



Minister's Estimates Notes

2025/2026

Ministry of
Post-Secondary Education
and Future Skills

April 2025

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Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
2025 Estimates Debate Binder
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Estimates – Motions

Opening Introductions and remarks Commencement of Estimates	Minister: “Mr./Mdme. Chair, it is with great pleasure that I rise to present the 2025/26 spending estimates for the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.” “Before I begin, I would like to introduce my Deputy Minister, Trevor Hughes.” [Introduce other staff as appropriate]. [Deliver opening remarks on Ministry priorities]
After Opening Remarks to Begin Debate	Minister: “Chair, I would be happy to receive comments, remarks and questions from the members of the Legislature.”
Adjournment of Estimates Debate	Minister: “I move that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.” Chair: Motion approved.
Completion of Estimates Debate	Minister: “I move that the committee rise and report resolution.” Chair: Motion approved.

List of people who will support the Minister:

- Trevor Hughes, Deputy Minister
- Kim Horn, EFO & 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
- Rachel Holmes, Assistant Deputy Minister of Immigration Services and Strategic Planning Division
- Tony Loughran, Assistant Deputy Minister of Governance, Legislation & Engagement Division
- Ministry Executive Directors will be available

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Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Budget 2025 Estimates – Opening Remarks

April 2025

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR
HON. ANNE KANG**

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

- **Thank you, Chair. Good morning/afternoon.**
- **I would like to start by acknowledging with gratitude that we're gathered here today in these Chambers on the territory of the Lekwungen peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.**
- **I'd also like to also recognize ministry staff who are present with me today and will be supporting me through our Estimates proceedings:**
 - **Trevor Hughes, Deputy Minister**
 - **Kim Horn, EFO & Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, Technology and Management Services Division**
 - **Chris Rathbone, Assistant Deputy Minister, Post-Secondary Policy and Programs Division**
 - **Joanna White, Assistant Deputy Minister, Labour Market Development Division**
 - **Rachel Holmes, Assistant Deputy Minister, Immigration Services and Strategic Planning Division, and**
 - **Tony Loughran, Assistant Deputy Minister Governance, Legislation & Engagement Division**
- **Since returning as Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, I have had the great opportunity to visit several post-secondary institutions and have appreciated the opportunity to meet with many educators and learners.**

- **I am also grateful for recent opportunities I've had to connect with trainers, employers and industry leaders from around the province.**
- **While we are facing challenging and uncertain times, our government continues to invest in post-secondary and training programs to support a strong economy in our province.**
- **We continue to make education and training more accessible, affordable and relevant so that British Columbians can gain the skills they need for good-paying, high-demand jobs.**
- **We remain committed to working with Indigenous partners to ensure that Indigenous learners can achieve their higher educational goals.**
- **Our province-led immigration policy and program delivery ensures newcomers are welcomed to British Columbia, and we are making the credential recognition process faster and easier for professionals with credentials issued in other jurisdictions.**
- **And we are helping to address workforce gaps and continuing our commitment to workers, economic**

development, and service delivery in key sectors including health, trades, and technology.

- **I am proud of the work of my Ministry and the many positive impacts these efforts have in the lives of British Columbians and I look forward to discussing these important issues and the programs that the ministry supports with colleagues today.**
- **And with that I turn it over to the Chair.**
- **Thank you.**

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Budget 2025 Estimates – Closing Remarks

April 2025

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR
HON. ANNE KANG**

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

- I want to thank the member and their colleagues for coming before the committee with their questions. We had a productive discussion.
- Before we move on with the vote, I want to acknowledge that it is a privilege to serve as Minister responsible for Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills – delivering post-secondary education and training for British Columbians and contributing to a strong, sustainable economy.

Motion

- Thank you very much, I move vote number 41, resolved that a sum not exceeding three billion, five hundred fifteen million, eight hundred and sixty-eight thousand dollars (\$3,515,868,000) be granted to His Majesty to defer the expenses of the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to the 31st of March 2026.

Title: B.C. Access Grant

Issue: Overview of the StudentAid BC Access Grant Program

Key Messages:

- The B.C. Access Grant provides up-front, non-repayable financial assistance to low- and middle-income learners enrolled in eligible full- and part-time undergraduate studies at B.C.'s 25 public post-secondary institutions.
- As of December 31, 2024, the B.C. Access Grant has supported over 85,000 students with over \$166 million in up-front, needs-based, non-repayable financial assistance.
- The B.C. Access Grant amount awarded to an eligible student replaces the equivalent amount of eligible B.C. student loan with non-repayable funding, thus reducing the amount of loan a student will have to repay at the end of their studies.
- All students who apply for student financial assistance are automatically assessed for the B.C. Access Grant.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The B.C. Government introduced the B.C. Access Grant in September 2020 to assist low- and middle-income learners to access and afford post-secondary education.
- Students who receive the B.C. Access Grant are also 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.
- The B.C. Access Grant offers the following three separate grant amounts:
 - A maximum of \$1,000 per academic year for students in programs two or more years in length.
 - A maximum of \$4,000 per academic year for students in programs under two years. A higher amount is provided because students in programs under two years are not eligible for federal Canada Student Grant funding.
 - A maximum of \$1,000 per academic year for students in part-time programs.

Table 1 – B.C. Access Grant

2020/21 FY Actuals	2021/22 FY Actuals	2022/23 FY Actuals	2023/24 FY Actuals	2024/25 FY Projected
\$30,725,000	\$35,770,000	\$34,611,000	\$38,146,000	\$39,595,000

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Title: Graduate Scholarships and Internships

Issue: Government support for graduate students, including scholarships and Mitacs internships for innovation.

Key Messages:

- As part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, the Ministry is supporting B.C.'s graduate students with scholarships of \$17,500.
- Since the B.C. Graduate Scholarship program first began in 2018, over 1,600 scholarships have been awarded to students in a wide range of programs, from research-intensive to professional degrees, with an emphasis but not exclusive focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics disciplines.
- In 2025/26, more than 200 scholarships will be awarded to B.C. graduate students.
- Additional graduate student supports include Mitacs internships. Through an investment of \$50 million in 2023, government is supporting 10,000 internships over five years, with stipends of \$10,000 per term for students.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The StrongerBC Economic Plan committed to accelerate talent development and skills training across the province, including a commitment to more graduate scholarships and internships for innovation.
- The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan committed to expanding merit-based graduate scholarships for students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields and other disciplines.
- 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.
 - An additional \$3.75 million was provided in 2021 and again in 2022.
 - Funding of \$5 million was provided in each of 2023/24 and 2024/25 through access to contingencies.
 - As announced in summer 2023, the award value of the scholarships has increased from \$15,000 to \$17,500.
 - Scholarships are administered by the 10 eligible public post-secondary institutions with graduate degree programs.

- Through a long-term partnership with Mitacs, the Ministry has provided over \$75 million in funding to support internships for innovation since 2018, including an investment of \$50 million in 2023, supporting internships over five years.
- The Mitacs¹ 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.
- The Ministry has several 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.
 - The Ministry projects that approximately 5,400 B.C. graduate students are accessing over \$95 million in combined federal and provincial student financial assistance through StudentAid BC in fiscal year 2024/25, including nearly \$2.8 million in non-repayable provincial grants and over \$39 million in interest-free B.C. student loan funding.

¹ Mitacs is a B.C.-based, national not-for-profit organization that delivers applied research training programs for students. It has funding arrangements with federal and other provincial governments.

Title: Provincial Tuition Waiver Program for Former Youth in Care

Issue: Overview of Provincial Tuition Waiver Program for Former Youth in Care

Key Messages:

- The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program removes barriers for former children and youth in care of all ages to access post-secondary education.
- Implemented in September 2017, the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program has waived over \$26 million in tuition and fees for over 3,175 former children and youth in care.
- The program supports eligible former children and youth in care who are attending full- or part-time studies under the graduate level at any of B.C.'s 25 public post-secondary institutions, Native Education College, and eligible union-based trades training providers.
- Implemented in August 2023, the Learning for Future Grant provides an annual grant of \$3,500 to assist with additional education costs for students who meet the eligibility requirements for the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program

- The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP) was expanded effective August 1, 2023, through a \$6.4 million annual program base budget increase, and a \$1.4 million Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) program funding reinvestment to:
 - Open the program to former youth in care of any age (previously age 19-26)
 - Expand eligibility for youth in care who turn(ed) 19 under any care status regardless of time in care
 - Add a new annual \$3,500 Learning for Future Grant tied to PTWP eligibility
 - Add program communications and outreach investments, and dedicated funding to post-secondary institutions to provide on campus support for former children and youth in care
- The program expansion responded to the Ministry's 2020 joint mandate commitment with MCFD to "...lead work to expand tuition waivers to all former youth in care, regardless of age" and was introduced in Budget 2023.
- Dedicated post-secondary institution funding has been used for investments in personnel, development of institution communities, best practices and resources for former children and youth in care students, and program promotion on and off campus.

- Since implementation of the program in 2017, the number of recipients has increased each year by an average of 30%. During the first year of program expansion (2023/24), the number of recipients increased by 56%. The average age of applicants has increased from 20 to 25.

Learning for Future Grant

- The Learning for Future Grant is available to provincial tuition waiver recipients enrolled in a program or course below the graduate level that leads, or will lead, to a credential.
- Since implementation in August 2023, over \$9.2M in Learning for Future Grant funding has been issued to over 1,600 Provincial Tuition Waiver Program eligible students.
- Over 1,120 eligible students received a Learning for Future Grant in 2023/24, totalling \$3.9M in grants issued. The Ministry is projecting a further 1,690 Learning for Future Grant recipients in 2024/25, totalling an estimated \$5.9M in grants issued.

First Nations Partners

- 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 current and former First Nations children and 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 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 BC student loans.

Appendix 1: Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Data Highlights

Table 1: Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Budget

(\$ millions)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Annual Program Base Budget	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	12.0
Increase to Base Budget (MCFD Budget Transfer/Reinvestment)	-	1.4	1.4	1.4	4.2
TB Approved Program Base Budget Increase	-	6.4	6.4	6.4	19.2
Total B.2023 Additional Funding	-	7.8	7.8	7.8	23.4
Total Annual Funding	4.0	11.8	11.8	11.8	35.4

Table 2: Total Program Recipients and Tuition Waivers Since Program Implementation

Fiscal Year	Number of Distinct Recipients	Annual Increase in Recipients	Tuition & Fees Waived
2024/25 (projected)	2,090	45%	\$7,810,000
2023/24	1,440	56%	\$5,598,000
2022/23	925	7%	\$3,390,000
2021/22	864	3%	\$3,337,000
2020/21	841	3%	\$3,017,000
2019/20	818	37%	\$3,269,000
2018/19	597	59%	\$2,413,000
2017/18	376	-	\$1,182,000

Table 3: Provincial Tuition Waiver Credentials 2017/18 - 2022/23

Credential Type	Credentials Awarded
Certificate	335
Bachelor	195
Diploma	190
Developmental	60
Other	10
Total	795

Table 4: Provincial Tuition Waiver Enrolment 2017/18 -2022/23

Program Area	% of Total
Arts and Sciences	39.2%
Human and Social Services	17.2%
Trades	10.8%
Business and Management	8.4%
Health	8.1%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	5.8%
Visual and Performing Arts	3.9%
Developmental	3.7%
Education	3.0%

Table 5: Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Recipients by Institution since FY 2020/21

Institution	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25 (Q3)
BC Institute of Technology	28	29	44	64	85
Camosun College	76	74	60	92	107
Capilano University	22	23	27	28	36
Coast Mountain College	Personal Information			12	14
College of New Caledonia	20	23	19	43	39
College of the Rockies	Personal Information		12	12	25
Douglas College	90	81	101	166	167
Emily Carr University of Art & Design	Personal Information			11	13
Justice Institute of BC	18	22	18	27	33
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	40	48	51	67	74
Langara College	46	50	49	79	76
Native Education College	Personal Information			12	12
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	25	14	15	21	26
North Island College	19	16	25	37	37
Northern Lights College	Personal Information				13
Okanagan College	44	45	44	74	60
Royal Roads University	-	Personal Information			
Selkirk College	Personal Information		11	15	23
Simon Fraser University	33	30	34	41	46
Thompson Rivers University	76	74	72	127	127
University of BC	42	46	54	79	89
University of BC - Okanagan	13	14	13	26	32
University of Northern BC	11	12	15	21	18
University of the Fraser Valley	72	85	92	132	59
University of Victoria	48	44	38	62	71
Vancouver Community College	20	30	30	40	38
Vancouver Island University	83	84	90	176	183
Out of Province Students	-	-	Personal Information	-	Personal Information
DISTINCT TOTAL*	841	864	925	1,440	1,463

* The distinct total of PTWP recipients does not equal the sum of the individual institution counts due to students attending multiple institutions within the same year.

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Title: **StudentAid BC Overview**

Issue: **StudentAid BC Student Financial Assistance Program Overview**

Key Messages:

- StudentAid BC delivers a wide range of provincial and federal financial assistance programs and services for students pursuing a post-secondary education at designated institutions in B.C. and around the globe.
- Over 75,000 British Columbians accessed student aid in 2023/24, receiving over \$1.1 billion in provincial and federal funding to support their studies.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- StudentAid BC 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 the following loans and grant programs:
 - B.C. Student Loans
 - B.C. Access Grant
 - Grants, services, and equipment for students with disabilities
 - Tuition waivers for former children and youth in care
 - Learning for Future grant for tuition waiver students
 - Grants for adults seeking to upgrade their education
 - Nurses' education bursary
 - Loan forgiveness for health and child service professions in underserved communities throughout the province
 - 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).

Provincial Loans

- B.C. student loans have been interest-free since 2019. This has resulted in over \$175 million in interest payments saved for students since that time.
- Effective August 1, 2023, weekly loan limits were increased for the first time since 2006.

Type	Previous (weekly)	New 23/24 (weekly)	Federal (weekly)
Without Dependents	\$110	\$220	\$300
With Dependents	\$140	\$280	\$300

- In 2023/24, the loan limit increases resulted in a 10 per cent increase in applications for student financial assistance over the previous fiscal year, and a 70 per cent increase in provincial disbursements to students. The average provincial disbursement increased from \$3,780 to \$5,870.

