

Meeting Note Advice to Minister

Date: October 9, 2018

Cliff #: 114056

Prepared for: Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Date, Time of Meeting and Location:

- Monday, October 29, 3:00-3:30 pm
- Victoria (specific location TBC)

Attendees:

- Aran Armutlu, Chair, British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS)
- Michael Olson, Executive Officer, BCFS

Issue(s):

- Representatives from the BCFS wish to discuss three issues:
 - up-front needs-based grants
 - eliminating interest on student loans
 - expansion of the Open Textbook Project

Background:

- BCFS is a provincial-level organization of 13 affiliated university and college student associations that collectively represents 130,000 students. (See Appendix A for members.)
- BCFS meets regularly with elected officials to advocate for issues of importance to post-secondary students, including: access and affordability; tuition fees; student aid; and housing.

Discussion:

- For its October 2018 meetings, the following issues have been identified for discussion:

Issue/BCFS Position	AEST action to date
Eliminate interest charged on all BC student loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2017, government reduced the interest rate charged on B.C. student loans to Prime (from Prime plus 2.5%). Further reductions will be phased in. • This initial interest rate reduction provides approximately \$11 million in interest relief and benefits to approximately 200,000 current borrowers.
Provide up-front, needs-based grants to combat financial barriers to studying at college or university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEST is currently reviewing student financial assistance policy, including best practices for grant funding to ensure grants are designed to support students <i>when and where they need it most</i>.

Expansion of the Open Textbook Project to develop resources that are a viable alternative to high-priced textbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2012, government has provided \$2.5 million to support development and use of over 240 open textbooks and other open education resources (OER). • More than 90,000 students across BC have benefitted from open textbooks, saving as much as \$9 million dollars. • NOTE: BCFS recently committed \$30,000 to the development of open resources through BC Campus.
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- Discussion points for other BCFS 2018/19 priorities:

Issue/BCFS Position	AEST action to date
International tuition fee limits and regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AEST is working with stakeholders, including students, to develop a new strategic approach to international education focused on a positive student experience.
Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action relating to post-secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-secondary institutions and AEST are committed to implementing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
Building a consent culture on campuses and working with institutions on effective sexual assault policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act</i> requires all B.C. public post-secondary institutions to have a sexual violence and misconduct policy in place. • AEST recently launched an awareness campaign around consent.

Key Messages:

- Thank the BCFS for their advocacy work on behalf of post-secondary students.
- BCFS is a valued partner in ensuring people around the province have access to affordable, high-quality public post-secondary education.
- AEST staff look forward to continuing to work with the BCFS on a wide range of issues affecting post-secondary students.

Attachment:

Appendix A: Membership of British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS)

Contact: Jeff Vasey, ADM, Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
250-952-0697

Appendix A: Membership of British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS)

- BCFS is comprised of 13 affiliated student associations representing 130,000 students.
- The BCFS was formerly known as the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) B.C. and was established in 1975. The current organization was founded in 2018 after separating from the national organization.

Members:

- University of British Columbia Students' Union Okanagan
(NB: also affiliated with ABCS)
- Camosun College Student Society
- Douglas Students' Union
- Emily Carr Students' Union
- College of New Caledonia Students' Union
- University of Northern British Columbia Graduate Students' Society
- North Island Students' Union
- Northwest Community College Students' Union
- Okanagan College Students' Union
- Selkirk College Students' Union
- Thompson Rivers University Students' Union
- Students' Union of Vancouver Community College
- Vancouver Island University Students' Union

Meeting Note Advice to Minister

Date: October 9, 2018

Cliff #: 114057

Prepared for: Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Meeting with Alliance of British Columbia Students (ABCS)

- October 29, 2018, 3:45-4:15
- Victoria (specific location TBC)

Attendees:

Jewelless Smith, ABCS, Policy and Political Affairs Coordinator

Issue(s):

ABCS has indicated the main topics they wish to discuss are:

- on-campus mental health resources
- experience of post-secondary education by students with disabilities
- monitoring/reporting of sexual violence at post secondary institutions

Background:

- Established in 2013, ABCS is a provincial-level organization of 5 affiliated university and college student associations that collectively represents 60,000 students:
 - University of British Columbia Graduate Students' Society
 - University of British Columbia Okanagan Students' Union
 - Capilano Students' Union
 - Langara Students' Union
 - Kwantlen Student Association
- ABCS meets regularly with elected officials to advocate for issues of importance to post-secondary students, including: access and affordability; tuition fees; student aid; and housing.

