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NEWS RELEASE

(for immediate release)

An intensive survey of the educational services that Cariboo College is performing and can perform in the future throughout the vast College region will be under way this summer as a major element in preparing a Five-Year Educational Master Plan.

The Educational Plan will be submitted to the provincial Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in 1980. Based on prescribed guidelines, the plan will spell out both the goals toward which the College should be headed and the strategy which will guide it step-by-step toward those goals.

"Obviously, a preliminary and essential step in carrying out the Ministry's mandate is the collection of data," said Leo Perra, Acting College Principal.

"To that end, we will be fanning out through the region, from Chase to Lillooet and from Lytton and Merritt to Williams Lake and Bella Coola, to find out what people think and expect of the College."

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The preliminary data collection phase of the Educational Plan process is entitled the Needs Assessment Project. Regional educational needs will be compiled from answers to questionnaires gleaned from four broad "target" groups, Perra said. These include the general public, Grade 11 and 12 students, college graduates, and specific-interest groups such as employers, native Indians, senior citizens and rurally isolated.

The College has retained a professional regional planner, Lyndagale Thorn, of Vancouver, to direct the Needs Assessment Project under the guidance of the College's Program Advisory Committee, presided over by Educational Vice-Principal, A.J. Wright.

To obtain the general public's views of how education affects them personally and how they regard the College's present and future role from the standpoint of their occupational, avocational or broad educational needs and desires, a team of four interviewers will shortly be at work.

These interviewers will be qualified university and college students working under the Department of Labour summer youth employment program. They will visit sample households throughout the region during the next three months. The interviews, based on questionnaires, will take about 20-30 minutes.

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Meanwhile, senior-level students in all or most of the secondary schools in the region will have been filling out questionnaires focussing on their post-graduation intentions and expectations, with specific reference to future education or training. The cooperation of school officials and teachers will be essential for this aspect of the Needs Assessment, Perra said. The results will, of course, be made available to school authorities, he added.

Also, as many former students of Cariboo College as possible will be sent separate questionnaires. These will bear principally on how effectively the College has met their individual needs in the light of their present and anticipated employment, career progress or further education.

The "special needs" groups---employers, etc.---will, like the general public, be surveyed via interviews. Questions asked of them will be geared to their particular interests and orientation.

At the same time, the College will be participating in discussion of potential and desired goals and of ways of attaining them. Ms. Thorn will also be conducting studies of population and economic data for the region. All these studies, plus the questionnaire results will then be analyzed and sifted as a basis for the Educational Plan.

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"The objective of the survey and the resulting plan," he commented, "has been well stated by the Ministry. It is to provide the information and insight to help the College's Board, administration and concerned College constituencies think through the directions in which they will take the College, and thereafter to be accountable to the community for those directions taken."

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