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 \$35.4 million in future repayments 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 per cent of their B.C. student loan forgiven over a 5-year term (up to 20 per cent 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 4,700 graduates have enrolled in the program and a total \$34.5 million 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 Actuals	2024/25 Projected
Canada Student Loans	\$492.005	\$375.896	\$334.593	\$489.950	\$523.000
Canada Student Grants	\$271.811	\$301.073	\$302.523	\$241.252	\$218.100
B.C. Student Loans	\$182.539	\$186.056	\$179.935	\$333.668	\$391.700
B.C. Student Grants	\$59.178	\$53.934	\$55.129	\$66.830	\$83.100
Total Funding	\$1,005.534	\$916.958	\$872.180	\$1,131.700	\$1,215.900

Table 2: Full- and Part-Time Student Financial Assistance Recipients (FY 2023/24)

Recipient Type	#	Recipient Type	#
Full-Time Recipients	69,046	Part-Time Recipients	6,195

*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	#
Total Unique Recipients	75,522

Table 3: Full-Time Student Financial Assistance Recipients Profile (FY 2023/24)*

Demographics			By Study Location	
Woman	63%	(43,157)	B.C. Publics	45,511
Single	81%	(56,148)	B.C. Privates	13,568
Married	15%	(10,505)	Out of Province in Country	7,706
Single Parent	4%	(2,636)	Out of Country	2,403
Under 25 Years Old	54%	(37,087)	By Credential Type	
Indigenous Identity	7%	(4,517)	Graduate	4,462
Permanent or Prolonged Disability	11%	(7,925)	Undergraduate	38,698
			Certificate/Diploma	25,588
			Other/Unknown	1,272

*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 2023/24 Ministry of Finance)

B.C. Student Loan Recipients		
Type of Recipient	Total	Amount
Recipients in Study or Grace	69,406	\$478,694,673
Recipients in Repayment	154,769	\$915,628,103
Recipients in Default	18,431	\$117,998,504
TOTAL Accounts Receivable	242,606	\$1,512,321,280

Title: Supports for Students with Disabilities

Issue: StudentAid BC Accessibility Related Funding Supports and Services for Students with Disabilities

Key Messages:

- The B.C. government is committed to making post-secondary education and training more accessible for all learners through a variety of support programs.
- StudentAid BC administers the Accessibility Supports Framework, a suite of student centred programs designed to facilitate access to post-secondary education for students with disabilities.
- In 2023/24, StudentAid BC provided over \$14.1 million in up-front Provincial disability grant funding to over 8,500 students.
- StudentAid BC works with post-secondary institutions and accessibility service providers to ensure students with disabilities receive the financial assistance and access to assistive services and technology they need to be successful.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The StudentAid BC Accessibility Supports Framework administers the following:

Financial assistance programs

- B.C. Access Grant for Students with Disabilities (up to \$1,560/year)
- B.C. Supplemental Bursary for Students with Disabilities (\$800/year)
- B.C. Access Grant for Deaf Students (up to \$30,000/year)
- Canada Student Grant for Students with Disabilities (\$2,800/year)
- Learning Disability Assessment Bursary (up to \$3,500 one-time)

Assistive services and technology

- Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment for Students with Disabilities (up to \$20,000/year)
 - B.C. Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities (up to \$12,000/year).
- The Ministry provides funding to the Accessibility Services Offices at all 25 public post-secondary institutions through annual block operating grants.

- Staff at the Accessibility Services Offices provide academic accommodations and accessibility services to students with disabilities, as well as access to StudentAid BC funded Centralized Accessibility Services which support access to:
 - Accessible digital and alternate format resource materials
 - American Sign Language practitioners and captioning services
 - Loans of assistive technology
- The number of students with disabilities receiving financial assistance increased by approximately 22 per cent between 2022/23 and 2023/24, resulting in increased accessibility program expenditures of approximately \$2.6 million. The number of students is projected to further increase by 16 per cent in 2024/25, resulting in increased expenditures of \$4 million.

	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25 (Projected)
Number of SFA recipients with a disability	7,290	8,895	10,280
Accessibility Grants	\$11,095,000	\$14,140,000	\$17,440,000
Other Accessibility Support Programs	\$4,470,000	\$4,025,000	\$4,775,000

Accessible Education and Training:

- Accessible Education and Training programs for students with cognitive or developmental disabilities are offered at 14 public post-secondary institutions and are funded through annual block operating grants.
- Approximately 785 learners access Accessible Education and Training programs each year.
- These programs provide literacy, numeracy, life skills, and employment training for students with cognitive disabilities or a combination of learning difficulties that often hinder further education, employment, or independence.
- Accessible Education and Training 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.

Title: Tuition Limit Policy

Issue: The Tuition Limit Policy, as it relates to student affordability and public post-secondary institutions' financial sustainability.

Key Messages:

- Government is committed to an accessible and affordable post-secondary education system, to ensure people have opportunities to meet their education and employment goals.
- We continue to maintain an annual cap of 2 per cent for domestic tuition and fees.
- This ensures tuition and fee increases remain low and predictable – providing stability and certainty so students and their families can plan for the costs of education.
- Our government supports student affordability through various other measures, including: eliminating student loan interest, investing in the needs-based B.C. Access Grant and affordable student housing, and expanding the tuition waiver for former youth in care.

If asked about the Tuition Limit Policy in relation to institutional revenue:

- The Ministry is continuing to review how operations at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions are funded to ensure they have the resources to support student success in these financially challenging times.

If asked about international student tuition:

- Government's new guidelines encourage institutions to set international tuition at a level that covers direct costs and overhead, so that taxpayers do not subsidize international students.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Established in 2005, the Tuition Limit Policy limits domestic tuition increases to 2 per cent annually. The Policy was expanded in 2007 to include mandatory fees.
 - The primary intent of the Policy is to ensure increases remain low and predictable, providing stability for students and their families in planning for the costs of education.
 - It is also 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.
 - According to 2024/25 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.

- Student groups have advocated for changes to the Policy, including requests to freeze or reduce tuition levels, and to expand application of the policy to international tuition.
- Public post-secondary institutions have highlighted challenges relating to:
 - Allowable increases not covering actual costs of offering more expensive programs (e.g., technology, health, and trades programs).
 - Ability to update long-standing mandatory fees, where services change (e.g., technology) or include variable costs (e.g., field trip costs for fuel or lodging).
- With recent inflationary pressures and decreasing international tuition revenue, many institutions face increased financial pressures and are seeking ways to increase revenue and decrease costs.
- As tuition is a component of overall public post-secondary institution revenue, the Tuition Limit Policy may be considered in conjunction with broader funding decisions.

International Student Tuition (see Tab 25)

- International student tuition at public post-secondary institutions is set by the Board of Governors of each institution, independent of government.
- Government's current guidelines encourage institutions to set international tuition at a level that covers direct costs and overhead, so that taxpayers do not subsidize international students.
- On January 29, 2024, the ministry announced it would implement new enrolment guidelines for public institutions that set expectations that public post-secondary institutions provide international students with transparent tuition fee costs over the standard duration of the student's study program, including any maximum expected increases in tuition.

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Title: Declaration Act Action Plan – PSFS Items

Issue: Summary of PSFS DAAP Actions and Implementation Progress

Key Messages:

- We are working closely with Indigenous partners and other lead Ministries to advance our Declaration Act Action Plan commitments.
- My Ministry leads four specific actions and supports another five actions led by the Ministry of Education and Childcare or the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.
- We take our lead from Indigenous partners in terms of which actions are of higher priority for them and their capacity to engage in the work.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The Ministry is the lead on four Declaration Act Action Plan (DAAP) actions and supports an additional five actions led by other Ministries (see Attachment).
- The four actions that the Ministry leads are all in progress, specifically:
 - Action 1.8: Indigenous Institutes** – *First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act* passed in May 2024. Continuing to collaborate on regulations, policies and procedures to implement the Act. Work with Métis Nation BC on a Métis Institute continues.
 - Action 1.9: Native Education College** – Ministry staff are working with NEC staff to bring it into alignment with public institution standards.; **Urban Indigenous Youth Education Project** – business case development underway.
 - Action 4.05: Indigenous Policy Framework** – Work will begin in 2025/26 with Indigenous and sector partners. Work on two sub-components - the Aboriginal Service Plan and Student Housing has been underway for some time.
 - Action 4.41: Indigenous Skills Training and Education Funding** – some funding allocated directly to First Nations and Métis partners as well as First Nations and urban organizations. A program review is planned for 2025/26.
- The Ministry supports five actions led by other Ministries:
 - Action 3.3 (ECC lead): Indigenous-specific Racism Review** - Early discussions have occurred with partners.
 - Action 4.2 (ECC lead): Recruitment and Retention of Indigenous Teachers** – A Call for Community-Based Teacher Education proposals has concluded and projects will begin in the coming months.

Action 4.18 (ECC lead): First Nations Children and Youth in Care – work is progressing on implementation of a Workplan.

Action 4.29 (MIRR lead with ECC): Strategy for Revitalization of Indigenous Languages – work has not started.

Action 4.30 (MIRR lead): Support Indigenous Language Revitalization – some funding has been secured to support the Indigenous Language Fluency Degree, additional resources required.

- DAAP reporting occurs twice per year to inform Cabinet (Fall and Spring) and reporting to the public annually in June.
- Reporting is reviewed by key Indigenous partners and any feedback is discussed/incorporated prior to the Ministry finalizing submissions to the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.
- Work on each action item is performed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous partners, respecting their priorities and capacity.

Attachment - Status of PSFS Declaration Act Action Plan Actions

PSFS-led Action Plan Actions		
Item	Status	Next Steps
1.8 (PSFS only) Recognize the integral role of Indigenous-led post-secondary institutes as a key pillar of B.C.'s post-secondary system through the provision of core funding, capacity funding and the development of legislation. This includes institutes mandated by First Nations, as well as a Métis post-secondary institute being developed by Métis Nation BC.	- The First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes (FNMPISI) Act received Royal Assent on May 16, 2024. - Legislation recognizes FNMPISI as a key pillar of the post-secondary system in BC and commits the Minister to provide ongoing operational and capacity funding to institutes that meet the eligibility criteria. - Through the StrongerBC: Action Plan, PSFS secured: \$6 million in annual ongoing operating funding for eligible First Nations Mandated Institutes and \$450,000 in annual ongoing capacity funding. - The Ministry continues to provide funding towards planning and implementation of the business plan for a Métis post-secondary institute carried out by Métis Nation BC.	- The Ministry is working in cooperation and collaboration with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), the Indigenous Adult Higher Learning Association (IAHLA), and First Nations to develop regulations, policies, and procedures required for implementation. - Cabinet Conferences
1.9 (PSFS and Infrastructure) A) Work with the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and the Urban Native Youth Association to co-develop an urban Indigenous centre that supports the childcare, housing and post-secondary needs of Indigenous learners, and B) strengthen the capacity of the Native Education College to provide culturally relevant post-secondary opportunities for urban Indigenous learners.	A) The Province funded the business case development for the Urban Indigenous Youth Education Project in collaboration with the Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) and Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) aiming to establish a new Indigenous youth center in Vancouver and serve as NVIT's Vancouver campus. B) The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills and Native Education College (NEC) are working together on capacity building, including the Ministry providing both ongoing annual and one-time funding.	A) Plans are being developed to establish a hub in East Vancouver co-locating several services for Indigenous people, in particular Indigenous youth: housing, a post-secondary campus, a community youth centre and childcare. B) NEC nears completion of plans to align with other public post-secondary institutions (e.g. staffing, policies, bylaws, governance).
4.05 (PSFS only) Co-develop a policy framework for Indigenous post-secondary education and skills training that includes:	The development of a new Policy Framework was sequenced after the First Nations institutes legislation and work is expected to get underway in 2025/26.	Collaborative work will continue in 2025/26.

	There has been some progress on sub elements of the Action as identified below.	
Supporting post-secondary institutions to be more culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners and communities;	This will be addressed as the Framework is further developed.	Collaborative work will continue in 2025/26.
Expanding the Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP) program to all 25 public post-secondary institutions;	The Aboriginal Service Plan program expanded to all 25 public post-secondary institutions in 2022-23.	Collaborative work on detailed program parameters will continue through 2025/26.
Ensuring that Indigenous learners have access to student housing that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically, and culturally;	Student housing mechanisms have been developed collaboratively with FNEC and MNBC to expand priority access for Indigenous learners and former youth in care learners.	Implementation is underway in the sector. Discussions in progress with FNEC and MNBC on refinements based on Distinctions Based Approach.
Developing mechanisms for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities to play an integral role in public post-secondary institutions' decision-making; and	This will be addressed as the Framework is further developed.	Collaborative work will continue in 2025/26.
Identifying legislative amendments needed to ensure all public post-secondary institution boards include at least one Indigenous person.	Currently being addressed through policy.Cabinet Confidences Cabinet Confidences	On hold Cabinet Confidences Cabinet Confidences
4.41 (PSFS and SDPR) Work with First Nations, Métis chartered communities and urban Indigenous organizations to provide funding for self-determined, community-led programs for Indigenous Peoples to upgrade skills, obtain credentials, secure employment, and develop and support community economies.	- PSFS provides provincial funding to FNEC, First Nations, Métis Nation BC, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres for community-based skills training and education that meets self-determined labour market development needs and priorities. - The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) provided \$27.3 million in strategic investment initiatives during 2023 to 2026. - This includes \$4 million to the First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPS) to plan and deliver programming to increase the employment of First Nations	- PSFS has been using an interim approach to the administration of the Indigenous Skills Training and Education program. - A tentative plan to engage on the program approach with FNEC, IAHLA, First Nations, First Nations partners, MNBC, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, and urban Indigenous organizations, is anticipated for 2025/26.

	people in First Nations public sector administration. • The remaining \$23.3 million was provided to the New Relationship Trust (NRT) to establish an Indigenous Labour Market fund to support First Nations governments and Indigenous organizations. • As of February 2025, NRT has approved 38 projects for a total of \$4.68 million.	
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Actions Led by Other Ministries (PSFS supports)		
Item	Status	Next Steps
3.3 (ECC) Conduct an external review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in the provincial public education system, and create a strategy, including resources and supports, to address findings.	• As a result of a request from First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) in August 2023, the scope of work on this action has expanded to include post-secondary education. • ECC, PSFS, FNEC, and FNLC have established a Technical Table to discuss Terms of Reference, potential reviewers, review process and a workplan.	• Discussions with FNEC, FNLC, ECC, and PSFS are underway. • Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) will also be engaged in the work to represent the needs of Métis students in BC.
4.2 (ECC and PSFS) Develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system.	• FNEC, IAHLA, ECC, and PSFS are working collaboratively to co-develop initiatives to support the training, recruitment and retention of First Nations teachers. • A sub-working group was developed to launch a call for proposals for community-based teacher education programs.	• Call for proposals for First Nations community-based teacher education has concluded. • PSFS is working with successful proponents on funding arrangements. • Consultations with MNBC have occurred and PSFS is currently finalizing the approach for Métis teacher recruitment and retention.
4.18 (ECC, MCFD, and PSFS) As committed to in the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, co-develop and implement measures to support improved education outcomes of current and former First Nation children and youth in care, including meaningful data collection to inform policy planning and service delivery.	• The Technical Table, consisting of FNEC, FNLC, ECC, PSFS, and MCFD, developed a First Nation Children and Youth in Care Protocol Workplan and Terms of Reference. • Both documents were approved by Ministers and First Nations Leadership at the Oversight Table in November 2023. • The protocol includes bi-annual Oversight Table meetings (inc. Ministers and First Nations leadership).	• The Technical Table meets monthly to implement workplan actions. • The Oversight Table normally meets twice annually, with Spring 2025 as the next planned meeting.

4.29 (IRR, PSFS, and ECC) Establish an Indigenous-led working group to develop a strategy for the revitalization of Indigenous languages in B.C., including potential legislative supports.	• ECC, IRR, and PSFS had been working together to develop a draft workplan to apply a sequenced, distinctions-based approach (DBA) for engaging with Indigenous partners. • Planning work to engage partners was paused late in 2024.	• First Nations partners have raised considerations relevant to Action 4.29 that require time for government to understand and address. Further planning is expected to resume in 2025/26.
4.30 (IRR and PSFS) Support Indigenous language revitalization through sustainable funding.	• PSFS is working with FNEC and IAHLA to support the implementation of the Indigenous Language Fluency Degree (ILFD) Framework. • First Nations, First Nations-mandated post-secondary institutes, and public post-secondary institutions partner to deliver degree programs in First Nations languages. • Through the StrongerBC: Action Plan funding, the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills will provide \$1 million annually over three years (2023/24-2025/26, \$3 million total).	• The Ministry continues to support the work of the six ILFD program sites. • Additional funding is needed to fully support the program sites and to ensure that PSIs can meet First Nation community needs for language programs.

