



Minister's  
Estimates Notes

2024/2025

Ministry of  
Post-Secondary Education  
and Future Skills

April 2024

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### Estimates – Motions

<p><b>Opening Introductions and remarks</b> Commencement of Estimates</p>	<p><b>Minister:</b> “Mr./Mdme. Chair, it is with great pleasure that I rise to present the 2024/25 spending estimates for the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.”</p> <p>“Before I begin, I would like to introduce my Deputy Minister, Bobbi Plecas.”</p> <p>[Introduce other staff as appropriate].</p> <p>[Deliver opening remarks on Ministry priorities]</p>
<p><b>After Opening Remarks</b> to Begin Debate</p>	<p><b>Minister:</b> “Chair, I would be happy to receive comments, remarks and questions from the members of the Legislature.”</p>
<p><b>Adjournment of</b> Estimates Debate</p>	<p><b>Minister:</b> “I move that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Motion approved.</p>
<p><b>Completion of</b> Estimates Debate</p>	<p><b>Minister:</b> “I move that the committee rise and report resolution.”</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Motion approved.</p>

List of people who will support the Minister:

- Bobbi Plecas, Deputy Minister
- Jason Butler, Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, Technology and Management Services Division
- Chris Rathbone, Assistant Deputy Minister of Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division
- Joanna White, Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour Market Development Division
- Tony Loughran, Assistant Deputy Minister of Governance, Legislation & Engagement Division
- Geoff Wilmshurst and Executive Directors will be available

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**SPEAKING NOTES FOR**

**Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills**

**Budget 2024 Estimates – Opening Remarks**

**HON. LISA BEARE**

**MINISTER OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**AND FUTURE SKILLS**

**April 2024**

- **Thank you, chair. Good morning/afternoon.**
- **I'd like to begin by recognizing that we're gathered here on the territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.**
- **I'd also like to also recognize the ministry staff who are present.**
  - **Bobbi Plecas - Deputy Minister**
  - **Jason Butler - Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, Technology and Management Services Division**
  - **Chris Rathbone - Assistant Deputy Minister of Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division**
  - **Joanna White - Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour Market Development Division**
  - **Tony Loughran - Assistant Deputy Minister of Governance, Legislation & Engagement Division.**

- **It was a true honour when only a couple of months ago the Premier appointed me Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, and since then I've made it a priority to visit as many post-secondary institutions as possible.**
- **Everywhere we are seeing local change, hearing about global challenges, while also seeing the tremendous opportunities that exist in British Columbia.**
- **The B.C. Labour Market Outlook tells us that 75 per cent of the one million job openings in B.C. over the next decade will require some form of post-secondary education and training.**
- **That's why we launched the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.**

- **Under the Action Plan we're removing barriers to post-secondary education and training. This includes providing the B.C. Future Skills Grant, doubling financial aid to students, and the expanded Provincial Tuition Waiver program.**
- **We're also helping to fill workforce gaps in high-demand fields, such as adding new student spaces in Early Childhood Educator programs, and more spaces in tech-relevant programs.**
- **In addition to these improvements my ministry is investing in more homes for students, enhancing international credential recognition, and is working closely with the Ministry of Health to expand and strengthen B.C.'s healthcare system.**

- **B.C.'s economy is changing, the world is changing, we need to be ready for it, and this government is meeting the moment for British Columbians.**
- **That's why this budget is built on investments to meet the needs of our society and our economy now and into the future.**
- **I look forward to discussing these important issues, and with that I turn it over to the chair.**
- **Thank you.**

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**SPEAKING NOTES FOR**

**Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills**

**Budget 2024 Estimates – Closing Remarks**

**HON. LISA BEARE**

**MINISTER OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION  
AND FUTURE SKILLS**

**April 2024**

- I want to thank the member and her colleagues for coming before the committee with their questions. We had a productive discussion.
- Before we move on with the vote, I want to say again it is a privilege to serve in this capacity as Minister responsible for Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

### Motion

- Thank you very much, I move vote number 41, resolved that a sum not exceeding three billion, three hundred seventy-one million, forty-three thousand dollars (\$3,371,043,000) be granted to his majesty to defer the expenses of the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2025.



