



Lindsay & District Labour Council
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We are the Lindsay and District Labour Council we have a membership of approx. 3000. We have 14 local unions affiliated with us. We represent members in health care, education, manufacturing, government, service. We would like to present this motion for the City of Kawartha Lakes to consider regarding Laurentian University and Post-Secondary Education. We will also send some background information.

James Mulhern
President
Lindsay and District Labour

Backgrounder

Post-Secondary Education in Canada and Ontario

The Importance of PSE in Canada and Ontario

Post-secondary education accounts for more than \$40 billion in government revenue annually or approximately 1.2 percent of GDP. But universities and colleges have far greater roles in the economy and in their local communities.

Universities not only educate the workforce of tomorrow. They drive research and are critical hubs in their communities fostering culture and attracting businesses large and small.

In Ontario alone, it is estimated that the economic impact of its 21 universities and 24 colleges is more than \$120 billion a year – a multiplier due to the number of students and researchers, but also due to how university and college infrastructure drives regional economic development and provides an educated workforce.¹

Employment

The PSE sector in Canada directly employs more than 440,000 people across the country and contributes another 300,000 indirect jobs.² Universities account for two-thirds of this employment, colleges a third. In Ontario, universities and colleges directly employ more than 118,000.

Faculty and instructors make up only 25-30 percent of total employment in PSE. **The majority of PSE employees work in a range of occupations from librarians to administrative staff to service and maintenance employees to construction workers.**

FUNDING

Despite overwhelming evidence that investing in PSE makes sense for Canada's social and economic well-being, both provincial and federal governments have persistently underfunded PSE in recent decades – trends that have been exacerbated by every major economic downturn and crisis since the early 1990s.

Following trends in the United States, Australia, and Great Britain, Canada's governments have similarly rolled back their spending on PSE since the 1980s. **In 1982, 83 per cent of university operating revenue came from government funding. Today, it accounts for only 47 per cent.**³

Now along with the United States, the UK, and Australia, **Canada provides the fewest public dollars for its PSE sector in the world.**⁴

In Canada, rather than invest, the Jason Kenney's Conservative government in Alberta has made deep provincial cuts to the provincial budget, forcing the University of Alberta to lay off 400 people, with another 650 to be let go in the coming year.⁹

But if Canada were to see similar aggressive austerity measures undertaken by provincial governments in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, in Ontario this could potentially mean job losses of more than 15,000. Across Canada, comparable levels of job cuts to those seen in the United States and Australia would total more 41,000.

A Recovery Plan

Any post-Covid recovery plan must include a new publicly funded post-secondary system. One that is fully funded by both provincial and federal governments, and that is free for all students who qualify.

A just transition to a post-COVID world will require retraining for unemployed Canadians, especially in sectors that will not return to pre-COVID levels of employment. It will also require major new initiatives to spark a transition to a clean energy economy.

Without a strong and growing PSE sector, none of these objectives can be met.

The United States federal government has recognized these problems, and has just passed legislation providing an additional US \$40 billion in emergency funding to its universities and colleges, with further accountability measures on its state governments to maintain funding for higher education.¹⁰

But to achieve a sustainable and innovative PSE system, all levels of government – federal provincial, and territorial – must work together to build, strengthen, and sustain a high-quality, accessible system of publicly-funded post-secondary education.

This requires:

- **Emergency stabilization funds for PSE institutions to address the costs and revenue losses associated with the Covid-19 pandemic**
- **A federal Post-Secondary Education Act with clear conditions and accountability measures for federal funding to the provinces;**
- **A dedicated Post-Secondary Transfer that provinces must adhere to;**
- **An increase in federal transfer funding by 40 per cent to restore the level of per-student PSE funding that was provided in 1993; and a similar increase by provincial governments to ensure that 80 percent of all funding in PSE is provided by public dollars.**
- **A new federal/provincial framework that immediately reduces and eventually eliminates tuition fees for post-secondary education.**



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Notice of Motion.

City Council Support for Emergency Funds for PSE Institutions and Stable Public Funding for Ontario's Universities and Colleges

Summary

Whereas on February 26, the Council of Ontario Universities reported that Ontario's universities have lost more than \$1 billion due to Covid-19 related costs and declining revenues;

And whereas the Council of Ontario Universities has requested emergency stabilization funds of \$500 million to support universities and colleges through the pandemic, but the province has offered only \$100 million;

And whereas one of Ontario's universities – Laurentian University – has already been placed into creditor protection at the cost of millions of public dollars for legal charges and fees, and at the cost of millions of dollars in lost research funding, as well as job losses in the hundreds, and damage to the reputation and future of the university;

And whereas Ontario's universities and colleges are critical to Ontario and to 26 cities and regions, contributing more than \$120 billion to Ontario's economy;

And whereas Ontario's universities and colleges employ more than 118,000 workers, and graduate more than 180,000 students annually with advanced skills and qualifications required for a growing economy;

And whereas a strong, vibrant, and inclusive post-secondary system is critical to any post-pandemic recovery;

And whereas Ontario students need programs that contribute to building and sustaining healthy communities;

And whereas a just transition to a post-COVID world will require retraining for unemployed Canadians, especially in sectors that will not return to pre-COVID levels of