Title: First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act

Issue: Implementing First Nation Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Legislation

Key Messages:

- The *First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act* (“the Act”) is a significant step toward reconciliation in post-secondary education with First Nations in B.C.
- First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes provide access to education in First Nations’ communities that is rooted in culture, language, and values, thereby fostering strength, pride and identity.
- The Act provides for ongoing operational funding and capacity funding to eligible institutes, ensuring sustainability and predictability.
- The Act received Royal Assent in May 2024 and is anticipated to come into force in the Fall of 2025 with implementation in early 2026.
- The Ministry of Post Secondary and Future Skills (the Ministry), First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) are now co-developing the policies and procedures required to implement the Act.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan 1.8, the Province committed to *“Recognize the integral role of Indigenous-led post-secondary institutes as a key pillar of B.C.’s post-secondary system through the provision of core funding, capacity funding, and the development of legislation. This includes institutes mandated by First Nations, as well as a Métis post-secondary institute being developed by Métis Nation BC.”*
- First Nations Mandated Institutes provide post-secondary education and training in First Nation communities that helps address First Nations’ workforce needs, revitalize First Nations language and culture, and address the continuing impacts of colonialism and racism.
- In fiscal year 2021/22, the Ministry began providing one-time operational and capacity funding for eligible First Nations-Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes.
- The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan provides for annual ongoing funding of \$6.45 million for operational and capacity funding for eligible institutes.
- The *First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act* commits to providing annual funding to eligible mandated institutes.
- The policies and procedures to operationalize the legislation are being developed in consultation and cooperation with First Nations.

Contact: Carrie Dusterhoft, Director, Indigenous Policy and Engagement

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- Regulations are required to establish the criteria that will determine a mandated institute's eligibility for funding.
- Further consultation with First Nations will be undertaken prior to finalizing the regulation, policies and procedures that are currently under development.
- The *First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes Act* fulfills Action 1.8 with regard to First Nations.
- The Ministry continues to work with Métis Nation BC on the Métis component of this Action.

Title: Indigenous Skills Training and Education Program

Issue: Indigenous Skills Training and Education Program Funding

Key Messages:

- Government supports Reconciliation with Indigenous people through the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Declaration Act and the Action Plan.
- The Ministry provides funding to First Nations, Métis and Indigenous organizations through the Indigenous Skills Training and Education (ISTE) Program for self-determined, community-based skills training and post-secondary education.
- Education and Training initiatives include post-secondary course work, essential skills and upgrading, literacy and numeracy, and trades training programs.
- The Program also includes supports such as childcare, transportation, counselling, and cultural supports.
- In 2024/25, we anticipate that more than 4,000 participants will benefit, more than 2,200 are expected to secure employment and more than 1,000 are anticipated to continue education and training.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The Ministry provides funding through the Indigenous Skills Training and Education (ISTE) Program to First Nations, Métis and urban Indigenous organizations for self-determined, community-based skills training and post-secondary education that leads to employment, community revitalization, and socioeconomic well-being.
- Delivery of the ISTE Program is guided by the Declaration Act Action Plan Item 4.41 to “work with First Nations, Métis chartered communities and urban Indigenous organizations to provide funding for self-determined, community-led programs for Indigenous Peoples to upgrade skills, obtain credentials, secure employment, and develop and support community economies.”
- ISTE’s 2024/25 \$30.7 million budget is supported through three sources:
 - \$5 million through the BC-Canada Workforce Development Agreement
 - \$15.7 million through the Stronger BC: Future Ready Action Plan
 - \$10 million from Provincial base funding
- In 2024/25, the ISTE Program provided \$14.5 million to 51 First Nations across B.C., or their designate, \$7.4 million to Métis Nation BC, \$2.2 million to the BC Association of

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Friendship Centers, \$5 million to the First Nations Education Steering Committee, and \$1.6 million to various Indigenous initiatives.

- Funded projects include post-secondary education, essential skills and upgrading, early childhood education, trades training programs, language training, office administration, food sovereignty, and literacy and numeracy.
- Program funding provides direct delivery of training and education and participant supports such as training allowance, childcare and cultural supports to remove barriers to accessing and succeeding in skills training and education programs.
- The primary outcome of funded initiatives is securing employment and/or moving on to further education or training. However, Nations and organizations can identify additional desired outcomes to measure success due to individual, community or labour market situations.
- In 2024/25, program staff anticipate that 4,047 participants will be served, of which 2,229 are expected to move on to employment and 1,090 to further education or training.
- In 2023/24, 4,525 participants were served, 2,704 participants were employed and 642 continued with education or training.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills plans to engage with First Nations, Métis Nation BC and Indigenous partners in a distinctions-based engagement to co-develop a redesigned ISTE program in 2025/26.
- The 2025/26 ISTE Program budget has not been confirmed.

Title: Indigenous-Specific Racism Review

Issue: Implementing an Indigenous Specific Racism Review in Education

Key Messages:

- In 2021, the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) called on the Province to commission an independent distinctions-based investigation and report on racism in the education system.
- My Ministry, along with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, has committed to an external review of systemic and Indigenous-specific racism in the K-12 and post-secondary public education systems.
- Our two Ministries are in the early stages of discussions and planning for the review in collaboration with our Indigenous partners.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Declaration Act Action Plan Action Item 3.03 commits to “conduct an external review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in the provincial public education system, and create a strategy, including resources and supports, to address findings.”
- The Ministry of Education and Childcare (ECC) is identified as the lead Ministry, however, both PSFS and ECC will share responsibility for implementing Action 3.03.
- PSFS has secured \$1.5 million over three years through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan of over three years to support the review.
- ECC has secured \$500,000 in funding.
- In November 2023, PSFS and ECC met with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) and agreed that staff would form a technical table.
- The technical table has met to discuss a draft Terms of Reference, a timeline and potential candidates to lead the review.
- The draft Terms of Reference is based on the *In Plain Sight* report which considered Indigenous racism in the health care system. It includes both an inquiry into Indigenous-specific racism and a commitment to make recommendations related to the review.
- It is anticipated that the review would take two years once the Terms of Reference are approved and an individual to lead the review is chosen.
- Initial discussions have been held with Métis Nation BC (MNBC), and further engagement is required.

Contact: Carrie Dusterhoft, Director, Indigenous Policy and Engagement Branch

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- Next steps include:
 - Cabinet Confidences
 - Identify an independent investigator to lead the review
 - Develop an engagement plan
 - Engage with MNBC and Indigenous Peoples more broadly.

Title: Indigenous Student Data in B.C. Public Post-Secondary

Issue: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Learners Data

Key Messages:

- Indigenous learners are opting to enrol in varying institution types and programs, and show increasing enrolment, FTEs, and credential attainment post-COVID.
- There has been consistent enrolment growth of Indigenous learners in Indigenous language programs, aligning with language revitalization efforts and the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.
- Compared to non-Indigenous learners, Indigenous learners continue to experience gaps in K-12 completions, post-secondary transitions and retention, and employment.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- 7.6% (25,870) of domestic learners enrolled in British Columbia public post-secondary institutions in the 2022/23 Academic Year (AY) self-identified as Indigenous: ¹
 - 49% (12,725) First Nations
 - 21% (5,430) Métis
 - 2% (400) Inuit
 - 32% (8,215) Indigenous identity only
- In 2021, 6% of the B.C. population 15 to 64 years old were Indigenous.
- Compared to non-Indigenous learners, a higher proportion of Indigenous learners are women (60% vs. 54%) and enroll later in life (57% of Indigenous learners are 25 years and older vs. 50% of non-Indigenous learners).

Transitions to Public Post-Secondary are slightly lower than non-Indigenous transition rates

- In 2022/23, the Indigenous learner 5-year cumulative transition rate to public post-secondary was 63% compared to a non-Indigenous learner transition rate of 69%.
- Indigenous women learners have consistently higher transition rates to public post-secondary than Indigenous men learners (see Table 1).

Table 1. 5-Year Cumulative Transition Rate by Gender, Indigenous Identity and High School Grad Year

Indigenous Identity	Gender	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Indigenous	Woman	67%	66%	66%	67%	68%
	Man	61%	60%	59%	57%	58%
Indigenous Total		64%	63%	63%	62%	63%
Non-Indigenous	Woman	73%	73%	71%	71%	69%
	Man	71%	70%	70%	69%	68%
Non-Indigenous Total		72%	71%	71%	70%	69%

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Enrolment - Indigenous learners have higher proportions of enrolment in regions outside the Mainland/Southwest; in Colleges; and, in Human and Social Services, Trades, and Developmental programs than non-Indigenous learners

- Approximately 12% of Indigenous learners are enrolled at a public post-secondary institution in the Cariboo/North region, compared to 3% of non-Indigenous learners (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. Academic Year 2022/23 Domestic Enrolment and 2021 BC 15 to 34 year-old Population by Region and Indigenous Identity

Development Region	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous	
	Public Post-Secondary Enrolment	Population 15-34 years old	Public Post-Secondary Enrolment	Population 15-34 years old
Cariboo/North	12%	21%	3%	5%
Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	29%	21%	19%	12%
Mainland/Southwest	38%	34%	63%	69%
Vancouver Island/Coast	21%	23%	15%	14%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission; Statistics Canada 2021 Census program

- A higher proportion of Indigenous learners enrol at Colleges than non-Indigenous learners, driven primarily by the enrolment of First Nations learners (see Table 3 below).

Table 3. Academic Year 2022/23 Domestic Enrolment by Institution Type and Indigenous Identity

Institution Type	First Nations	Métis	Non-Indigenous
Colleges	35%	31%	30%
Institutes	22%	17%	19%
Teaching-Intensive Universities	25%	25%	22%
Research-Intensive Universities	17%	27%	29%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

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- A higher proportion of First Nations learners enrol in Developmental (e.g., Adult Basic Education, English Language Learning) and Trades, and lower rates in Business and Management, and Engineering and Applied Sciences (see Table 4).
- There has been consistent enrolment growth in Indigenous language, education, and studies programs, with Indigenous learners representing 73% of students in programs.

Table 4. 2022/23 Academic Year Enrolment by Program Area and Indigenous Identity

Program Area	First Nations	Métis	Non-Indigenous
Arts and Sciences	27%	30%	29%
Trades	14%	12%	9%
Human and Social Services	13%	13%	12%
Developmental	12%	6%	5%
Health	8%	12%	11%
Business and Management	9%	10%	12%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	7%	10%	12%
Personal Improvement and Leisure	4%	1%	4%
Education	3%	4%	3%
Visual and Performing Arts	2%	3%	3%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

FTEs – Indigenous learners comprise 7% of the total domestic student FTE

- In the 2022/23 Fiscal Year (FY), Indigenous learners represent 7.1% of domestic FTEs.
- 13,808 Indigenous FTEs were delivered system-wide.
 - 2,331 (17%) of those were funded by SkilledTradesBC.

Credentials – Growth in bachelor's degrees awarded over the past five years

- 3,663 Credentials were awarded to Indigenous learners in 2022/23 FY, an increase of 1.9% from the previous year (3,595).
- A higher proportion of credentials awarded to First Nations and Métis learners are at the certificate level compared to non-Indigenous learners (see Table 5).

Table 5. 2022/23 Fiscal Year Credentials Awarded by Credential Type and Indigenous Identity

Credential Type	First Nations	Métis	non-Indigenous
Certificate	51.9%	36.3%	27.2%
Bachelor	24.3%	44.1%	51.6%
Diploma	15.2%	12.4%	15.5%
Graduate & First Professional	4.3%	4.4%	4.2%
Developmental	4.2%	2.8%	1.5%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%

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Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

- In the past five FYs, the most notable increases in credentials have been for bachelor's degrees (13%; 942 to 1,065) and graduate and first professional degrees (17%; 375 to 430).
- Although bachelor's, graduate and first professional degree credentials accounted for only 44% of credentials awarded to Indigenous learners in 2022/23, this increase has resulted in the overall increase in credentials awarded.
- In the past five FYs, the number of eligible Indigenous learners for new teacher certification increased by 33%, from 90 in 2018/19 to 120 in 2022/23.

Student Outcomes – Higher unemployment rates overall except for Baccalaureate grads

- Indigenous Baccalaureate Graduates were also more likely to be employed in a job related to their program (83%) than non-Indigenous Baccalaureate Graduates (76%).

Table 6. Graduate Unemployment Rate: 2021-2023 Student Outcomes Survey Results

Student Survey Group	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Baccalaureate Graduates	5.2%	6.5%
Diploma, Associate Degree and Certificate Graduates	8.4%	7.6%
Apprenticeship Learners	5.6%	2.8%
Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners	15.5%	9.3%

Source: BC Student Outcomes Surveys, 2023

- The Ministry is working to implement its commitments in the Declaration Act Action Plan including developing and implementing First Nations-mandated Institutes legislation, supporting First Nations languages and teacher education as well as providing community-based program funding for education and skills training.

¹ Indigenous self-identification information in the public post-secondary system is collected based on learners self-identifying as an Aboriginal person (i.e. First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) at a B.C. public post-secondary institution, or as a person with Aboriginal ancestry in the B.C. K-12 system. The non-Indigenous category may include Indigenous learners who have not self-identified.

Title: Native Education College

Issue: Native Education College - support for operations to ensure continuity of service

Key Messages:

- Native Education College (NEC) provides Indigenous learners with high quality skills credentials that allow them to achieve employment goals and pursue higher education.
- NEC has increased enrollment by 87 per cent since 2022 - from 140 to 262 learners today.
- Government has invested \$21 million with NEC since 2020/21.
- Ongoing investment supports government's Declaration Act Action Plan commitment to strengthen NEC's capacity to provide culturally relevant post-secondary education opportunities for urban Indigenous learners.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Declaration Act Action Plan Action 1.9 (in part) commits to "...strengthen the capacity of the Native Education College to provide culturally relevant post-secondary opportunities for urban Indigenous learners."
- Native Education College's (NEC) mission is to be "the college of choice for Indigenous learners who prefer a culturally authentic and holistic learning environment that celebrates their ways of being, worldviews, and pedagogies."
- NEC currently delivers post-secondary program certificates and diplomas in ten subject areas including Indigenous Adult Basic Education.^{Business Information}
- For the first time, in 2024/25 NEC offered an Associate of Arts Degree - Indigenous Studies. This 2-year degree is transferable to public post-secondary institutions to pursue a higher degree.
- NEC is currently a private institution, and since 2021 there have been discussions about NEC potentially becoming a publicly designated institution.
- The Ministry has been working with NEC over the past four years to: bring them into alignment with the *College and Institutes Act*; expand their programming; increase its teaching and operational staff; conduct organizational and Board restructuring; and ensure continuity of service with the goal of NEC becoming a public post-secondary institution.
- NEC reports over 800 applicants to its programs annually, demonstrating high demand for their culturally safe approach to education delivery.

- Since 1987/88, the Ministry has supported NEC's operations by providing approx. \$2 million annually.
- In 2022/23 funding increased to approx. \$3.2 million through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, and in 2024/25 the Ministry provided \$6.9 million (ongoing and one-time funds) to address operational pressures in 2024/25 and in future years.
- Cabinet Confidences
-

Title: **Prioritization of Indigenous Learners and Current/Former Youth in Care in Student Housing**

Issue: **Update on adopting student housing prioritization practices across PSIs.**

Key Messages:

- Section 4.5 of the *Declaration Act Action Plan* commits government to ensuring that Indigenous learners have access to student housing that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically, and culturally.
- The Ministry has taken a collaborative approach to this initiative, including public post-secondary institutions (PSIs), the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), Métis Nation BC and student associations.
- Work is ongoing and the Ministry is committed to increasing access to student housing for Indigenous learners.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Based on the *Declaration Act Action Plan*, and the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol Agreement, the Ministry began the Priority Access Initiative in 2022.
 - Pursuant to section 4.5 of the Declaration Act Action Plan: ensure that Indigenous learners have access to student housing that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically and culturally.
 - Pursuant to section 7.0 of the draft First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol Agreement Workplan: ensure institutions have processes and policies in place to prioritize student housing beds for current/former youth in care (CFYIC) pursuing post-secondary education in B.C.
- Under the *University Act* and *College and Institute Act*, institutions have authority for the management of student housing buildings, including priority access policy and implementation.
- Several PSIs are already prioritizing these student groups; as of 2021, of the 17 PSIs with student housing, 10 prioritize Indigenous students and 5 prioritize CFYIC students.
- In December 2023, government released the Distinctions-Based Approach Primer which further shapes policy and program consideration in relation to First Nations.
- It is anticipated that government will release further guidance in 2025 to support appropriate implementation of a distinctions-based approach.