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**Title:** B.C. Access Grant

**Issue:** Highlights for the B.C. Access Grant Program

**Key Facts and Background:**

- The B.C. Government introduced the B.C. Access Grant in 2020/21 to help low- and middle-income learners access post-secondary education.
- The B.C. Access Grant provides up-front, non-repayable financial assistance to low- and middle-income learners who are enrolled in eligible full-time and part-time undergraduate certificate, diploma, and degree programs at B.C.’s 25 public post-secondary institutions.
- As of December 31, 2023, the B.C. Access Grant has supported over **71,000** students with approximately **\$129 million** in up-front, needs-based, non-repayable financial assistance.
- All students who apply for student financial assistance are automatically assessed for the B.C. Access Grant.
- The B.C. Access Grant offers the following three separate grant amounts:
  - A maximum of \$1,000 per year for students in programs two or more years in length.
  - A maximum of \$4,000 per year for students in programs under two years. A higher amount is provided because students in programs under two years are not eligible for the Canada Student Grant.
  - A maximum of \$1,000 per year for students in part-time programs.

**Table 1 – B.C. Access Grant**

<b>2020/21 FY</b> Actuals	<b>2021/22 FY</b> Actuals	<b>2022/23 FY</b> Actuals	<b>2023/24 FY</b> Projected
\$30,725,000	\$35,770,000	\$34,611,000	Advice/Recommendations

- A student’s eligible B.C. Access Grant amount replaces an equivalent amount of eligible B.C. student loan with non-repayable funding, thus reducing the amount of loan students will have to repay at the end of their studies. The B.C. Access Grant does not necessarily increase the amount of money available to the student.



- Prior to the introduction of the B.C. Access Grant in 2020, 22% of overall funding for eligible students was in the form of non-repayable grants. This increased to 33% with the introduction of the B.C. Access Grant.
- Students that receive the B.C. Access Grant are eligible to receive other financial support, such as federal loans and grants, interest free provincial and federal student loans, repayment assistance and supports for students with disabilities.

**Title:** Funding Formula Review – Public Post-Secondary Institutions

**Issue:** Draft *What-We-Heard Report* and Next Steps

**Key Facts, Data and Background:**

- In March 2022, B.C. announced a funding review that would examine how government funds the operations of British Columbia’s 25 public Post-Secondary Institutions. The funding review was led by Don Wright.
- The funding review was a mandate commitment established in the fall of 2020 to “make sure public post-secondary institutions have the resources they need to support economic recovery and student success.”
- Public institutions have three primary revenue streams: provincial grants, domestic tuition, and international student tuition.

Funding Source	Total Amount for Fiscal 2022/23 (in millions) <sup>1</sup>	Percentage of Total
Provincial government grants	\$2,928	37%
Domestic tuition	\$1,165	15%
International student tuition	\$1,487	19%
Sales of goods and services	\$733	10%
Federal government grants <sup>2</sup>	\$637	8%
Other revenue <sup>3</sup>	\$878	11%
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>\$7,828</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup> 2022/23 Audited Financial Statements for Sector .

<sup>2</sup> Federal government grants may be provided for specific items like research funding, specialized equipment, and specific projects.

<sup>3</sup> Other revenues comprise grants from other sources, sales of goods and services from related entities, investment income, earnings from commercial subsidiaries, gains on sale of tangible capital assets, and other miscellaneous revenues.

- Provincial government grants to public institutions have been increased to fund collective agreements since 2013. In addition, some targeted funding for specific programs that has been added to their base.
- The provincial government has limited increases to tuition for domestic students to 2% annually since 2005.
- The first phase of the funding review was engagement with sector partners (public institutions, students, labour and sector associations, and Indigenous organizations) during the spring and summer of 2022. Feedback was gathered from more than 40 in-person and online sessions, and 50 written submissions.

