



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
MERRITT BC
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***NICOLA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TO OFFER SOCIALLY DISTANCED
EDUCATION FOR THE FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 SEMESTERS***

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology students will have the opportunity to participate in socially distanced classroom spaces and/or virtual environments. President Ken Tourand stated, “the health and safety of our employees and students is the first priority. To support safe and healthy learning and working environments, NVIT has enhanced existing technologies and invested in new technology and training to ensure our faculty and staff have the tools and skills necessary to continue delivering quality Indigenous programming and services.”

NVIT faculty are preparing to teach in hybrid environments and student services is implementing and exploring virtual appointment bookings, tutoring services and proctoring applications. NVIT is committed to delivering scheduled programming and student supports. This commitment necessitates equipping traditional classrooms with technology for hybrid learning while also ensuring access to support services. Through investment in technologies learners will have access to the student services team, tutors, Elders and counselling services. “Ideally, students and employees have the opportunity to engage, as per the official academic schedule, on-line or on campus”, said Tourand. “I do hope the virtual opportunities encourage those Indigenous Grade 12 graduates across the Province to take advantage of NVIT’s Immediate Entry Bursary.” Indigenous grade 12 graduates who plan to immediately enter NVIT this Fall are eligible for a first year tuition bursary whether they are studying virtually or at either of the Merritt or Burnaby campuses.

With a commitment to the safety and well-being of employees and students, NVIT continues to build a plan for returning to physical campus spaces. Institute plans for Fall 2020 include consideration for:

- Monitoring health of employees and students with clear policies and procedures related to learner attendance policies and employee sick leave. Online reporting processes for employees and learners will be established.
- Use of physical barriers, directional signage and wayfinding to limit social interaction and virus contamination in physical spaces on campuses
- Procedures for cleaning and sterilization of “high touch” areas in the workplace throughout the day and availability of hand sanitizer stands at entrances.
- NVIT’s Elders’ Council will remain off campus and provide virtual support. Employees and learners with underlying medical conditions and those over the age of 65 will be encouraged to learn and work in the virtual environment.
- Through the investment in technologies and training, NVIT will use on-line learning and support to balance social interaction for learning and development.
- Until further notice, NVIT employees will not resume work-related travel.

In response to Indian Control of Indian Education (1972), and under the guidance and leadership of Grand Chief Gordon Antoine and our founding communities, NVIT was constructed over thirty years ago with the intention of improving the quality of life for Indigenous people of the Nicola Valley. Today this, now, global vision is reinforced through the emerging landscape to Indigenize education through the adoption of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). NVIT responds to community needs throughout British Columbia and Canada by ensuring public post-secondary education remains accessible and relevant. In being committed to the NVIT vision, and the unwavering support of the Chiefs of the Nicola Valley, NVIT not only continues to support our communities and create Indigenous academic space, but also expands our Indigenous circle of belonging among those with whom we serve. www.nvit.ca