Discussion:

- For its October 2018 meetings, ABCS has identified three issues for discussion:

Issue/ABCS Position	AEST Action to date
On-campus mental health resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 2017 Update provided AEST with \$1.5 million annually to support targeted mental health initiatives for post-secondary students.
➤ Need for proactive services vs. response-based measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past year AEST consulted with sector partners and students, including the ABCS, to understand challenges and gaps around mental health supports at post-secondary institutions; including the need for <i>both</i> proactive supports (e.g. counselling) and responsive measures (e.g. interventions in cases of substance abuse and addiction). • RESPONSE: AEST is working with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions to develop a coordinated, cross-government mental wellness strategy for all

	<p>British Columbians, including post-secondary students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several options for post-secondary mental health initiatives are being considered, including: <p>s.13</p>
<p>Students with disabilities:</p> <p>➤ Need for better student data</p> <p>➤ Need to review policy for accessibility grants and student loans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently AEST gathers information and advice on the needs and experience of students with disabilities through regular meetings of several partner-based committees comprised of: federal/provincial government representatives; Accessibility Coordinators from all BC post-secondary institutions; and disability service providers. AEST also gathers program data on students who access provincial financial assistance and/or assistive service and equipment supports; and uses surveys and questionnaires to gather student input. RESPONSE: AEST will continue to work with partners to: enhance opportunities to consult with students with disabilities; and gather more fulsome data to ensure policy/programs are meeting student needs. Current policy requires that in order for students with disabilities to access federal and provincial financial assistance and/or equipment and service grants, they must have a verified disability and demonstrate financial need (i.e. meet eligibility criteria for a student loan). In cases where students with disabilities do not meet student loan criteria but wish to access grants to offset equipment/services costs, AEST works applicants to include disability-related costs as part of its needs assessment. In the majority of cases, this consideration results in students receiving equipment/service grants. RESPONSE: AEST will continue to actively to support access and success of students with disabilities in BC's post-secondary education. If there are gaps in funding policy staff will work with partners to resolve them as fairly and effectively as possible.
<p>Monitoring/reporting of sexual violence at public post-secondary institutions</p> <p>➤ Need for monitoring and reporting at institutional level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of May 19, 2017 public post-secondary institutions are required to establish sexual violence and misconduct policies and report annually to their governing body on policy implementation. Currently, institutions are not required to report or track the number of incidents, or make public reports to governing bodies. An outreach campaign, in winter 2017/2018, solicited feedback on how policies may be strengthened. Awareness campaigns, education and workshops were among the top themes. Increased reporting and accountability were also raised. RESPONSE: AEST will continue review feedback and consider further actions to support students and institutions in creating safer campuses.

Summary:

- Thank the ABCS for their advocacy work on behalf of post-secondary students; and in particular their interest in students with disabilities.
- AEST staff look forward to continuing to work with the ABCS on a wide range of issues affecting post-secondary students.
- Offer to make arrangements for follow-up between ABCS and AEST directors on issues discussed at meeting:
 - Executive Director, Post -Secondary Programs (Nicola Lemmer)
 - Executive Director, Student Aid BC (Kelly McConnan)

Contact: Jeff Vasey, ADM, Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
250-952-0697

Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX

From: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Sent: Friday, October 26, 2018 4:14 PM
To: Wolsey, Ashley AEST:EX
Cc: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX; Soper, Darryl AEST:EX; Beattie, Michelle AEST:EX; Goodman, Dean AEST:EX
Subject: Fwd: Back Pocket Notes for Jeff
Attachments: Back pocket Notes for Jeff Oct 2018 Student Society Mtgs.docx; ATT00001.htm

Hi Ashley,

Please find attached some additional notes for Jeff in advance of the Minister's meetings with the BC Federation of Students and the Alliance of BC Students on Monday. This material does not need to be added to the MN but may be useful background for Jeff.

Thanks,
Melanie

Back pocket Notes for Jeff in preparation for October 2018 Student Society Meetings:

1. Follow-up AEST Staff-level meeting with BC Federation of Students scheduled for October 30:

- Several weeks ago the BCFS Chairperson approached Ministry staff and requested a meeting.
- Purpose of the meeting is to establish stronger lines of communication, which AEST supports.
- Meeting is scheduled for October 30th at St. Ann's; it will be general in nature and provide an opportunity for relationship building.
- The BCFS delegation consists of 10 representatives, including Aran Armutlu (Chairperson).
- Draft agenda topics include:
 - Update from Students on what student issues are being highlighted with MLAs
 - Sexual Violence Prevention on campus (Dean Goodman / Yael La Rose)
 - Student Housing Initiative (Jeanne Sedun)
 - International Education (Jamie Edwardson / Laurie Brucker)
 - Open Education Resources (Melanie Nielsen / Andrei Bondoreff)
 - Student Loans and Needs-based Grant System (Philip Davidson)