- From these engagements, an Interim What-We-Heard Report was drafted in December 2022, Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

Advice/Recommendations; Cabinet Confidences

- In May 2023, the ministry released the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, which provided a significant investment of \$480M over three years into the post-secondary system. The StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan provided student supports, expansion of public institution seats in priority sectors like technology and short-term training programs aimed supporting people to fill labour market shortages in areas like the technology sector, health care and early childhood education.
- In addition to the \$480M over three years, government also committed to investing in an additional 4,000 student beds and doubling student loan maximums to support affordability for students.
- Since the engagement concluded, sector partners and members of the media have requested the Interim report be released publicly.
- The ministry is currently considering options for the release of the What We Heard Report.



**Title:** Future Skills Grant

**Issue:** As part of B.C.'s StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan, the future skills grant provides British Columbians with access to short-term skills training that responds to the urgent and growing need for skilled workers in the province.

**Key Facts, Data and Background:**

- The StrongerBC future skills grant provides access to up to \$3,500 in short-term skills training, delivered by public post-secondary institutions across the province, for British Columbians, 19 years of age or older.
- The StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan committed a total investment of \$39M over three years to the future skills grant.
- Investing in short-term skills training equips British Columbians with relevant job skills, fosters economic growth, and supports resilience in an ever-changing job market.
- The future skills grant increases affordability and accessibility to job-related, short-term skills training that is not eligible for funding under other grants, bursaries, or loans, through StudentAid BC, provincial and federal apprenticeship supports, or WorkBC employment programs.
- Future skills grant -eligible programs are aligned with the 2023 Labour Market Outlook high-demand industries and support the StrongerBC Economic Plan and key strategies, such as B.C.'s Health and Human Resources Strategy and CleanBC.
- In Fall 2023, more than 400 programs were available through the future skills grant at 24 public post-secondary institutions across B.C., serving over 7,000 learners across the province. The future skills grant proved to be in high demand, Advice/Recommendations Advice/Recommendations
- Demand for the future skills grant exceeded expectations in the first year of implementation. The ministry was able to reallocate savings and secure additional funding within the fiscal year to ensure as many learners as possible could access the grant.
- Based on preliminary analysis of the Fall 2023 semester, the future skills grant is meeting learner and labour market needs across the province (*See Appendix 2 and Appendix 3*).
- The ministry anticipates ongoing high demand in 2024/25, and is reviewing eligibility and scope to prioritize future offerings aligned with high-demand occupations.

Advice/Recommendations; Government Financial Information

## Appendix 2: Fall 2023 Regional Distribution of Funding<sup>1</sup>

Economic Region	% of Funding
Cariboo	3%
Kootenay	2%
Mainland/Southwest	60%
North Coast and Nechako	2%
Northeast	1%
Thompson Okanagan	10%
Vancouver Island/Coast	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix 3: Labour Market Outlook Alignment

Top High-Demand Industries Based on Labour Market Outlook 2023 <sup>2, 3</sup>	% of Jobs Openings by 2033	% of Fall 2023 FSG Learners
Health care and social assistance	17%	12%
Professional, scientific & technical services	14%	19%
Educational services	7%	7%
Construction	7%	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>

<sup>1</sup> The data was collected on February 7, 2024, as the ministry continues to receive the Fall 2023 claims.

<sup>2</sup> B.C. Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills. (2023). *British Columbia Labour Market Outlook (2023 Edition)*, accessed on February 7, 2024 at: [https://www.workbc.ca/sites/default/files/2023-11/MPSEFS\\_11803\\_BC\\_Jobs\\_LMO\\_2023\\_FINAL..pdf](https://www.workbc.ca/sites/default/files/2023-11/MPSEFS_11803_BC_Jobs_LMO_2023_FINAL..pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Retail trade is one of the top five high-demand industries identified in Labour Market Outlook 2023; no Fall 2023 future skills grant programs were aligned with this industry, and therefore retail trade was not included in this table.