Progress on Work

- Four mechanisms have been identified for implementation in partnership with FNEC and PSIs.
 1. Co-develop leading practices to provide sector guidance on implementation.
 2. Engagement with PSI leadership: Letters to PSI presidents requesting their support and facilitating discussions with senior level staff for in-depth discussions on challenges and opportunities.
 3. Implement sector reporting to measure progress.
 4. Implement new funding requirements for future student housing projects, requiring PSIs to implement priority access policies across all housing inventory, not just new buildings.
- The Ministry is currently working with partners to understand how to appropriately apply a distinction-based approach to student housing prioritization.

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Title: Asylum Claimants

Issue: Provincial actions to monitor and support asylum (refugee) claimants in B.C.

Key Messages:

- The federal government is responsible for securing our border and managing refugee claims.
- The federal government has invested \$1.3 billion to implement Canada's Border Plan and safeguard the integrity of our immigration and asylum systems.
- B.C. does our part in supporting eligible refugee claimants with a range of provincial services such as settlement services and other programs.
- The Province continues to be a willing partner in asylum management, where cross-government efforts are supported by federal leadership and resourcing

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- New asylum claims in B.C. have increased three-fold in the last two years, from 3,890 in 2022 to 11,450 in 2024. Since September 2024, B.C. has consistently received around 1,000 new claims per month.
- In 2024, claimants accounted for 4.4% of all temporary residents arriving in B.C. and 3.5% of all newcomers to the province (temporary and permanent).
- B.C. has the highest proportion of temporary residents in the country – one in every 11 B.C. residents is a temporary resident. As permits expire in 2025, there is risk of increased asylum claims from individuals seeking a pathway to permanent residency.
- On average, it takes three years for asylum claims to be determined by the Immigration Refugee Board of Canada. As of December 31, 2024, there were 13,795 individuals with open asylum claims residing in B.C.
- The Province is closely monitoring potential caseload pressures from increased asylum claims through ongoing cross-ministry engagement.
- B.C.'s Safe Haven program provides specialized settlement services to claimants to address their unique vulnerabilities and needs. Through the launch of this program in April 2024, the geographic reach of services was extended beyond Vancouver to include five additional communities (Kelowna, Abbotsford, Coquitlam, Victoria, and Surrey).
- The federal government is responsible for securing our border and managing asylum claims. B.C. is actively engaged with the federal government on border security, immigration integrity, and potential migration flows from the United States. This includes joint planning meetings with relevant federal departments.

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Title: BC Provincial Nominee Program – Addressing Fraud

Issue: Activities and initiatives of the BC PNP's Anti-Fraud and Investigations Unit (AFIU)

Key Messages:

- We are aware of the risk of fraud and corruption within the immigration system and continue to strengthen our approach to detect and mitigate this behaviour.
- We educate our clients and the public about immigration fraud and how to report it, and have a dedicated email address for them to report fraud in our program.
- We continue to collaborate at the federal and provincial levels to increase cooperation on investigations, improve communication and share information.
- Our goal is to have effective and efficient Anti-Fraud measures in place to detect and deter immigration fraud and exploitation.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The BC PNP established an Anti-Fraud and Investigations Unit (AFIU) in 2020. It currently has four staff dedicated to investigating fraud and misrepresentation. To date, the unit has completed more than 2200 reviews or investigations, with appropriate actions taken when fraud and misrepresentation have been detected. All costs are covered through BC PNP application fees.
- The BC PNP has established a fraud risk management framework and risk registry to identify risks and prioritize actions to address based on risk level.
- Our key external partners and collaborators include Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), the Law Society of B.C., and the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC). We have information sharing systems in place with IRCC and the Law Society, and are currently working to establish one with CICC.
- We are also aware of the risks posed by unscrupulous and unlicensed individuals in the immigration consultant services industry, and are working on increasing awareness of fraud scams and tactics to better protect prospective immigrants and employers.
- Helpful resources about immigration fraud are available on the welcomebc.ca website. Anyone with information about fraud directly related to the BC PNP can email a fraud tip to: PNP.fraud.tips@gov.bc.ca.

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Title: BC Provincial Nominee Program – Entrepreneur Immigration

Issue: BC is focused on attracting international entrepreneurs to communities to grow and diversify the provincial economy

Key Messages:

- Entrepreneur Immigration facilitates immigration for foreign entrepreneurs who bring their business expertise to manage businesses in B.C.
- The Entrepreneur Base stream is for candidates who wish to establish or purchase and expand a business anywhere in B.C.
- The Regional Stream focuses on connecting entrepreneurs to participating regional communities and their local economic development priorities. In 2024, 13 new applications were received from entrepreneurs who had been referred by participating communities.
- A third-party performance audit was completed in September 2023 as required under the Canada-BC Immigration Agreement. A strategic review of the Entrepreneur streams is underway in 2025 to identify opportunities for the program to support government priorities and recommend program design changes.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In 2024, the Ministry supported 34 work permits for entrepreneurs to come to B.C. and start their businesses and nominated 28 entrepreneurs and their families for permanent residency. Final 2024 statistics for the program will be posted publicly in the BC PNP 2024 Annual Statistics Report in spring of 2025.
- The Entrepreneur Regional stream was launched in March 2019 and made a permanent ongoing stream upon the end of a pilot phase in March 2024. Fifty (50) regional communities are actively collaborating with the Ministry to continue to attract entrepreneurs, and more recently, workers to the regions.
- A strategic review of the EI streams is currently underway to modernize the program and optimize the use of EI as a strategic selector to support government's priorities to diversify and grow the economy.
- The review includes reviewing the services currently offered to businesses and employers to hire international talent on temporary work permits to support strategic investment projects and create significant economic benefit for the province.

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Title: BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) - Skills Immigration

Issue: Supporting BC's Economy and Critical Services

Key Messages:

- The BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) makes a positive impact on B.C.'s economy and critical services like health care, childcare and housing.
- That is why we are extremely disappointed that the federal government has decided to reduce the number of people that B.C. can nominate by 50 per cent in 2025 – from 8,000 down to 4,000. B.C. had requested growth to 11,000 to help us meet our most pressing labour market needs.
- Our next step is to determine how we manage the program this year considering the much-reduced allocation. Information on our approach will be released in the coming weeks.
- B.C. also continues to advocate to the federal government to restore the PNP allocation.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Immigration is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial governments. B.C. has a direct role in immigrant selection through the BC PNP. The federal government allocates a specific number of nominations to B.C. every year.
- In January 2025, the federal government reduced B.C.'s allocation from 8,000 in 2024 to 4,000 this calendar year. There are insufficient nominations to meet the high demand for the program: in January 2025 the program had 5,200 applications under assessment, and nearly 10,000 interested individuals in a registration pool.
- The lower allocation and existing applicant inventory mean there are few opportunities for the program to intake new applications in 2025. An inventory and intake management plan has been developed. Once approved, the BC PNP will organize technical briefings for partners and key stakeholders.
- Clinical health care workers are the critical priority for the PNP. Ministry staff are looking at ways to directly support the Ministry of Health in their international recruitment efforts.
- Intergovernmental Communications

- B.C. continues to request that Canada restore the BC PNP allocation based on the program's strong outcomes and positive impact. The program:
 - Aligns selection with key labour market priorities: in 2024, 1,331 nominees were working in healthcare, 1,279 in childcare, 1,302 in technology, 496 in construction and 48 were veterinary care workers.
 - Has strong nominee outcomes and retention: BC nominees who achieved permanent residence in 2021 had a median income of \$61,400 in 2022, higher than immigrants from any other immigration stream or in any other province. Further, according to Statistics Canada 92 per cent of nominees are still in BC after five years, which is one of the highest retention rates amongst provinces.
 - Supports immigration to regional centres: in 2024, 42 per cent of Skills Immigration nominees were based outside of Metro Vancouver, representing two-third of all economic immigration to communities outside Metro Vancouver.
 - Transitions temporary residents to permanence: in 2024, 94 per cent of nominees were current temporary residents in BC.

Title: BC Settlement Services for Newcomer Supports

Issue: Provincial programs that support the integration of temporary residents and skilled immigrants

Key Messages:

- BC invests approximately \$35.5 million annually in three programs that provide essential services for newcomers across the Province.
- Provincial investments for newcomer services were quadrupled as of April 2024 to historic levels to meet increased demand.
- Unfortunately, our federal partners have decided to reduce funding and cut services. We urge the federal government to reverse these cuts so that newcomers can get good jobs and contribute to our economy.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In B.C., both the provincial and federal governments fund services for newcomers. In general, newcomers that are here temporarily on a work or study permit, are making a refugee claim or who have obtained Canadian citizenship can receive supports from the Province. Permanent residents are eligible for federal programs.
- The three B.C. funded programs serving newcomers in over 90 B.C. communities include:
 - The ***BC Newcomers Services Program*** provides enhanced and expanded services to help temporary residents and naturalized citizens settle in communities, practice English, and find employment.
 - The ***BC Safe Haven program*** is focused on specialized services for refugee claimants to help reduce vulnerability and increase community connection.
 - The ***Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants*** program helps professional newcomers find employment that aligns with their pre-arrival skills and education.
- The programs see strong uptake and outcomes. The Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants results in 70 per cent of clients working an occupation that matches their experience and education. The Newcomer Services Program served over 37,000 clients over the first 9 months of the program.
- As of April 1, 2025, the federal government has severely reduced services for permanent residents, including reduction in free language training, and ended services for Ukrainians who hold a special authorization visa. The Province will continue to maintain service access for Ukrainians.

- These reductions in services to permanent residents will result in gaps in services, lengthy waitlists and potential underemployment of talented newcomers.

Title: Federal Immigration Levels

Issue: Reductions to federal immigration admission targets for 2025-2027

Key Messages:

- The lower immigration targets in the current federal Immigration Levels Plan will help alleviate pressure in the housing market and on other public services and infrastructure. But, with an aging population, B.C. will continue to need newcomers to fill skills gaps in our labour market and to grow the workforce.
- The federal decision to reduce by 50% the number of people the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) can nominate this year limits B.C.'s ability to recruit in-demand healthcare workers, skilled tradespeople, and other professionals we need.
- B.C. needs a stable, predictable immigration system with a larger provincial role in nominating newcomers through BC PNP.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- On October 24, 2024, the federal government released its annual Immigration Levels Plan for 2025-2027. Admission targets for the number of new permanent residents (PRs) to be admitted each year were reduced from 485,000 in 2024 to 395,500 in 2025, 380,000 in 2026 and 365,000 in 2027.
- Within the economic category, targets for federal economic streams under the Express Entry system increase by 13% to 124,680, while targets for admissions under the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) are reduced by 50% to 55,000.
- Accordingly, in January 2025 the federal government cut all provinces' PNP allocations by 50%, reducing B.C.'s allocation to 4,000 (compared to 8,000 last year and 11,000 requested this year). This reduction diminishes the provincial role in the immigration system and negatively impact B.C.'s ability to address high-priority labour force needs.
- This Levels Plan also includes temporary resident (TR) targets for the first time. The targets aim to reduce the TR population down to 5% of Canada's overall population, with a net decline of more than 890,000 TRs over the next two years.
- Intergovernmental Communications
- Most of this growth was in the TR population, and created pressures on housing supply, public infrastructure and services such as healthcare, education, and childcare.
- In line with federal targets and policy changes, population growth slowed to 2.2% by October 2024, and B.C.'s population is forecasted to start shrinking in mid-late 2025.

Attachment 1 - Canada's 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan

Immigration Category		2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target	2027 Target	2025 Change from 2024
<i>French-speaking Permanent Resident Admissions outside Quebec¹</i>		26,100	29,325	31,350	31,500	12.4%
Economic	Federal Economic Priorities	110,770 ²	41,700	47,400	47,800	12.6%
	In-Canada Focus		82,980	75,830	70,930	
	Federal Business	5,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	-60.0%
	Economic Pilots: Caregivers; Agri-Food Pilot; Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot; Economic Mobility Pathways Project	10,875	10,920	9,920	9,920	0.4%
	Atlantic Immigration Program	6,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	-23.1%
	Provincial Nominee Program	110,000	55,000	55,000	55,000	-50.0%
	Quebec Skilled Workers and Business ³	TBD	34,500	TBD		n/a
	Regularization Public Policy	-	50	100	200	n/a
	Total Economic	281,135	232,150	229,750	225,350	-19.8%
Family	Spouses, Partners and Children	82,000	70,000	65,500	61,000	-14.6%
	Parents and Grandparents	32,000	24,500	21,500	20,000	-23.4%
	Total Family	114,000	94,500	88,000	81,000	-17.1%
Refugees and Protected Persons	Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Abroad	27,000	20,000	18,000	18,000	-25.9%
	Resettled Refugees - Government-Assisted	21,115	15,250	15,250	15,250	-27.8%
	Resettled Refugees - Privately Sponsored	27,750	23,000	22,000	21,000	-17.1%
	Resettled Refugees - Blended Visa Office-Referred	250	100	100	100	-60%
	Total Refugees and Protected Persons	76,115	58,350	55,350	54,350	-23.3%
Humanitarian & Compassionate and Other⁴		13,750	10,000	6,900	4,300	-27.2%
Overall Planned Permanent Resident Admissions		485,000	395,000	380,000	365,000	-18.6%

¹ Represent the number of admissions required to meet 6% target in 2024, 8.5% in 2025, 9.5% in 2026 and 10% in 2027. Calculated based on admissions necessary to meet the targets, based on the overall ranges outside of Quebec.

² Previously Federal High Skilled under 2024-2026 levels plan.

³ Per Canada-Quebec Accord, Quebec has full responsibility for selection of immigrants destined to Quebec, with exception of family class and protected persons. Quebec also tables its immigration plan on or before November 1 each year. Admissions targets for Quebec's economic programs used to calculate overall economic targets in the federal plan are 37,990 in 2024; 34,500 in 2025; and 35,500 in 2026

⁴ Persons selected on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, for reasons of public policy, and in the permit holder class. This also includes some admissions from Canada's responses to the situations in Ukraine, Sudan, and Hong Kong.

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Title: **Implementing International Credentials Recognition Act**

Issue: **Mandate letter commitments related to international credential recognition**

Key Messages:

- The *International Credential Recognition Act* and regulations will be fully implemented on July 1, 2025.
- We are engaging with immigrant-serving organizations, internationally trained professionals, and regulatory authorities to ensure that implementation of the *International Credential Recognition Act* is relevant, meaningful, and effective.
- We support regulatory authorities to improve their processes through the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The 2024 Labour Market Outlook for British Columbia indicates that just over 1.1 million jobs will be open between 2024-2034, 46 per cent of which will need to be filled with newcomers to Canada.
- Credential recognition allows individuals trained in other jurisdictions to transfer their credentials and obtain a license to practice their profession in B.C.
- The *International Credentials Recognition Act* applies to 18 B.C. professional regulatory authorities responsible for 29 occupations as in scope of the Act. The Act does not cover Health Professions which are separately governed by the Ministry of Health under the *Health Professions Act*.
- The *International Credentials Recognition Act* came into force on July 1, 2024.
- Regulations pertaining to the prohibition of Canadian work experience came into effect on January 1, 2025, which was the start of a six-month transition period. By July 1, 2025, the *International Credentials Recognition Act* and regulations will be fully in force.
- B.C. continues to support professional regulatory authorities to make improvements to their credential recognition processes for internationally trained professionals through the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund.
- *Budget 2023* included a base budget lift of \$281,000 in 2023/24 and an additional lift of \$373,000 in 2024/25 for FTEs needed to advance the priority initiative of streamlining international credential recognition (including the development and implementation of new legislation).
- The Credential Assessment Improvement Fund is allocated \$1.0 million each fiscal year, which is used to fund one FTE and up to \$900,000 in project-based initiatives to improve

fairness and efficiency of credential recognition processes and increase access to information for internationally trained professionals.