2. Status of U-Pass BC Program Renewal:

- The current Metro Vancouver U-Pass agreement is supported with an annual provincial contribution of \$12 million from Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI).
- The current agreement covering 10 Lower Mainland public post-secondary institutions expires December 2019.
- Over the past year, MOTI has been meeting with student society representatives to discuss terms for renewal. Key negotiating points for the students:
 - a longer term agreement (more than the current 3 year term); ideally an agreement in perpetuity;
 - a cost model that maintains student fees at \$41/month through to May 2020, with subsequent increases at 2% per year, consistent with other annual student fee increases.
- MOTI has completed a Treasury Board submission for discussion on October 31, 2018.
- In keeping with government campaign commitments to 'make education more affordable and to continue to support U-Pass', MOTI is recommending continuation of provincial funding. The recommended option includes:
 - a five year agreement (January 2020 – May 2025)
 - increased annual provincial contributions
 - a cost model that maintains student fees at \$41/month until April 2020; with modest increases over the term of the agreement
- MOTI advises student reps will support a higher increase in the first year if a 5 year agreement is reached.
- Comparison of the Metro Vancouver U-pass rates with similar programs in other BC regions and across Canada indicates the proposed option compares favourably.

Suggested Response:

s.13

Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX

From: Soper, Darryl AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 9:31 AM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Meeting Note for ABCS - Mental Health Section

Wording has changed slightly on the mental health:

- AEST is working with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions to develop a coordinated, whole-of-government mental wellness strategy for all British Columbians, including post-secondary students.
- Potential post-secondary mental health initiatives include:

s.13

Let me know if you need me to pop down and discuss.

DS

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 8:58 AM
To: Soper, Darryl AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Meeting Note for ABCS - Mental Health Section

Ok – please cc Melanie – in case we need to fix right away. (I am in a meeting until 10).

Shelley Gilmour

Senior Policy Analyst
BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
778.698.9844

From: Soper, Darryl AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 8:57 AM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Meeting Note for ABCS - Mental Health Section

I will send you the new wording if that is OK?

DS

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 8:56 AM
To: Soper, Darryl AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Meeting Note for ABCS - Mental Health Section

I am at a meeting on until 10 – how about I come see you?

Shelley Gilmour

Senior Policy Analyst
BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
778.698.9844

From: Soper, Darryl AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2018 8:55 AM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Subject: Meeting Note for ABCS - Mental Health Section

Hi Shelly.

I need to amend the MH Section a little – can I drop over to see you at some point this morning?

DS

Darryl Soper
Director, Human and Social Service Education
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
Province of British Columbia
Office: 778.698.9896
Cell: 250.508.0438
Email: Darryl.Soper@gov.bc.ca

Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX

From: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 4:07 PM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX; Harada-Down, James AEST:EX; Nelson, Tony AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Looks good – a couple of edits highlighted in green

Thanks

Miles

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 1:46 PM
To: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX; Harada-Down, James AEST:EX; Nelson, Tony AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Hi Miles – thanks for all your help. In the spirit of ‘briefing note brevity’, I’ve had to condense/distill your bullets and explanations.

Please check and see if I am way out of line ..and edit away. Thanks again.

Students with disabilities:	
➤ Need for better student data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently AEST gathers information and advice on the needs and experience of students with disabilities through regular meetings of several partner-based committees comprised of: federal/provincial government representatives; Accessibility Coordinators from all BC public post-secondary institutions; and disability service providers.• AEST also gathers program data on students who access provincial financial assistance and/or assistive service and equipment supports; and uses surveys and questionnaires to gather student input.• RESPONSE: AEST will continue to work with partners to: enhance opportunities to consult with students with disabilities; and gather more fulsome data to ensure policy/programs are meeting student needs.
➤ Need to review policy for accessibility grants and student loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current policy requires that in order for students with disabilities to access federal and provincial financial assistance and/or equipment and service grants, they must have a verified disability and demonstrate financial need (i.e. meet eligibility criteria for a student loan).• In cases where students with disabilities do not meet student loan criteria but wish to access grants to offset equipment/services costs, AEST works allows applicants to include disability-related costs as part of its needs assessment. In the majority of cases, this consideration results in students receiving equipment/service grants.• RESPONSE: AEST will continue to actively to support access and success

	of students with disabilities in BC's post-secondary education. If there are gaps in funding policy – staff will work with partners to resolve them as fairly and effectively as possible.
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Shelley Gilmour