**Title:** Graduate Scholarships and Internships

**Issue:** Government support for graduate student scholarships and Mitacs internships for innovation.

**Key Facts and Background:**

- As part of the *StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, Budget 2023* approved access to contingencies of \$15 million over three years for graduate scholarships and internships.
- *Budget 2024* reflects the \$5 million annual commitment in 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- The \$15 million in funding builds on earlier investments from 2018 to 2022:
  - In 2018, \$12 million was provided to establish the British Columbia Graduate Scholarships, the largest investment in the province's history in scholarships for graduate students, supporting 800 awards of \$15,000 each through March 2021.
  - An additional \$3.75 million was provided in 2021 and again in 2022.
  - To date over 1,100 scholarships have been awarded to students in a variety of degree programs. Eligible programs range from research-intensive to professional degrees, with an emphasis but not exclusive focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics disciplines.
  - As announced in summer 2023, the award value of the scholarships has increased from \$15,000 to \$17,500.
- Through a long-term partnership with Mitacs, since 2018 the ministry has provided over \$75 million in funding to support internships for innovation. Mitacs is a BC-based, national not-for-profit organization that delivers applied research training programs for students. It has funding arrangements with federal and other provincial governments.
  - The Mitacs model is one of partnership among levels of governments, industry, and post-secondary institutions.
  - Students receive a stipend of \$10,000 for their four-month internship while gaining hands-on work experience and applying their knowledge and skills to real-world problems faced by businesses and organizations in the province.
  - In spring 2023, the ministry provided \$50 million to Mitacs to support 10,000 additional internships over five years.

**Ministry Funding 2017/18-2022/23**

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
Scholarships	\$12M			\$3.75M	\$3.75M		\$19.5M
Mitacs	\$10M	\$5.6M	\$1.2M	\$1M	\$8.6M	\$50M	\$76.4M

- The ministry has a number of other supports for graduate students.
  - A range of student financial aid is offered through StudentAid BC, including grants, bursaries, loans, and targeted funding for graduate students with dependents and disabilities.
  - More than 4,000 BC graduate students accessed over \$50 million in combined federal and provincial student financial assistance through StudentAid BC in Fiscal Year 2023/24, including nearly \$0.6 million in non-repayable provincial grants and over \$13.2 million in interest-free BC student loan funding.
- Other examples of related supports for students and industry include the Innovator Skills Initiative administered by Innovate BC. In recent years, the Innovator Skills Initiative has received a provincial investment of over \$20.5 million to support more than 3,000 paid placements at businesses in the province for tech or tech-related roles.
- The *StrongerBC Economic Plan* commits to accelerate talent development and skills training across the province, including a commitment to more graduate scholarships and internships for innovation.
- The subject of the note is referenced in the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services' recommendations on Budget 2024 and funding for graduate scholarships and internships are consistent with the recommendation to reduce financial barriers to post-secondary education.

**Title: Provincial Tuition Waiver for Former Youth in Care**

**Issue: Highlights for Provincial Tuition Waiver Program for Former Youth in Care**

**Key Facts and Background:**

- The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program removes barriers for former youth in care to access post-secondary education.
  - Implemented in September 2017, the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program has waived over \$19 million in tuition and fees for over 2,450 former youth in care as at December 31, 2023.
  - The program supports eligible former youth in care who are attending full-time or part-time undergraduate studies at any of the 25 B.C. public post-secondary institutions, Native Education College, and eligible union trades training institutes.
- The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program was expanded effective August 1, 2023. The following increased eligibility and supports for former youth in care were supported by a **\$6.4 million** annual program base budget increase and **\$1.4 million** Ministry of Children and Family Development program funding reinvestment in 2023/24:
  - Opened the program to former youth in care of any age (previously limited to age 19-26);
  - Inclusion of eligibility for former youth in care who turn(ed) 19 under any care status regardless of time in care;
  - Implementation of new annual \$3,500 Learning for Future Grant tied to Provincial Tuition Waiver Program eligibility;
  - Program communications and outreach initiative, and increases to administration to support program promotion, awareness and uptake; and
  - Dedicated funding to post-secondary institutions to provide on campus support for former youth in care.
- The program expansion meets the ministry's joint mandate commitment with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to "...lead work to expand tuition waivers to all former youth in care, regardless of age".