- In 2023/24 the Credential Assessment Improvement Fund invested \$590,000 in projects led by professional regulatory authorities. A further \$160,000 was spent on the development of the *International Credentials Recognition Act*.
- Improvements to International Credential Recognition complement long-standing work on domestic labour mobility. The Office for International Credential Recognition includes B.C.'s Labour Mobility Coordinator, who works to support licensed professionals from other jurisdictions in Canada as they transfer their credential to B.C.
- The Office for International Credential Recognition is a newly configured work unit in the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, bringing together two teams that formerly operated separately within the ministry as the Credential Recognition Improvement Branch and the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance.
- There are no plans to request additional funding for the office and its ongoing operations.
- A Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials has been assigned to advance international credential related priorities.

Appendix 1: Regulatory Authorities and Professions under the *International Credentials Recognition Act*

Schedule 1

Regulatory Authority	Regulated Profession
Association of British Columbia Land Surveyors	Land surveyor
British Columbia College of Social Workers	Social worker Registered clinical social worker
British Columbia Registered Music Teachers' Association	Registered music teacher
British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects	Landscape architect
College of Veterinarians of British Columbia	Veterinarian
Organization of Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia	Chartered professional accountant

Schedule 2

Regulatory Authority	Regulated Profession
Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia	Applied science technologist Certified technician
Architectural Institute of British Columbia	Architect
Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia	Professional engineer Professional geoscientist
Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals	Registered professional forester Registered forest technologist
British Columbia Institute of Agrologists	Professional agrologist Technical agrologist
College of Applied Biology	Applied biology technician Professional biologist Registered biology technologist

Schedule 3

Regulatory Authority	Regulated Profession
Superintendent of Real Estate under the <i>Real Estate Services Act</i> [BC Financial Services Authority]	Associate broker Managing broker Representative
Director of certification under the <i>Teachers Act</i> [Teacher Regulation Branch]	Professional certificate holder Conditional certificate holder
Director of the early childhood educator registry under the <i>Community Care and Assisted Living Act</i> [Early Childhood Educator Registry]	Early childhood educator Early childhood educator assistant
Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board	Emergency medical assistants
Law Society of British Columbia	Lawyer
Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia	Notary public

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Title: International Education/British Columbia Council for International Education

Issue: International education and British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE)

Key Messages:

- We welcome international students to B.C., and we want them to have a great experience when they come to study in our province.
- International students are an important part of the post-secondary education community and the communities of B.C.
- The sector's world-class reputation ensures that B.C. continues to attract the talent we need for a productive, sustainable, and innovative economy.
- BCCIE works with government, public and private post-secondary institutions, and K-12 school districts to support delivery of quality international education and to help keep BC a leader in this sector.
- BCCIE supports the sector to respond to the needs of international students by helping institutions develop effective programs and services to support student safety, system integrity, and successful student outcomes.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- **Note:** 2024 annual data is not yet available from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- In 2023, there were 261,360 international students in B.C. – an increase of 76 per cent since 2017. This represents 20 per cent of all international students in Canada, second to Ontario.
- Of this total, more than 217,600 were post-secondary students including 111,900 (51 per cent) in public post-secondary and 105,700 (49 per cent) in private post-secondary.
- Enrolment growth of international post-secondary students between 2017 and 2023 was 183 per cent in the private post-secondary sector and 51 per cent in the public post-secondary sector.
- 81 per cent of international students studied in the Mainland/Southwest region.
- International student tuition accounts for 19 per cent (\$1.64 billion) of total revenue for public post-secondary institutions.

- International students also support broader economic activity. In 2019, they spent over \$6.6 billion on tuition, accommodation and living expenses, arts, culture, and recreation, supporting an estimated 53,400 jobs in communities throughout the province.¹

International Student Tuition

- International student tuition at public post-secondary institutions is set by the Board of Governors of each institution, independent of government.
- On average, international students pay four times more tuition than domestic students.
- Government's current guidelines encourage institutions to set international tuition at a level that covers direct costs and overhead, so that taxpayers do not subsidize international students.
- Students, stakeholders, and the Legislature budget consultations have recommended that the ministry provide predictable fees to international students.
- On January 29, 2024, the ministry announced it would implement new enrolment guidelines for public institutions that set expectations that public post-secondary institutions provide international students with transparent tuition fee costs over the standard duration of the student's study program, including any maximum expected increases in tuition.

International Student Supports

- The ministry is implementing new measures that will establish higher standards and greater accountability for educational institutions in B.C. These measures will ensure the delivery of a high-quality education and strengthen the safeguards, supports, and services available to international students throughout their education experience and following graduation.
- Supports are available to international students through public post-secondary institutions such as student housing, information on housing options in the community, financial assistance through bursaries and emergency funding, food bank services, and mental health support to respond to individual needs.
- International students have access to mental health support through Here2Talk – Government's free 24/7 province-wide mental health resource with translation support.
- B.C. provides settlement and integration services to eligible post-secondary international students, graduates and other newcomers through the B.C. Settlement and Integration Services Program.
- The Province will continue to work with students, institutions, and newcomer services to ensure international students have access to the supports they need.

¹An Update on the Economic Impact of International Education in British Columbia, Dr. Roslyn Kunin, 2020 (unpublished).

The BC Council for International Education (BCCIE)

- BCCIE works with government, public and private post-secondary institutions, and K-12 school districts to support delivery of quality international education and to help keep B.C. a leader in this sector.
- In alignment with Provincial direction, BCCIE supports and advances government priorities for international education, including supporting the sector to build and develop the capabilities to recruit, support, retain, and provide a quality education program for international students in communities across the province.
- BCCIE supports the sector to respond to the needs of international students by helping institutions develop effective programs and services to support student safety, system integrity, and successful student outcomes.
- Budget: \$1.9 million in revenue, including \$1.5 million in government funding and revenue generated by the annual BC International Education Week conference and professional development programs.
- Staffing: currently 10 FTEs. BCCIE continues to operate with fewer staff compared to the pre-COVID period, to help offset budget pressures.
- BCCIE's recent accomplishments include:
 - Delivered the annual *BC International Education Week* conference, with sessions on intercultural and Indigenization, international education strategic plans, and supports for international students. The conference included delegations from Thailand, the Philippines, Colombia, and Mexico.
 - Hosted an in-person two-day symposium on advancing international student support as it relates to the new EQA Code of Practice.
 - Coordinated an education partnership initiative to Mexico to build student and faculty mobility and other academic partnerships between BC and Mexico institutions.
 - Hosted key capacity building events online including education agent management masterclass and a workshop on International Strategic Planning in the B.C. Post-Secondary Education Context.
 - Delivered mentorship support and guidance to Northern Lights College as they build their international team and plan.
 - Organized a virtual BC Offshore Schools/B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions Pathways event to facilitate relationships and connections between BC Offshore School providers and BC Public post-secondary institutions.
 - Coordinated overseas missions by public post-secondary institutions to the Philippines and New Delhi, India, in March 2025, to support them in developing international partnerships and student recruitment.

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Title: International Education Framework

Issue: B.C.'s International Education Framework

Key Messages:

- We welcome international students to B.C, and we want them to have a great experience when they come to study in our province.
- We have introduced new protections for international students by setting higher education quality standards and introducing more rigorous requirements and stronger oversight for institutions enrolling international students.
- We have introduced a new Code of Practice as one of the protections, which sets higher standards for institutions for student support and protection so that students receive the education they expect and deserve.
- Stronger enforcement and higher standards mean the ministry can act more quickly and decisively to protect international students.
- Our actions will help ensure institutions deliver a high-quality education and have strong supports that students need to study, find a good and meaningful job after graduation, and build a successful life in B.C.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- **Note:** Complete data for 2024 is not yet available from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- In 2023, there were 261,360 international students studying at all levels in B.C. - up 76 per cent since 2017. Of this total, more than 217,600 were post-secondary students including:
 - 51 per cent (111,900) in public post-secondary.
 - 49 per cent (105,710) in private post-secondary.
 - Private degree granting institutions (Degree Authorization Act): 69,685
 - Private training institutions (Private Training Act): 34,865
 - Theological/other: 1,160
- Enrolment growth of international post-secondary students between 2017 and 2023 was 183 per cent in the private post-secondary sector and 51 per cent in the public post-secondary sector.
- 81 per cent of international students studied in the Mainland/Southwest region.
- International student tuition accounts for 19 per cent (\$1.64 billion) of total revenue for public post-secondary institutions.

- The rapid, concentrated growth in the number of international students in the province created benefits, tensions, trade-offs, and a need for government direction.
- In response to concerns about international student growth and education quality, the Ministry engaged with public and private-sector post-secondary institutions, international students, faculty, and other sector stakeholders to identify the key areas of concern and develop policy and regulatory changes.
- In 2024, the Ministry implemented a suite of regulatory amendments and policy changes under the International Education Framework that:
 - Drive higher quality standards for post-secondary international education delivery.
 - Protect B.C.'s reputation as a quality education destination.
 - Strengthen support for international students.
- These actions include:
 - Moratorium on new institutions being designated under Education Quality Assurance (EQA) - preventing new institutions from recruiting international students until February 2026 while the new, higher standards come into effect.
 - Policy measures to increase inspections and enforcement to improve accountability and strengthen protections for international students.
 - Policy, regulation and fee changes that came into effect by January 2025, including:
 - EQA policy changes to raise standards, and a new Code of Practice to strengthen compliance and enforcement.
 - New international student enrolment guidelines for public institutions, including:
 - Manage international enrolment within the institution's Provincial Attestation Letter cap allocation.
 - Limit international enrolment to 30 per cent of total enrolment.
 - Provide international students with transparent tuition fee costs over the standard duration of the student's study program.
 - New guidelines for public post-secondary institutions on the development of international education strategic plans that identify the goals, objectives, priorities, and student supports of the institution's international education program.
 - Regulation changes (*Private Training Regulations*) to raise standards and improve private sector oversight.
 - Higher quality assessment and institution standards for private degree-granting institutions.
 - Ongoing measures to strengthen increased Ministry oversight, compliance and enforcement, funded by higher fees.
- These new requirements are now in effect to help protect international students and ensure the highest quality education for international post-secondary students.

Title: Federal Study Permit Allocations

Issue: The federal cap on study permit applications.

Key Messages:

- The post-secondary education sector is a critical aspect of workforce development and ensuring a strong economy in B.C.
- The federal government announced that the new study permit cap for international students across Canada is set at 437,000 permits for 2025 - a 10 per cent decrease from 2024.
- B.C.'s allocation of Provincial Attestation Letters was 76,000, of which fewer than 48,000 are for undergraduate students – a 40 per cent cut in undergraduate students from 2024.
- We are working to protect our public institutions from this cut as best we can by providing a sufficient quota of Provincial Attestation Letters to sustain their international student programs.
- While private post-secondary institutions remain eligible to enroll international students, most of them had a reduction in the number of Provincial Attestation Letters in 2025.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

Federal Study Permit Application Cap

- In January 2024, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced an initial cap on study permit applications to stabilize study permit growth.
- Each province and territory received a population-based allocation within this cap to distribute among designated learning institutions. B.C. was allocated 83,000 in 2024, which was expected to result in approximately 50,000 study permits.
- For 2025, IRCC expanded the scope of the cap to cover almost all international students on study permits at the post-secondary level, including those previously exempt: students pursuing master's and doctoral degrees, students transitioning from K-12 to post-secondary, and in-Canada students transferring between post-secondary institutions.
- On December 24, 2024, IRCC informed B.C. that the Province will receive 76,087 Provincial Attestation Letters (PALs) in 2025 for all post-secondary applicants, with a target of 53,589 study permits approved for 2025.
- B.C.'s allocation of 76,087 PALs comprises:
 - 28,333 (minimum) for graduate degree students.
 - 47,754 (maximum) for all other students (undergraduate, graduate certificate and diploma students).

- B.C.'s allocation for undergraduate and other students is cut 42 per cent from B.C.'s 2024 allocation at the undergraduate level, and the graduate degree quota is higher than expected (37 per cent of the total B.C. allocation).
- B.C.'s 2025 PAL allocation model has three principles:
 - Support public institutions to maintain their international student programs.
 - Stabilize sector growth.
 - Ensure the best use of PALs.
- For 2025, public institutions received 55 per cent of the total PALs, including 68 per cent of undergraduate/other PALs and 30 per cent of graduate degree PALs. Private institutions received 45 per cent of the total PALs, including 32 per cent of undergraduate/other PALs and 70 per cent of graduate degree PALs.
- Public institutions received sufficient allocations to allow them to continue their international education programs.
- The private training sector (career colleges) received significantly fewer PALs in 2025 compared to 2024, which may increase pressure on private business operations. Smaller institutions that relied on international enrolment to operate or grow may be impacted, potentially ceasing to operate.
- Private sector institutions with graduate degree programs received an allocation for graduate degree students based on each institution's average share of study permits approved by IRCC between 2021 to 2023 at the graduate degree level.

Financial Considerations for B.C. public Post-Secondary Institutions

- Since January 1, 2024, IRCC policy changes to international student study and work permits caused a "global chill" in international recruitment for Canada, and recruitment is down.
- In 2023/24, international student tuition accounted for 19 per cent (\$1.64 billion) of total revenue for public post-secondary institutions, including 15.6 per cent at research universities, 30 per cent at teaching universities, 27 per cent at colleges and 7 per cent at institutes.
- In 2023/24, the province provided \$2.83 billion in operating grants to the 25 public institutions, an increase of over \$1 billion (57 per cent) since 2015/16.
- Several public post-secondary institutions report significant declines in international enrolment. Six public post-secondary institutions reported a deficit in 2024/25, and 17 forecast a deficit for 2025/26.
- The Ministry will continue work with post-secondary institutions to evaluate and advocate federally in relation to the funding challenges caused by the federal government's changes related to international students.

- Broad economic factors, such as global inflation and general downward trends in domestic enrolment, continue to impact the post-secondary sector and influence the decisions that some institutions face.
- The Ministry will support public post-secondary institutions to identify structural solutions, new revenue streams, and cost reductions to ensure strong, sustainable public post-secondary schools, and training providers who offer British Columbians the training and skills they need to be successful and help grow our provincial economy.