Senior Policy Analyst
BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
778.698.9844

From: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 8:40 AM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX; Harada-Down, James AEST:EX; Nelson, Tony AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

The existing committee structures consist of agency staff and service delivery partners (institutions, contractors). These consultation processes generally address the development and implementation of supports for students with disabilities. These processes can be informed by information gathering exercises that do involve students directly (surveys, questionnaires, etc.), but there are no ongoing consultation process that directly involves students with disabilities. The ministry also provides opportunities (social media, etc) where students can submit feedback directly to our communications area.

Thanks

Miles

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2018 4:47 PM
To: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Is/has there ever been any interest by the ministry in consulting with students? Broadening the membership on any of the committees to include student representatives?

Shelley Gilmour

Senior Policy Analyst
BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
778.698.9844

From: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2018 4:45 PM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

No, we do not usually consult directly with students.

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2018 4:02 PM
To: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Thanks Miles – a couple questions...starting with:

Are there student representatives on any of the committees? And/or representatives from the Association of BC Students and/or the BC Federation of Students?

Shelley Gilmour

Senior Policy Analyst
BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
778.698.9844

From: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2018 2:26 PM
To: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Hi Shelley,

Please see below for some information as requested. Please let me know if you need any clarification or anything additional.

Thanks

Miles Stratholt, MSc
Senior Policy Analyst
Targeted Learners Support Programs
Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training
Phone: (250) 387-0245
Email: Miles.Stratholt@gov.bc.ca
Web: www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc

1. The Ministry engages in consultation processes that provide insight and information on the needs of students with disabilities at post-secondary institutions including:
 - a. **Students with Disabilities Committee** – BC is the provincial chair of this committee which brings together federal/provincial/territorial agency staff tasked with the provision of financial resources and services to students with disabilities. The committee examines national trends and issues impacting students with disabilities (funding, accommodation, barriers, etc).
 - b. **Advanced Education/Disability Service Providers Technical Advisory Committee** – Advanced Education staff engage with disability service providers (BC Institute of Technology, Langara College and Assistive Technology BC) to review development and implementation of specialized communication access, alternate resource material and assistive technology projects and services to assist public post-secondary institutions with the accommodation of students with disabilities
 - c. **Advanced Education/Accessibility Advisors Consultation Committee** – Advanced Education staff chair consultation process with Accessibility Coordinators at all BC public post-secondary institutions. The committee directly addresses the challenges faced by students with disabilities at the institution level

(funding, barriers, etc.) and assists the ministry with understanding the needs and requirements of this population of students.

- d. The ministry gathers data on students with disabilities who access our disability related programs. We have data on the number of students who access financial assistance and/or assistive service and equipment programs. The ministry also tracks students who do not complete their programs and can identify those who are receiving ministry disability related program supports.

2.

- a. At present a student with a disability must apply, and be eligible for a student loan before they would be eligible for most ministry disability related programs. This is true for provincially delivered, federal disability related programs and some provincial financial assistance programs. The federal programs are subject to federal Canada Student Loan Program policy.
- b. The province does support the delivery of assistive technology and services to non-post secondary (Adult Basic Education, English Second Language and Adult Special Education) students who are ineligible for student loans, through the **Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities**.
- c. The province also supports communication access and alternate resource format services to all post-secondary students with disabilities at public post-secondary institutions regardless of student loan status, through the **Post-Secondary Communication Access Services** and the **Centre for Accessible Post-Secondary Education Resources** programs.
- d. The province also supports the delivery of assistive technology to these students through the **Public Post-Secondary Loan** program and the **Program for the Institutional Loan of Assistive Technology**.

From: Gilmour, Shelley E AEST:EX
Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 1:34 PM
To: Stratholt, Miles L AEST:EX
Cc: Nielsen, Melanie AEST:EX
Subject: Bullets re Students with Disabilities

Hi there Miles. Just a heads up

We are pulling together some briefing materials for an upcoming meeting between the Minister and the Alliance of BC Students ...and we need your help.

One of the issues the ABCS would like to discuss is the post-secondary experience of students with disabilities (SWD).

Could you help with providing some background bullets? Here are 2 issues related to SWD

s.13

Please give me a call to discuss.

Shelley Gilmoor

Senior Policy Analyst

BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

778.698.9844