	FY17/18 (actuals)	FY18/19 (actuals)	FY19/20 (actuals)	FY20/21 (actuals)	FY21/22 (actuals)	FY22/23 (actuals)	FY 23/24 (projected)
<b>Number of Recipients</b>	379	613	843	863	892	930	1,430
<b>Tuition &amp; Fees Waived</b>	\$1,182,329	\$2,413,033	\$3,268,622	\$3,017,038	\$3,336,923	\$3,390,233	Advice/Recommendations

- Between program expansion implementation on August 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, Provincial Tuition Waiver Program applications have increased by approximately 250% over the same period last year, with the majority of these students receiving the new Learning for Future Grant, and the average age of applicants rising from 20 to 25.
- In addition to the tuition waived, the ministry anticipates issuing Advice/Recommendations in Learning for Future Grant funding to further support former youth in care eligible for the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program up to December 31, 2023. More data will be available in late February following the reporting deadline for institution partners.
- The ministry leads a Provincial Tuition Waiver Community of Practice with post-secondary institution Campus Navigators, and other student support staff at the post-secondary institutions, to support former youth in care students on campus to navigate their education journey.
- The Children and Youth in Care Protocol signed by First Nations Leadership Council, First Nations Education Steering Committee, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the Ministries of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Education and Child Care, and Children and Family Development sets out a joint commitment to engage in dialogue and joint action to improve the education outcomes of all First Nations children and youth in care, and former youth in care.
- The First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol Workplan has several commitments to improve the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program and post-secondary education outcomes, including:
  - Ensure the Province provides funding for broad wraparound supports (tuition, living allowance, supplies, etc.) to First Nation former youth in care pursuing a post-secondary education.
  - Improve access to the Tuition Waiver Program (TWP) by expanding the eligibility criteria and building awareness by improving outreach.
  - Develop funding options to provide debt relief (loan forgiveness) to former children and youth in care with outstanding B.C. student loans.

**Table 1. Budget 2023 PSFS – Tuition Waiver Program Funding Summary**

(\$ millions)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Annual Program Base Budget	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Increase to Base Budget (MCFD Budget Transfer/Reinvestment)	-	1.4	1.4	1.4
Cabinet Program Base Budget Increase	-	6.4	6.4	6.4
<b>Total B.2023 Additional Funding</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>7.8</b>
<b>Total Annual Funding</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>11.8</b>

**Appendix 1: Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Recipients by Institution**

Institution	Fiscal Year 17/18	Fiscal Year 18/19	Fiscal Year 19/20	Fiscal Year 20/21	Fiscal Year 21/22	Fiscal Year 22/23	Fiscal Year 23/24 (Q3)
British Columbia Institute of Technology	16	22	40	30	29	44	46
Camosun College	47	75	87	76	74	60	74
Capilano University	11	16	25	22	23	27	22
Coast Mountain College		Personal Information					
College of New Caledonia	13	16	27	21	24	19	33
College of the Rockies		Personal Information		14	9	12	12
Douglas College	38	48	89	88	85	103	121
Emily Carr University of Art and Design		Personal Information					
Justice Institute of British Columbia	Personal Information		14	17	21	18	18
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	23	37	45	41	49	52	55
Langara College	28	44	56	52	56	49	68
Native Education College		Personal Information					
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	23	27	32	25	14	16	20
North Island College	Personal Information	13	16	21	18	25	26
Northern Lights College	Personal Information						
Okanagan College	13	40	34	44	44	44	57
Royal Roads University		Personal Information					
Selkirk College	Personal Information				11	15	21
Simon Fraser University	16	22	26	33	29	34	32
Thompson Rivers University	31	53	84	70	68	72	99
University of British Columbia	14	19	28	33	35	54	72
University of British Columbia Okanagan	10	11	13	18	20	13	24
University of Northern BC		Personal Information			11	15	17
University of the Fraser Valley	29	47	70	77	89	92	100
University of Victoria	12	32	39	49	45	38	58



Vancouver Community College	11	18	27	20	28	30	28
Vancouver Island University	31	30	36	82	84	92	144
Out of Province student						Personal Information	
Trades Training							Personal Information
<b>Total</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>1,194</b>

### Appendix 2: Student Success: Graduation and Credentials

- From the 2017/18 to the 2021/2022 academic years, 570 former youth in care completed post-secondary credentials while receiving supports through the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program, including bachelor’s degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- Former youth in care accessing the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program are pursuing studies in a range of programs that support provincial labour market priorities, including human and social services, health, and trades.