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Title: StrongerBC future skills grant

Issue: The future skills grant makes skills training more affordable and accessible

Key Messages:

- The future skills grant offers up to \$3,500 for short-term skills training, helping British Columbians improve their skills and supporting high-demand industries and government priorities.
- High demand for the grant: Over 7,000 learners benefited in 2023/24 and over 5,000 in 2024/25, across hundreds of programs at 24 public post-secondary institutions in B.C.
- The grant aids career advancement in high-demand industries and makes training more accessible and affordable, particularly for mid-career professionals and underrepresented groups.
- The Ministry expects continued high demand in 2025/26 and is reviewing eligibility and scope to align with future government priorities.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- As a flagship initiative of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, the future skills grant offers up to \$3,500 in short-term skills training for British Columbians 19 years of age or older to gain new skills and advance or transition in their careers.
- The government committed a total investment of \$39 million over three years (2023/24 to 2025/26) to deliver the future skills grant.
- The future skills grant supports programs that are aligned with high-demand industries and respond to government priorities (including training to support B.C.'s health care, construction and technology sectors).
- Since launched in May 2023, the future skills grant has been consistently in high demand. In 2023/24 over 7,000 learners successfully registered in over 340 programs offered by 24 public post-secondary institutions across the province. In 2024/25, over 5,000 learners accessed the grant and received training in over 350 programs.
- The future skills grant effectively helps individuals advance their careers in high-demand industries. It makes training more accessible and affordable, drawing in mid-career professionals and underrepresented groups to expand their skills for better-paying jobs or transition into a new field. The program's high completion rate reflects the strong engagement, interest, and demand from learners for this funded initiative.
- The Ministry anticipates ongoing high demand in 2025/26 and is reviewing eligibility and scope to prioritize future offerings aligned with government priorities.

Appendix 1: Future skills grant Three-Year Budget

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
\$10.0M	\$14.5M	\$14.5M	\$39.0M

Appendix 2: 2023/24 and 2024/25 Registration Details

Fiscal Year	Approved Programs	Registered Programs	Unique Learners
2023/24	400+	309	7,000+
2024/25	400+	356	5,357

Appendix 3: 2024/25 future skills grant Distribution by Economic Region

Economic Region	Unique Learners	Funding	Population
Mainland/Southwest	56%	57%	62%
Vancouver Island/Coast	22%	23%	17%
Thompson/Okanagan	11%	11%	12%
Cariboo	4%	3%	3%
Kootenay	3%	3%	3%
Northeast	2%	1%	1%
North Coast	1%	1%	1%
Nechako	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Appendix 4: Key Industries Supported in 2024/25

Industry	Funding	Unique Learners
Non-Specialized or Covering Multiple Industries*	42%	34%
Health Care and Social Assistance	18%	19%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	14%	15%
Business, Building and Other Support Services	4%	4%
Construction	4%	4%
Forestry, logging and support activities	4%	4%
Finance, insurance and real estate	4%	4%
Information, culture and recreation	3%	5%
Total	92%	91%

* Non-Specialized or Covering Multiple Industries are not specific to one particular industry but related to transferrable skills needed in different job roles and lines of work.

Title: Labour Market Development Programs (WDA/ LMDA Funded)

Issue: Workforce development programs provide skills training for jobs aligned with labour market need.

Key Messages:

- The Ministry's labour market development programs, together with employment programs delivered by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, are designed to help people increase their skills and obtain sustainable employment.
- Labour Market development programs focus on meeting the needs of the province's workforce, supporting a strong and stable economy by delivering targeted programming for people, employers, communities and sectors.
- British Columbia's labour market development programs are federally funded through the Canada-BC Labour Market Transfer Agreements, complemented by provincial investments.
- The Ministry is working in partnership with colleagues at the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction to ensure that, despite reductions in federal funding, we continue to develop and deliver efficient, effective labour market programming to support people across the province.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The Ministry delivers workforce development programs designed to align the province's workforce with evolving labour market needs, including programs for people, employers/sectors and communities.
- Programs are primarily federally-funded, with additional provincial support through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan. Federal funding was reduced in the federal government's 2024 Budget by \$74 million annually. (See Tab 33 – Minister's Note: Labour Market Transfer Agreements.)
- PSFS and SDPR are working on labour market and employment services program alignment for April 1, 2026, further to mandate direction to reduce overlap and duplication and increase overall program efficiencies. (See Tab 31 – Minister's Note: Program Alignment.)

Programs for People:

- The Ministry's programs for people provide targeted training opportunities and employment skills to a range of individuals, including those who face barriers to participation in the labour market.
- Skills Training for Employment (STE) programs support people to gain in-demand skills to participate in the labour market and enter high opportunity occupations. In 2023/24, the program was expanded to include 113 unique programs. 95 percent of STE

participants reporting outcomes were employed or in further education or training after completing their program in 2023/24.

- SkilledTradesBC Pre-Apprenticeship programs are delivered in partnership with 13 service providers to provide about 800 people per year, from equity-deserving groups, with the skills they need to participate in trades occupations. In 2023/24, 94 percent of participants were employed or in further education or training after completing their program.
- The BladeRunners program helps at-risk young adults attach to the labour market, including in sectors facing skills shortages such as construction. Programming is delivered through 10 agreements and supports approximately 1,200 people annually. In 2023/24, 69 percent of participants were employed or in further education or training after completing their program.

Programs for Employers and Sectors:

- The B.C. Employer Training Grant (2024/25 budget: \$8.5 million) serves employers by cost-sharing training for employees. Sectors are supported through the project-based Sector Labour Market Partnerships program (2024/25 budget: \$4 million).
- The B.C. Employer Training Grant helps employers invest in skills training by funding up to 80 per cent of the cost of training to upskill or re-skill their new or current employees. In 2023/24, almost 1,700 employers and 7,000 employees accessed the grant.
- The Sector Labour Market Partnerships program helps sectors and industry understand changing labour market conditions so they can adapt to shifts in the labour market and evolving skills needs. In 2023/24, the program supported 24 projects across 14 sectors in all regions of B.C.

Programs for Communities:

- The Community Workforce Response Grant program helps communities respond to urgent and emerging labour market needs through skills training projects for unemployed or precariously employed people.
- Projects address a variety of regional and local labour market needs through cohort-based occupational skills training to address critical skills shortages in communities, such as Early Childhood Educators, Paramedics and Health Care Aides.
- In 2023/24, the program served 39 communities through 113 skills training projects with 1,145 participants across the province. Over 73 per cent of people who participated in a Community Workforce Response Grant project were employed or moved into further education and training as a result of the program.

Appendix 1: Funding Tables 2024/25

The 2025/26 budget have not yet been confirmed.

Programs for People				
Program	Program Description	2024/25 Budget		
		Federal	Provincial	TOTAL
Skills Training for Employment	Delivers skills training, employment services and wraparound supports to help people from vulnerable and under-represented groups to gain sustainable employment.	\$34M*	\$11.5M	\$45.5M*
SkilledTradesBC Pre-Apprenticeship Training	Delivers skills training, employment services and supports to prepare Indigenous people and other equity-deserving groups for apprenticeships and jobs in the trades.	\$8.2M	\$0M	\$8.2M
BladeRunners	Delivers life skills, job readiness skills, work experience and ongoing supports to young adults at risk (aged 15-30), with over 50% of participants self-identifying as Indigenous.	\$6.2M	\$0M	\$6.2M
Total		\$48.4M*	\$11.5M	\$59.9M*

*2025/26 Skills Training for Employment (Youth and Youth at Risk) budget will be reduced by about \$7M from the previous fiscal year due to pressure caused by federal budget reductions. (See Tab 33 – Minister's Note: Labour Market Transfer Agreements.)

Programs for Employers and Sectors				
Program	Program Description	2024/25 Budget		
		Federal	Provincial	TOTAL
B.C. Employer Training Grant	Provides skills training funding to employers to support their employees to gain skills they need for their current job, a new job, or a promotion.	\$7.1M	\$1.4M	\$8.5M
Sector Labour Market Partnerships	Provides funding to support sector-led partnerships to respond to labour market changes and workforce challenges.	\$4M	\$0M	\$4M
Total		\$11.1M	\$1.4M	\$12.5M

Programs for Communities				
Program	Program Description	2024/25 Budget		
		Federal	Provincial	TOTAL
Community Workforce Response Grant	Provides funding for skills training projects, with wraparound supports, to respond to urgent and emerging labour market needs and lead to sustainable employment for unemployed or precariously employed people.	\$8M	\$1.6M	\$9.6M
Total		\$8M	\$1.6M	\$9.6M

Appendix 2: Program Examples

Programs for People

- Quadrant Marine (\$720,000 over three years (2023/24 to 2025/26)) is delivering a Skills Training for Employment program to 60 young adults in the Capital Regional District and the Greater Vancouver Regional District. This program provides young adults with career opportunities in the marine service industry by delivering marine community-based skills exploration leading to employment.
- Tea Creek Training (\$1.5 million over two years (2024/25 to 2025/26)) is delivering a SkilledTradesBC Pre-Apprenticeship program providing land-based, culturally safe, Indigenous-led introductory skills training for Indigenous participants in Chetwynd and Kitwanga. Offered through a mix of short and longer-term training modules that each participant can select depending on their needs, training equips participants with the skills to enter employment and apprenticeship.

Programs for Employers and Sectors

- ETG funded more than \$4,600 in 2024/25 to a small logging processing business in the rural community of 150 Mile House. After losing forestry contracts and laying off their employees, the company is pivoting to construction so they can build housing and provide renovations for their community. To achieve this, the company co-owner took Carpenter Level 1 skilled trades training with the goal to obtain a Red Seal, setting the foundation for their new business direction.
- SLMP funded BC Wood Specialties Group (\$1.27 million over three years (2022/23 to 2025/26)) to develop training for workers in the Value-Added Wood (VAW) sector. The training includes entry-level knowledge and skills, increased upskilling opportunities for skilled production workers and was piloted in partnership with North Island College, Okanagan College and the College of New Caledonia. Additionally, expansive HR resources and coaching were developed to support small and medium-sized VAW businesses.

Programs for Communities

- In 2024/25, there was a series of forest mill closures in communities across northern British Columbia. The B.C. Career College Association received \$454,000 from the Community Workforce Response Grant to provide Early Childhood Education certificate training to 27 participants in several communities throughout the impacted area.
- In 2024/25, to assist in addressing the chronic shortage of primary care paramedics in the Kootenay region, Community Futures East Kootenay received \$338,000 from the Community Workforce Response Grant to deliver paramedic training to 16 participants in the region.

- In 2024/25, Dzawada'enuxw First Nation received \$279,000 from the Community Workforce Response Grant to engage North Island College to train 13 participants in carpentry. The training was on-the-job to assist the community to restore and protect housing from reoccurring flooding.

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Title: Labour Market Development Program Alignment

Issue: Alignment of Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction skills training and employment programs

Key Messages:

- To better align with ministry mandates and make it easier for people to access the right programs and services, work is underway to transition some skills training initiatives between the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR).
- Starting in the 2026/27 fiscal year:
 - SDPR will lead on delivering skills training programs for youth and people facing multiple barriers, aligning with its mandate to respond to people with complex needs.
 - PSFS will take responsibility for the Apprentice Services program, aligning with its mandate for growing a skilled trades workforce responsive to the labour market.
- Fiscal year 2025/26 will serve as a transition year, during which ministries will engage with partners and plan for the delivery of newly aligned programs.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Currently, there are some program delivery areas with overlapping mandates and potential for duplication between PSFS and SDPR as both ministries administer employment services and skills training programs for people with multiple barriers.
- Ministry mandate letters, released in January 2025, indicate that SDPR is the lead for employment programs for people with multiple complex barriers. PSFS will focus on delivering skills training programs aligned with labour market needs and priorities.
- Mandate letter direction comes at a critical juncture for the province's employment and skills training programs:
 - The reduction of B.C.'s Labour Market Transfer Agreement funding by \$74 million by the federal government in Budget 2024 continues to have a profound impact and highlighted the need to ensure funding is targeted.
 - The demand for employment services and related assistance has increased due to a higher number of jobseekers and increasing complexity of client needs; and,
 - The re-procurement and update process for WorkBC services, also referred to as WorkBC Modernization.

- Program alignment will consist of, starting in April 2026:
 - PSFS will receive \$20 million of Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) funding from SDPR. PSFS will have responsibility for the Apprentice Services program, aligning with the ministry's mandate over the trades training system, apprentice policy and governance of SkilledTradesBC.
 - SDPR will receive \$20 million of Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) funding from PSFS. SDPR will have responsibility over programs for people with multiple barriers to employment and youth, aligning with their mandate to serve people with complex needs.
- The transfer of WDA funding will support SDPR's overall mandate and strengthen the new WorkBC program model's flexibility for service delivery to respond to the needs of clients facing complex disadvantage.
- As PSFS is responsible for the trades training system, consolidating apprentice services at PSFS meets its mandate for growing a skilled workforce that meets labour market demand.
- Fiscal year 2025/26 will serve as a transition year, in which engagement, planning, development and procurement for aligned programs will be completed.
- All current contracts are planned to continue through their full term (to March 31, 2026, for PSFS's programs for people with multiple barriers and youth, and to March 31, 2027, for SDPR's WorkBC Apprentices Services program).
- Ministries are prioritizing service continuity for clients throughout the alignment process, aiming to minimize disruptions for the people who benefit from programs.
- Service providers for both ministries were notified of the upcoming changes on March 12, 2025.

Title: Labour Market Outlook

Issue: The 2024 edition of the BC Labour Market Outlook (LMO) and the plan for the 2025 edition.

Key Messages:

- The 2024 BC Labour Market Outlook (LMO) is a 10-year forecast of job market trends in B.C., designed to help current and future students, organizations, workers and employers make decisions about careers, skills training, education and hiring in the future.
- Over 1 million job openings (1,120,000) are expected between 2024 and 2034.
- Just over three-quarters (76 per cent) of these jobs will require some form of post-secondary education or training.
- The 2024 LMO was developed prior to changes in federal immigration targets and the uncertainty around tariffs.
- Work is underway on the next edition of the LMO which will include the new immigration targets and considerations around potential new tariffs.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Over one million job openings are forecasted between 2024 and 2034.

Total job openings
60% from replacement (mostly retirement)
40% from expansion of the economy

New job seekers
47% young people starting work
46% immigrants
5% migrants from other provinces

- This LMO is based on federal immigration levels announced in November 2023.
- Of the more than one million openings, 76 per cent will require some form of post-secondary education or training, or management or supervisory experience.

Education or training, or management or supervisory experience	Share of job openings
Management or supervisory	16%
University degree	21%
College diploma or apprenticeship of two or more years	21%
College diploma or apprenticeship of less than two years	17%
High school diploma	13%
No formal education	12%

- The Labour Market Outlook identifies employment growth and job openings in every region.

Region	Employment 2024	Annual Employment Growth: 2024-34	Job openings
Vancouver Island/Coast	445,800	1.1%	166,700
Mainland/Southwest	1,819,100	1.7%	754,700
Thompson-Okanagan	305,600	1.2%	121,900
Kootenay	79,800	0.5%	26,300
Cariboo	86,500	0.4%	23,500
Northeast	36,300	0.6%	11,200
North Coast/Nechako	44,200	1.0%	15,700
British Columbia	2,817,300	1.4%	1,120,000

- The Labour Market Outlook identifies job openings in key occupational groups.

Key Occupational Group	Job openings 2024-34
Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) occupations	120,450
Construction trades occupations	65,480
Trades occupations for Skilled Trade Certification	9,400
Care (Health, Social and Education) Occupations	208,240

- The Labour Market Outlook identifies 125 High Opportunity Occupations some examples are:
 - Heating, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics
 - Mechanical engineers
 - Pharmacy technicians
 - Cybersecurity specialists
 - Licensed practical nurses
- The 2025 edition of the Labour Market Outlook is planned for release in the fall of 2025 and will be based on federal immigration targets announced in October 2024.

