to COVID-19 impacts and recovery.

… /4

- Work with the Ministry and your communities, employers and industry to implement post-secondary education and skills training for British Columbians, particularly those impacted by COVID-19 and vulnerable and underrepresented groups, to participate fully in economic recovery and growing career opportunities.

- Fully engage with government in implementing mandate commitments to support a future-ready workforce and post-secondary system, increasing access to post-secondary education and skills training and high opportunity jobs for British Columbians. This includes cross-government, community, sector and stakeholder collaboration to support mandate commitments where education, innovation and equity play a role, and that builds upon government's CleanBC strategy and supports a clean economic future.

Public post-secondary institutions are expected to meet or exceed the financial targets identified in the Ministry's Service Plan tabled under Budget 2021. In addition, institutions are expected to comply with the Tuition Limit Policy, which sets a two percent cap on tuition and mandatory fee increases for domestic students to ensure programs are affordable. I also encourage you to continue to work collaboratively across the system, to collectively focus on learner success and address common challenges that impact your sector, region, or access to education.

In addition, it is expected that your institution will continue to be diligent in ensuring familiarity with and adherence to statutory obligations and policies that have broad application across the B.C. public sector, including consistent and appropriate compensation decisions that demonstrate a cost-conscious culture, achieved through coordinated, well-informed and transparent decision making by employers that adheres to the requirements outlined in the *Public Sector Employers Act.*

British Columbia's public sector employers are expected to adhere to government's policies, guidelines, and direction regarding executive compensation, including the best practice of annual performance reviews for all senior executives. This approach ensures that compensation decisions are based primarily on employee performance and merit rather than an entitlement to a salary increase. The executive compensation guidelines are found in the Guide to B.C. Public Sector Compensation and Expense Policies.

In August 2020, the Minister of Finance implemented a freeze on executive compensation increases for the 2020/21 performance year, requiring all institutions to submit their amended compensation plans to the Minister of Finance.

The Ministry posts the annual reporting requirements for public post-secondary institutions on its website at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/mandate-letters. This document outlines the statistical, financial and performance reports for the fiscal year. Your institution is expected to meet

these requirements by providing the data and reports necessary for Government to carry out its responsibilities.

As Board Chair, you are required, upon resolution of your board, to sign the Mandate Letter to acknowledge government's direction to your institution. The signed Mandate Letter is to be posted publicly on your institution's website in spring 2021.

On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts the entire post-secondary system has made to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and keep students, faculty, staff and the broader community safe. I also want to thank you, your board, senior administration, faculty and staff for your leadership in ensuring learning continuity for your students as we have navigated through this unprecedented time. I look forward to continuing to work with you and your board colleagues to build a better B.C.

Sincerely,

Honourable Anne Kang
Minister June 1, 2021

For Board Chair signature:

X_____

Gloria Morgan
Board Chair Date Signed: June 25, 2021

pc: Honourable John Horgan
Premier

Lori Wanamaker
Deputy Minister to the Premier, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the BC Public Service

Heather Wood, Deputy Minister and Secretary to Treasury Board
Ministry of Finance

Douglas S. Scott, Deputy Minister, Crown Agencies Secretariat
Ministry of Finance

Shannon Baskerville, Deputy Minister
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Neil Fassina, President
Okanagan College