**Table 1: PTWP Credentials - 2017/18 - 2021/22**

Credential Type	Credentials Awarded
Certificate	225
Diploma	160
Bachelor	160
Developmental	20
Other	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>570</b>

**Table 2: PTWP Enrolment - 2017/18 - 2021/22**

Program Area	% of Total
Arts and Sciences	42.3%
Human and Social Services	16.5%
Business and Management	8.3%
Health	8.5%
Trades	7.8%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	5.7%
Developmental	3.8%
Visual and Performing Arts	4.4%
Education	2.7%

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Title: StudentAid BC Overview

Issue: StudentAid BC Student Financial Assistance Program Overview

Key Facts and Background:

- In 2022/23, approximately 70,000 British Columbians received over \$875 million in federal and provincial student financial assistance (Appendix A, Tables 1 and 2).
A range of financial support including interest free loans, non-repayable grants, loan forgiveness and repayment assistance are available to help students access and afford post-secondary education.
Provincial student financial assistance includes loans and grant programs, such as:
o B.C. Student Loans
o B.C. Access Grant
o Grants, services, and equipment for students with disabilities
o Tuition waivers for former children and youth in care
o Learning for Future grant for tuition waiver students
o Grants for adults seeking to upgrade their education
o Nurses' education bursary
o Loan forgiveness for health and child service professions in underserved communities throughout the province
o Repayment assistance
Eligibility for student financial assistance is based on a student's financial need and calculated based on education and living costs minus resources (i.e. family income).
Student financial assistance funding is intended to supplement other financial resources available to students (e.g., employment income, scholarships, bursaries, and family contributions).
Effective August 1, 2023, weekly loan limits were doubled. This is the first increase since 2006.

Table with 4 columns: Type, Previous (weekly), New 23/24 (weekly), New Federal (weekly). Rows include Without Dependents and With Dependents.

- As of December 31, 2023, the 2023 loan increases have resulted in a 10% increase in applications for student financial assistance (SFA) and a 13% increase in recipients of provincial disbursements. In addition, the average provincial disbursement increased from \$2,100 to \$3,400.
- In 2019, B.C. eliminated interest on student loans. This has resulted in over \$145 million in interest payments saved for students since that time.

#### Repayment Assistance Plan

- In 2023 B.C. strengthened the Repayment Assistance Plan and aligned with the federal government to increase the income threshold for when a student loan payment is required, as well as lowering the maximum payment required.

Payment	Previous	New (23/24)
Income Threshold	\$25,000	\$40,000
Percentage of Total Income	20%	10%

- It is estimated that changes to the Repayment Assistance Plan will save borrowers approximately \$35.4M in future repayment over the student loan repayment life cycle.

#### B.C. Loan Forgiveness Program

- The B.C. Loan Forgiveness Program provides a benefit to recent graduates working in select health occupations or working with children in underserved areas with identified needs throughout the province.
- Participants in the program may have up to 100% of their B.C. student loan forgiven over a 5-year term (up to 20% forgiven each year).
- Occupations for the B.C. Loan Forgiveness Program are selected based on high-priority labour market needs identified by partner ministries (HLTH, ECC, MCFD) and eligibility of training programs for student financial assistance.
- Since introduction of the B.C. Loan Forgiveness Program in 2002, approximately 4,250 graduates have enrolled in the program and a total \$31.9M of debt has been forgiven.



**Appendix A: StudentAid BC Program Expenditure Overview:**

**Table 1: Federal and Provincial Program Expenditures by Fiscal Year**

Programs (in \$M)	2020/21 Actuals	2021/22 Actuals	2022/23 Actuals	2023/24 Projected
Canada Student Loans	\$492.005	\$375.905	\$334.593	Advice/Recommendations
Canada Student Grants	\$271.683	\$301.057	\$302.522	
B.C. Student Loans	\$182.539	\$186.056	\$179.935	
B.C. Student Grants	\$63.824	\$57.546	\$58.786	
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$1,010.051</b>	<b>\$920.564</b>	<b>\$875.836</b>	

**Table 2: Full- and Part-Time Student Financial Assistance Recipients (FY 2022/23)**

Recipient Type	#	Recipient Type	#
Full-Time Recipients	64,647	Part-Time Recipients	6,826

\*Full- and part-time recipients are not summative; some students transition between full- and part-time study throughout the year and are represented in both categories.