Title: Labour Market Transfer Agreements

Issue: Labour Market Transfer Agreements fund skills training and employment services

Key Messages:

- There are two Labour Market Transfer Agreements funded by the Government of Canada: The Workforce Development Agreement and the Labour Market Development Agreement.
- Through these agreements, B.C. delivers critical workforce development, employment and skills training services that support a strong, sustainable economy.
- The Workforce Development Agreement, which is largely administered by the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, provides labour-market aligned skills training and education programming for individuals, communities, employers and sectors.
- Government of Canada funding under the Labour Market Transfer Agreements was reduced in 2024, creating a \$74 million annual shortfall for B.C.'s skills training and employment programs.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- B.C. has two Labour Market Transfer Agreements with Canada:
 - the **Workforce Development Agreement (WDA)**, administered by the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) (\$99.1 million for 2024/25); and
 - the **Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)**, administered by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) (\$296.1 million for 2024/25).
- The WDA provides the majority of funding for PSFS's workforce development and skills training programs. (*See Tab 30 – Labour Market Development Programs.*)
- PSFS transfers a portion of the WDA (\$27.6 million for 2024/25) to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) through inter-ministry agreement for programming to support persons with disabilities.
- The LMDA is designed to primarily serve people who are eligible for Employment Insurance (EI). It funds SDPR employment services including WorkBC Centres, WorkBC Employment Services, Community and Employer Partnerships and WorkBC Apprentice Services.
- SDPR transfers a portion of the LMDA funding (\$41.8 million for 2024/25) to PSFS through inter-ministry agreement for employer- and sector-driven programs, public information and outreach, and services at public post-secondary institutions for EI-eligible learners.

- From 2017/18 to 2023/24, Labour Market Transfer Agreements provided both base and top-up funding to BC. *(See Appendix 1 for funding tables.)*
- Top-up funding was eliminated in federal Budget 2024, reducing funding levels for BC. by almost \$74 million annually. As a result of the inter-ministry agreements between SDPR and PSFS, the total funding shortfall for PSFS is \$26 million.
- To date, PSFS has addressed this budget shortfall by:
 - Reducing allocations for its skills training grant programs;
 - Applying carry-forward funding from 2023/24; and
 - Ending about half of its youth skills training contracts starting in 2025/26.
- Further to mandate letter direction and in response to the federal funding reduction, PSFS and SDPR are working on labour market and employment services program alignment for April 1, 2026. *(See Tab 31 – Minister’s Note: Program Alignment.)*
- As a part of this alignment:
 - PSFS will transfer \$20 million of WDA funding to SDPR to provide programs for people with multiple barriers to employment and youth.
 - SDPR will transfer \$20 million of LMDA funding to PSFS to administer the Apprentice Services program and support targeted skills training programs.
- Program alignment aims to improve service outcomes for people. By aligning programs to Ministry mandates, risk of duplication will be reduced, resources will be used more efficiently, and the skills training and employment system will be easier to navigate.

Appendix 1: Labour Market Transfer Agreements Funding Allocations

Table 1: Workforce Development Agreement Funding Allocation

Fiscal	Base Program Funding	Top-Up Funding	Total Funding*
2017/18	\$96,069,514	\$9,475,683	\$105,545,197
2018/19	\$97,709,057	\$9,738,268	\$107,447,325
2019/20	\$98,788,201	\$18,511,929	\$117,300,130
2020/21	\$97,236,731	\$26,935,382	\$124,172,113
2021/22	\$97,885,051	\$27,114,972	\$125,000,023
2022/23	\$98,092,493	\$27,172,436	\$125,264,928
2023/24	\$98,802,785	\$27,369,193	\$126,171,978
2024/25	\$99,067,878	\$0	\$99,067,878
Total	\$783,651,710	\$146,317,863	\$929,969,573

*10% of WDA funding is used for administration costs associated with programming.

Table 2: Labour Market Development Agreement Funding Allocation

Fiscal	Base Program Funding	Top-Up Funding	Targeted Funding*	Admin Funding	Total Funding
2017/18	\$278,354,408	\$13,576,215	\$6,873,508	\$20,535,000	\$319,339,131
2018/19	\$276,944,000	\$24,437,187	\$7,503,560	\$20,535,000	\$329,419,747
2019/20	\$275,522,390	\$25,184,810	\$2,548,952	\$20,535,000	\$323,791,152
2020/21	\$273,893,674	\$34,825,928	N/A	\$20,535,000	\$329,254,602
2021/22	\$273,505,313	\$44,970,363	N/A	\$20,535,000	\$339,010,676
2022/23	\$275,211,299	\$49,418,557	N/A	\$20,535,000	\$345,164,856
2023/24	\$275,380,128	\$46,474,213	N/A	\$20,535,000	\$342,389,341
2024/25	\$275,606,902	\$0	N/A	\$20,535,000	\$296,141,902
Total	\$2,204,418,114	\$238,887,273	\$16,926,020	\$164,280,000	\$2,624,511,407

*Targeted Funding:

2017/18: Forestry Workers only (Softwood Lumber Action Plan)

2018/19: Forestry Workers \$4,954,608 + Steel and Aluminum impacts \$1,562,541 + Seasonal Workers \$986,411

2019/20: Seasonal Workers \$986,410 + Steel and Aluminum impacts (\$1,562,542)

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Title: Skills Training Response to Old Growth Deferral Strategy

Issue: Support for workers, employers and communities impacted by changes in the forest sector

Key Messages:

- The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills works closely with the ministries responsible for forests, economic development, labour, and social development to provide a coordinated response to support communities, workers and employers impacted by changes in the forest sector.
- Under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, the ministry invested \$4.1 million in 2023/24 to respond to forest sector disruptions and urgent labour market needs across 50 impacted communities.
- The ministry leveraged existing labour market programs, including the Community Workforce Response Grant and the B.C. Employer Training Grant, to help over 600 impacted workers and 100 businesses adapt to sustainable opportunities in forestry and other key sectors.
- The Ministry is also working with post-secondary, community and industry partners to pilot a new model that helps communities diversify their local labour markets by exploring emerging sectors.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- To deliver targeted skills training support to workers, businesses and communities impacted by shifts in the forest sector in 2023/24, the ministry invested an additional \$4.1 million through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan in existing labour market programs. *(See Appendix 1 for program information.)*
- By leveraging existing labour market programs with the Community Workforce Response Grant (CWRG) and the B.C. Employer Training Grant (ETG), these programs helped over 50 impacted communities, including 10 communities receiving Community Transition services. *(See Appendix 1 for the full list of communities.)*
- Skills training through ETG helped over 100 impacted employers adjust their workforces to meet changing business needs. 75 per cent of employers who received support were small businesses.
- Together, ETG and CWRG supported over 600 impacted workers with skills training to move into sustainable employment opportunities, which included jobs in both forestry and new lines of work.
- Over 90 per cent of participants that complete skills training find employment or move into further education or training. About half of workers remain in the forest sector,

including younger employees who upgrade their skills to replace retiring workers. Others pursue skills for jobs in different sectors, like construction, mining and health care.

- The ministry also worked with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation to develop a proactive program model that assists communities in exploring new economic opportunities in partnership with government, industry and post-secondary institutions.
- The first project to pilot this model launched in 2023/24 and focuses on northern Vancouver Island; the ministry is providing North Island College (NIC) \$1.2 million over three years to prepare people for careers in the seaweed industry. Training is expected to reach over 80 participants in 2025/26 across four communities, including First Nations communities.
 - Leveraging the pilot funding provided through PSFS, NIC was able secure an additional \$880,000 in PacifiCan (federal) funding to establish a Seaweed Innovation Hub (SIH), to advance B.C.'s sustainable seaweed industry. This funding will complement the skills training pilot through the creation of a seaweed seed bank, acquiring a mobile processing unit, testing new seaweed dehydration and food processing technologies, and helping small-scale producers improve operations and adopt innovations.

Appendix 1: Old Growth Program Information, 2023/24¹

In 2023/24, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills served 59 communities through Old Growth funding:

Abbotsford	Enderby	Pitt Meadows
Black Creek	Fort St John	Port Alberni*
Burnaby	Fraser Lake*	Port Clements
Burns Lake	Golden	Prespatou
Campbell River*	Hixon	Prince George*
Castlegar	Houston*	Princeton
Chetwynd*	Hundred Mile House	Rossland
Chilliwack	Kamloops	Salmon Arm
Clearwater	Keremeos	Smithers
Coldstream	Krestova	Summerland
Coquitlam	Langley	Surrey
Courtenay	Maple Ridge	Telkwa
Cranbrook	McBride	Terrace*
Crescent Valley	Merritt	Vancouver
Creston	Nanaimo	Vanderhoof*
Crofton*	Nanoose Bay	Vavenby
Cumberland	North Vancouver Parson	Vernon
Dawson Creek	Peace River Regional	Williams Lake*
Delta	District	Woss
Duncan	Penticton	Ymir

**Indicates a Community in Transition. Community Transition Services, led by the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, rapidly deploy a cross-ministry response to bring government and non-government support to rural communities experiencing significant local indefinite or permanent job loss.*

¹ Data for 2024/25 programming is not finalized.

Table 1: Old Growth Program Overviews, 2023/24

Program	Description	Old Growth Enhancements	Budget ¹	Participants
B.C. Employer Training Grant	Provides employers throughout B.C. with skills training funding for their workforces, including prospective new hires.	Expanded eligibility criteria for impacted businesses in October 2022 to address needs of owners/operators and workers.	\$1.0M	464
Community Workforce Response Grant	Provides funding for communities and sectors to respond to labour market needs through skills training for unemployed or precariously employed people.	Community Response Stream launched in mid-September 2022 for impacted communities.	\$2.3M	148
New Pilot Project with North Island College	Pilot project to support proactive workforce development alongside economic development in remote and rural communities with limited resource economies. 2023/24 supported curriculum development. Training expected in 2024/25.		\$0.5M	--
Total			\$3.8M	612²

1. The budget reflects 2023/24 Old Growth funding through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan and is not inclusive of administrative funding of \$0.3M. The B.C. Employer Training Grant and Community Workforce Response Grant receive other funding through the Canada-BC Labour Market Transfer Agreements. (See Tab 30 – Minister's Note: Labour Market Development Programs.)

2. 612 is the number of unique participants. Participants may take training more than once.

Table 2: Old Growth Skills Training by Sector, 2023/24

Skills Training Alignment by Sector	% of funding	# of participants (ETG and CWRG combined)	# of employers (ETG only)
Manufacturing ¹	29%	181	23
Construction	29%	100	18
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	16%	154	26
Health care and social assistance	10%	14	— ²
Transportation and warehousing	7%	20	9
Wholesale trade	2%	42	4
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2%	34	— ²
Retail trade	2%	15	5
Public administration	1%	13	1
Professional, scientific and technical services	1%	12	7
Other services (except public administration)	1%	9	5
Educational services	<1%	8	3
Accommodation and food services	<1%	7	2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	<1%	2	1
Administrative and support, waste management, remediation services	<1%	1	1
Total	100%	612	105

1. Most Manufacturing skills training prepared people for mill-related jobs, like wood product manufacturing and paper manufacturing.

2. Skills training in this sector was delivered exclusively through the Community Workforce Response Grant (CWRG). While agreements through the CWRG are designed to benefit the community at large, including employers, the program tracks participants and communities rather than specific businesses.

Appendix 2: Old Growth Success Stories

B.C. Employer Training Grant

Forestry company diversifies their business

In 2023/24, Lawes Forest Management Ltd. in Princeton needed to adapt to changes to the forest sector. One of their workers was doing cut block layout work, which was slowing down due to old growth deferral decisions. The company received \$3,800 through the B.C. Employer Training Grant to reskill their employee in silviculture surveying, enabling the company to add a new business line and keep the employee fully employed in a new role.

Supporting entrepreneurial spirit and community needs

In 2024/25, the B.C. Employer Training Grant provided \$4,600 to Short Trees Ltd., a small “stump to dump” and logging processing business in 150 Mile House. With challenges in the forest sector making business more difficult, Short Trees Ltd. decided to pivot to construction to build housing and provide renovations for the community. To achieve this, the company co-owner took Carpenter (Harmonized) Level 1 skilled trades training from Thompson Rivers University with the goal to obtain a Red Seal, setting the foundation for their new business direction. The B.C. Employer Training Grant has since approved a second application for Carpenter (Harmonized) Level 2 training. The path to the Red Seal is clearly underway for this small entrepreneurial employer.

“Jon is a natural leader/entrepreneur, and it is his hope to gain the skill set needed for building/carpentry, with the hopes of creating much-needed housing in our community. He hopes to achieve his Red Seal in carpentry and hire employees and recreate his once successful business into another successful business where he can provide employment to others.”

Community Workforce Response Grant

Supporting career transitions to other well-paying jobs

When an impacted worker’s future doesn’t include forestry, some choose to pursue new lines of work like Class 01 truck driving. While it is a good-paying job, training can be very expensive. The Community Workforce Response Grant worked with the BC Trucking Association and invested \$128K in helping six impacted workers to take ICBC Class 1 Mandatory Entry Level Training Driver’s Training. Projects served Prince George, Peace River Regional District, Smithers and Vanderhoof, with all participants securing employment after training.

Supporting impacted rural communities to access urgently needed skills training

It can be challenging for small rural communities to access the training needed to address urgent skills shortages, like paramedics. The Community Workforce Response Grant invested \$335K to support paramedic training in Prince George, serving 14 people from communities across the Nechako and Cariboo regions, including McBride, Burns Lake and Smithers. Most participants received funding support to cover mileage, lodging, meals and other expenses to ensure they had equitable access to these skills. Three months after training, nearly all participants had found paramedic work in the town they lived in.

Title: StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan

Issue: Ensuring British Columbians can access affordable, industry-relevant education and training that equips them with the skills needed to secure good jobs and thrive in a rapidly changing economy.

Key Messages:

- Launched in May 2023, the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan (the Plan), supports people in getting the education and skills needed to get good jobs and thrive in a changing economy.
- The Plan supports BC's economy through initiatives that tackle labour shortages and help employers overcome skills gaps while supporting ambitions for a clean and inclusive economy and acting on commitments made in the Declaration Act Action Plan (2022).
- Now entering its third year, the Plan is fully implemented, on budget, and has helped more than 356,000 British Columbians through 24 initiatives.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The Plan was developed in response to rapid technological transformations, geopolitical shifts impacting the workforce, including a shortage of workers and key skills across sectors¹ and the global economic upheavals caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Plan is being delivered through a collaborative partnership of five ministries (PSFS, ECC, SDPR, JEDI and WLRS) and our Indigenous partners, supporting multiple government priorities: affordability, building more housing, poverty reduction, the shift to a clean economy, and advancing reconciliation.
- The Plan consists of 24 initiatives that address five key priorities:
 1. **People seeking post-secondary education:** The Plan makes education more affordable by doubling BC student aid weekly loan maximums, which has supported over 90,000 full-time students. To date, the Province has invested \$10 million into Graduate Scholarships and \$21.8 million to double veterinary seats from 20 to 40.
 2. **People looking to reskill for in-demand jobs:** Over 11,000 students have accessed industry-relevant, short-term post-secondary training through the future skills grant. The Plan also supports Transition Training for Forest Sector Workers and Communities.