Recipient Type	#
<b>Total Unique Recipients</b>	69,683

**Table 3: Full-Time Student Financial Assistance Recipients Profile (FY 2022/23)\***

**Full-Time Recipients Profile (FY 2021/22):**

Demographics	
Female	63% (40,893)
Single	82% (52,688)
Married	15% (9,460)
Single Parent	4% (2,747)
Under 25 Years Old	53% (34,026)
Aboriginal Identity	7% (4,307)
Permanent or Prolonged Disability	9% (6,023)

By Study Location	
B.C. Publics	43,032
B.C. Privates	12,583
Out of Province/Country	7,004
Out of Country	2,758
By Credential Type	
Graduate	4,117
Undergraduate	36,187
Certificate/Diploma	24,070
Other	1,193

\*Note: Columns cannot be summed due to overlapping categories. This is due to students having more than one demographic identifier or changing institutions or programs during the fiscal year and therefore being counted in more than one category.



**Table 4: Accounts Receivable (FY 2022/23 Ministry of Finance)**

<b>B.C. Student Loan Recipients</b>		
Type of Recipient	Total	Amount
Recipients in Study or Grace	64,101	\$413,679,444
Recipients in Repayment	145,544	\$780,056,365
Recipients in Default	19,251	\$127,944,599
<b>TOTAL Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>228,896</b>	<b>\$1,321,680,408</b>

**Title: Supports for Students with Disabilities**

**Issue: StudentAid BC Financial and Assistive Supports and Services for Students with Disabilities**

**Key Facts and Background:**

- B.C. government is committed to making post-secondary education and training more accessible for all learners through a variety of support programs.
- The ministry provides the following supports for students with disabilities through the student financial assistance program:
  - BC Access Grant for Students with Disabilities (\$1,560/year)
  - BC Supplemental Bursary for Students with Disabilities (\$800/year)
  - BC Access Grant for Deaf students (\$30,000/year)
- Supports through block-funded programs at the institution level:
  - Learning Disability Assessment Bursary (\$3,500 one-time)
  - Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities (\$12,000/year).
- B.C. additionally administers Federal grant programs for B.C. students with disabilities including:
  - Canada Student Grant for Students with Disabilities (\$2,800/year)
  - Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment (\$20,000/year)
- In 2022/23, StudentAid BC provided over \$11 million in Provincial disability grant funding to over 6,800 students.
- The ministry provides funding to the Accessibility Services Offices at all 25 public post-secondary institutions through annual block funded operating grants. Staff at the Accessibility Services Offices support students with disabilities by:
  - Liaising with students and assessing their academic accessibility needs.
  - Working with the student and faculty to develop a student's accommodation plan.
  - Assisting the student with application for, and acquisition of:
    - StudentAid BC Financial Assistance;
    - assistive services including specialized tutoring, academic coaching or interpreting services; and
    - assistive technology and software.

- The Accessibility Services Offices also provide students with disabilities access to ministry funded Centralized Accessibility Services for students with disabilities through the:
  - Centre for Accessible Post-secondary Education Resources (Langara College) – supports increased participation in, and completion of post-secondary education by producing accessible digital and alternate format resource material for students with disabilities.
  - Academic Communications Equity Program (BC Institute of Technology) – provides provincial coordination and service provision to Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind students through access to American Sign Language practitioners, transcriptionists, intervenors, and captioning.
  - Program for Institutional Loan of Adaptive Technology (Assistive Technology BC) – improves access to required adaptive technology to support institutions in meeting their duty to accommodate students with disabilities.
- In 2021/22 StudentAid BC aligned with the new federal disability definition to include a category of persistent or prolonged disability. This enhancement, along with the trend in increasing numbers of students identifying as having a disability, has resulted in average growth of approximately 25% annually in StudentAid BC Accessibility Programs over the past 3 years.
- Among those receiving student financial assistance (SFA), the number of students with disabilities increased by approximately 21% between 2021/22 and 2022/23, resulting in increased accessibility program expenditures of approximately \$2.85M.

	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24 (as at Q3)
Number of SFA recipients with a disability	6,020	7,292	7,391
Accessibility Grants	\$8,802,000	\$11,093,000	\$7,868,000
Other Accessibility Support Programs	\$3,907,000	\$4,471,000	\$3,206,000

**Adult Special Education Programs:**

- Adult Special Education programs for students with cognitive or developmental disabilities are offered at 13 public post-secondary institutions and are funded through annual block operating grants.
- Approximately 700 learners access Adult Special Education programs each year.
- These programs provide literacy, life skills and employment training for students with developmental and other disabilities that are barriers to further education, employment, or independence.





- Eligible Adult Special Education students can access the Adult Upgrading Grant to cover their education-related costs, including tuition, mandatory fees, books, technology, materials, eligible childcare expenses, and transportation.

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**Title:** Tuition Limit Policy

**Issue:** Mandate to strengthen the Tuition Limit Policy

**Key Facts, Data and Background:**

- The Tuition Limit Policy supports affordability of post-secondary education by ensuring domestic tuition and fee increases remain low and predictable.
  - In place since 2005, the policy has kept domestic tuition increases limited to 2% per year. The policy was expanded to include mandatory fees in 2007.
  - The Policy is intended to create an appropriate balance of costs between students, institutions, and taxpayers so students have affordable access to a post-secondary education system that is sustainable over the long term.
  - Limiting tuition and mandatory fee increases has helped provide certainty and stability for students and their families when planning for the future.
  - According to 2023/24 Statistics Canada data, B.C. has the fourth lowest undergraduate tuition for all provinces in Canada – lower than Prince Edward Island, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia.
  - The Tuition Limit Policy does not apply to international student tuition.
- Work continues to address the previous Minister’s mandate commitment to “keep student fee increases low by strengthening the existing Tuition Fee Limit Policy to make sure institutions are not increasing fees beyond the prescribed limits.” This includes:
  - The ministry currently receives annual reporting from post-secondary institutions on tuition and fee increases and is consulted when new fees are being considered.
  - While reporting indicates little to no incidences of institutions increasing fees beyond the 2% cap, the ministry is reviewing the Tuition Limit Policy and its associated processes.
  - The ministry consistently seeks opportunities to clarify, update and refine the existing policy and associated processes.
  - This work will consider aspects of the policy where:
    - clarification is frequently sought or provided (e.g., what fees are considered mandatory; how increases can be applied to programs; what are the consultation requirements for new fees; what are the processes relating to revised programs);
    - input or concerns have been received by students or stakeholders; and,
    - the policy intersects with other ministry policies or work.

- The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services Report does not make any recommendations specifically related to the Tuition Limit Policy, but it does reference tuition and makes recommendations which may have implications for the policy:
  - Recommendation #2 – create a provincial strategy for international students, regulating international student tuition fees to provide predictability.
    - We have heard student organizations call on the ministry to include international tuition in the Tuition Limit Policy, to provide predictability of costs and limit tuition increases for international students.
    - International student tuition at public post-secondary institutions is set by the Board of Governors of each institution, independent of government.
    - The ministry’s long-standing guidelines set out the expectation that institutions set international student fees at a level that covers direct costs and overhead.
    - As part of our new measures to enhance standards and provide greater accountability for international education in B.C., the ministry is updating these guidelines for public post-secondary institutions and is requiring international student tuition fee transparency to prevent unexpected program fee increases.
    - This will ensure incoming international students know the entire cost of their education before they start their program (see tab 27 International Education Framework estimates note for more information).
    - Including international tuition in the Tuition Limit Policy would be inconsistent with ensuring international students are responsible for covering the cost of their education without a taxpayer subsidy.
  - Recommendation #3 - complete the post-secondary education funding review and implement an updated funding model.
    - As tuition is a component of overall public post-secondary institution revenue, Government may wish to consider updates to the Tuition Limit Policy depending on any decisions or recommendations relating to the funding review process.

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