¹ Labour Market Outlook, 2023

3. **People Facing Barriers:** Skills Training for People with Multiple Barriers was expanded, with nearly 80% of participants finding employment so far. The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program was also expanded, resulting in a 227% increase in recipients in the first year (2,004 recipients since August 1, 2024) and 1,390 more early childhood educator training spaces were created to help parents and businesses.
 4. **Indigenous Peoples:** The Plan supports multiple initiatives to address Actions 1.08², 1.09³, 3.03⁴, 4.20⁵, 4.30⁶, and 4.41⁷ in the Declaration Act Action Plan, including Core and Capacity Funding for First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes and Indigenous language revitalization programs. The Guardians and Stewardship Training Initiative creates in-community jobs and supports First Nations to continue their work as stewards of their territories.
 5. **People new to B.C.:** The International Credential Recognition Act (effective July 1, 2024), streamlines the recognition of 29 in-demand professions (including engineers, paramedics, early childhood educators, and teachers). The Find Your Path tool (FYP) has supported over 29,000 people to apply for courses through occupational learning pathways.
- The Plan provides support for key sectors in BC's economy:
 - Strengthening the technology workforce with 3,000 additional Tech-relevant Spaces at public post-secondary institutes in the province.
 - Supporting construction by establishing a Mass Timber Training Hub at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT).
 - Expanded Manufacturing Workforce Development providing youth with short-term work placements in BC's manufacturing sector.
 - Boost recruitment and retention of teachers in rural and remote communities with additional funding to recruit, train and retain a greater number Indigenous teachers in the K-12 system.
 - Rapid Response Training includes adding 200+ industry relevant micro-credential courses at post-secondary institutions province wide and TradeUpBC an online hub for tradespeople to access skills training.
 - B.C.'s economy is changing, and the government is focused on ensuring programs and initiatives are relevant, efficient and keep costs low.

² Recognize the integral role of Indigenous-led post-secondary institutes through core funding, capacity funding and the development of legislation.

³ Strengthen the capacity of the Native Education College to provide culturally relevant post-secondary opportunities.

⁴ External review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in the provincial public education system.

⁵ Advance the partnership between the Métis Nation of British Columbia and the Province of B.C.

⁶ Support Indigenous language revitalization through sustainable funding.

⁷ Provide funding for self-determined, community-led programs for Indigenous Peoples to upgrade skills, obtain credentials, secure employment, and develop and support community economies.

- Shifting priorities, including the threat of U.S. tariffs, require government to be ready to respond quickly to labour market challenges.
- The Plan is responsive, and able to address emergent economic issues with programs that can be scaled up and adapted to meet needs.
- The Future Ready Office continues to monitor The Plan's implementation and performance to ensure programs remain relevant, efficient and help keep costs low.

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Title: Addressing Racism, Hate, and Discrimination, including Antisemitism

Issue: Actions taken to address racism, hate and discrimination, including antisemitism

Key Messages:

- Government has been very clear that racism, hate, and discrimination, including antisemitism, have no place on post-secondary campuses or anywhere else in B.C.
- Public post-secondary institutions are responsible for having appropriate policies and processes in place to ensure campuses are safe spaces for all.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Public post-secondary campuses have been the site of heated discussions and debates about the Israel-Hamas war. Protest activity at several institutions disrupted board meetings and convocation ceremonies and included temporary occupation of spaces on campuses.
- Encampments were established at four institutions: the University of B.C. – Point Grey; the University of B.C. – Okanagan; University of Victoria; and Vancouver Island University.
 - The encampment at Vancouver Island University was the subject of a court injunction requiring the encampment to disband. The other three encampments disbanded without a court injunction.
- The Ministry continues to respond to correspondence regarding concerns at post-secondary institutions about racism and hate, with recent focus on antisemitism.
- Public post-secondary institutions are responsible for having appropriate policies and processes in place to ensure campuses are safe spaces for all.
- On September 19, 2024, public post-secondary institution board chairs were sent a letter from the Minister reminding them of their responsibility to ensure safety in areas of racism and antisemitism (letter attached).
 - Public post-secondary institutions were encouraged to collaborate with their institutional community to ensure their policies and procedures align with best practices to keep students, staff, and faculty safe from violence in all forms.
- Since 2023, several institutions have made public statements on global events and the importance of supporting and ensuring the safety of all students, staff, and faculty.

- As part of messaging, institutions often share information on the support and services that are available to students, staff, and faculty, who may be impacted by events.
 - In addition to institution specific supports, all post-secondary students have access to a mental health support program called Here2Talk – a 24/7 provincially-funded province-wide mental health resource with translation support.
- B.C. has participated in multiple meetings with the Council of Ministers of Education Canada to share promising practices that have been or are being implemented to counter hate, particularly antisemitism and Islamophobia, in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions.
- Presidents have also responded to requests from federal ministers for information on institutional codes of conduct relating to antisemitism and ensuring Jewish students and staff feel safe.
- The B.C. Government has taken several additional steps to address antisemitism, Islamophobia and hate-motivated crimes and incidents. This includes:
 - Launching a dedicated Racist Incident Helpline to offer a low-barrier and safe alternatives for those hesitant to approach police through a confidential and supportive environment.
 - Requiring mandatory Holocaust education for high school students by the 2025-26 school year.
 - Passing the *Anti-Racism Data Act* in June 2022 and the *Anti-Racism Act* in May 2024 to help address and dismantle systemic racism and to provide supports for those who have been negatively impacted

Attachment: September 19, 2024 Letter to PSI Board Chairs



September 19, 2024
Our Ref. 135667

Dear British Columbia Public Post-Secondary Institution Board Chairs:

With the academic year underway and as you welcome new and returning students, staff and faculty to your institutions, I want to highlight the importance I place as Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills on your work to ensure that post-secondary institutions are safe communities for everyone. I am looking to you, the leaders of the public post-secondary education system, to ensure safety in the areas of racism and antisemitism, sexualized violence and overdose prevention.

As Board Chairs of public post-secondary institutions, you take your responsibility for the management and administration of your institution seriously, and Government respects your accountability for these areas. We recognize the autonomy of academic governance at post-secondary institutions and value academic freedom and the protection of speech. I know that ensuring all post-secondary students, staff and faculty have access to safe, inclusive and high-quality learning environments that support them in achieving their best is a commitment shared across the post-secondary education sector.

Government has been very clear that violence, hate and discrimination, including antisemitism, have no place on post-secondary campuses or anywhere else in BC. While peaceful demonstrations are part of post-secondary institutions' free speech and exchange of ideas, none of us can tolerate expressions of hatred and acts of violence of any kind, and we recognize the need to ensure safety is maintained on campuses.

I expect that each public post-secondary institution has developed, implemented and enforced rules around racism and hate, including incidences of hate language used to bully, harass or harm others. Institutional policies should detail any applicable reporting processes, enforcement measures or potential disciplinary consequences that are in place. Additionally, as leaders of our public post-secondary institutions, it is up to you to ensure these policies are effectively communicated to your community, including students, faculty, staff and contractors. Post-secondary institutions are encouraged to work with their community to ensure their policies and procedures align with best practices to keep students, staff and faculty safe from violence in all forms.

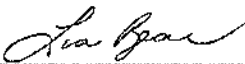
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I am also grateful for the input and advice your institutions, students and community members and partners have provided over the past year which has helped to inform the development of a draft *Post-Secondary Sexualized Violence Action Plan*. As the Ministry continues to develop and augment the *Action Plan*, I urge you to review your institution's policies and procedures to ensure alignment with trauma-informed and survivor-centered approaches. I also encourage you and your teams to make use of the existing synchronous and asynchronous training resources and supports available on the Safe Campuses BC website. This website also hosts a Toolkit on reporting of sexualized violence to support you when drafting your institution's annual report.

The safety of post-secondary communities is also at risk from the ongoing toxic drug crisis, which has resulted in significant increases in drug-related overdoses and deaths. In May 2024, I convened a Post-Secondary Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) who, along with my Ministry, has prepared guidelines to inform your institutions as you develop focused strategies that reflect the individual nature of your post-secondary communities. In addition, a province-wide toxic drug and naloxone awareness campaign was launched in September to coincide with the return of students to campus. The Steering Committee will continue to keep you and your colleagues informed as you pursue your role in responding to this public health emergency over the short-, medium- and long-term.

My Ministry remains committed to inclusion, justice and equity for all and is dedicated to ensuring staff, students and faculty feel safe and supported. We are committed to working with all public post-secondary institutions to promote policies and procedures that recognize these elements while following best practices in responding to and preventing racism, hate and violence at public post-secondary institutions. My Ministry will continue to work with all post-secondary institutions to provide world-class post-secondary education to all students in a safe and supportive environment.

Sincerely,



Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

pc: All Public Post-Secondary Institution Presidents

Title: Sexualized Violence Policy

Issue: Status of work relating to Sexualized Violence Policies

Key Messages:

- Sexualized violence is unacceptable, and it is important to make sure post-secondary communities are a safe space for everyone.
- All B.C. public post-secondary institutions are required by law to have sexualized violence policies in place and report annually to their board.
- Since 2018, this Government has invested \$2.2 million towards preventing and addressing sexualized violence in post-secondary communities.
- The Ministry will continue to work with the post-secondary sector to develop resources that help address sexualized violence and to ensure campaigns are attentive to the needs of the sector.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* requires all B.C. public post-secondary institutions to have sexualized violence policies in place and report annually to their board.
- Private institutions are also required to have policies that address sexualized violence.
- Since 2018, this Government has invested \$2.2 million towards prevention and response to sexualized violence in post-secondary communities, including:
 - run an awareness campaign to help prevent sexualized violence on and around post-secondary institutions,
 - enhance institutions' systems for reporting and disclosing sexualized violence,
 - develop plain-language supports for institutional policies,
 - develop open-source training resources for institutions,
 - provide specialized supports for rural and remote campuses, including investigation training for staff, and
 - survey students to better understand perceptions of sexualized violence in post-secondary communities.
- Most recently, in 2024, the Ministry and the public post-secondary sector worked together to launch:

- A suite of open-source training resources that address the impacts of sexualized violence on specific student populations, such as Indigenous students, graduate students, and international students.
 - The training resources also address technology-facilitated sexualized violence, such as online sexual harassment and sharing intimate images without consent.
- A toolkit to help institution staff implement their sexualized violence policies and prepare their institution's annual report.
- The Ministry will continue to work closely with:
 - the post-secondary sector to develop resources and take steps to help address sexualized violence, and
 - the Gender Equity Office and the cross-government Gender-Based Violence Action Plan Working Group to ensure alignment.

Title: Student Mental Health Initiatives

Issue: Here2Talk 24/7 mental health service for post-secondary students

Key Messages:

- Improving student mental health is an integral part of *A Pathway to Hope*, B.C.'s roadmap for making the system of mental health and addictions care better for the people of British Columbia.
- Young people between 15 to 24 are more likely to report mental illness and substance use disorders than other age groups.
- Since 2020, Government has offered Here2Talk, a 24/7 mental health service available to all students registered at a post-secondary institution in British Columbia.
- To date, over 10,000 students have accessed the Here2Talk service more than 23,000 times.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Launched in April 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, Here2Talk is a 24/7 mental health service that can be accessed free-of-charge and is open to any student attending the 25 public post-secondary institutions and more than 300 private institutions across the province.
- Here2Talk includes a website and an app that provide access to relevant online mental health content, information about the service, and a link to a real-time chat session with a counsellor.
- The service is a single-session model and provides students with confidential and immediate support, vital information, as well as referrals to helpful services available on their campus or in their communities.
- Services are available in English and French with additional languages upon request (e.g., Punjabi, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, Arabic).
- Government provides \$1.5 million in annual funding to deliver the Here2Talk service and has contracted TELUS Health as the service delivery provider to January 2026.
- Students use the chat feature approximately 70 per cent of the time and the phone feature approximately 30 per cent of the time.
- 71 per cent of students who have used the service report that Here2Talk provided them with the support and tools they needed, while 68 per cent would recommend it to a friend or classmate.

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Title: Overdose Prevention and Response at Post-Secondary Institutions

Issue: Government is actively working to improve overdose prevention measures and emergency response efforts within post-secondary institutions to ensure student safety.

Key Messages:

- Overdose-related fatalities are preventable, and every loss is deeply felt across communities.
- The Province is committed to strengthening overdose prevention efforts by taking a proactive approach to harm reduction and emergency preparedness.
- The toxic drug crisis continues to impact campuses, and institutions must have clear strategies, protocols, and policies in place to address risks and support students in emergency situations.
- To further these efforts, the Ministry established the Post-Secondary Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee in May 2024.
- As part of the government's response, nasal naloxone has been distributed to all public post-secondary institutions and First Nations Mandated institutes, ensuring these essential kits are available to students, faculty, and staff.
- The Ministry remains committed to ensuring all post-secondary institutions have clear, effective, and student-focused overdose prevention policies, reinforcing the importance of safety measures that are easy to understand, access, and implement.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In 2016 the Province of B.C. declared a public health emergency in response to the significant increase in toxic drug overdose deaths. It has been identified that over 50 per cent of all toxic drug deaths among B.C. residents occurred in individuals aged 19 to 39.
- On January 23, 2024, UVic student Sidney McIntyre-Starko suffered a fatal overdose in a campus dorm room, experiencing cardiac arrest due to fentanyl poisoning.
- The delayed emergency response may have been influenced by fear of disciplinary repercussions, underscoring the urgent need for clearer institutional policies surrounding overdose incidents.
- Post-Secondary Institutions have been encouraged to develop focused strategies to respond to this crisis within their unique communities and age groups.
- Data has indicated that First Nations People have died from drug poisoning at 6.1 times the rate of other B.C. residents in 2023.
- Key Messages to Post-Secondary Institutions:
 - Ensure information on contacting emergency services is clear and unambiguous with respect to contacting 911 in the event of a medical emergency.

- Inform PSI communities on the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*, which indicates that individuals will not face any criminal consequences for drug possession or use when calling for help with a drug overdose event.
- Expand awareness of existing toxic drug alerts provided by the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, in partnership with the B.C. Health Authorities and community partners, throughout the campus community.
- Continue working with the B.C. Centre for Disease Control and community health partners to ensure supplies of free injectable naloxone are available on campuses.
- In May 2024, the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills convened a Post-Secondary Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) to work collaboratively across the post-secondary sector, ensuring institutions are prepared to respond to overdose incidents and support harm reduction strategies.
- Universities and colleges across B.C. are evaluating existing policies to strengthen overdose prevention efforts, enhance campus response protocols, and ensure students have access to naloxone kits, educational resources, and support services.
- As institutions implement new measures, there is a continued focus on the effectiveness of training, emergency coordination, and awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and improve student access to life-saving interventions.

Governance and Membership of the Steering Committee:

- To address the ongoing public health emergency posed by the toxic drug crisis, the Ministry convened the Post-Secondary Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee in May 2024.
- The Steering Committee is co-Chaired by Dr. James Mandigo, Provost and VP Academic at the University of the Fraser Valley, and Kim Horn, ADM and Executive Financial Officer at the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.
- The Steering Committee includes senior executives from: the B.C. Center for Disease Control, the Office of the Provincial Health Officer, the Ministry of Health, post-secondary institutions, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the First Nations Health Authority, and the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills.
- This committee was created to work collaboratively across the post-secondary sector, ensuring institutions are prepared to respond to overdose incidents and support harm reduction strategies.
- Through this collaborative approach, the committee integrates leading public health practices into institutional guidelines.
- This committee is tasked with reviewing existing institutional policies, identifying gaps, and developing sector-wide best practices that strengthen overdose response and prevention strategies.
- New guidelines introduced in Fall 2024 help institutions create comprehensive emergency response plans that improve overdose prevention strategies and ensure students understand available supports.
- These guidelines emphasize standardized response protocols, training requirements, and the integration of harm reduction messaging across institutions.

Contact: Kashi Tanaka Executive Director Post Secondary Operations and Emergency Support 250 415-9706

Last Updated: April 3, 2025

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- In 2025, the Steering Committee continues working on expanding the guidelines to include improved overdose response training for faculty, staff, and students, new education initiatives to raise awareness of toxic drug risks, and clear protocols on how institutions should handle overdose notifications, including best practices for alerting next of kin.
- Completed Work
 - On June 24, 2024, the Steering Committee issued a communique to all public post-secondary institutions that identified recommended immediate actions (see attached June 2024 Sector Communique).
 - An awareness campaign was developed by Government Communications and Public Engagement with the Steering Committee acting as the primary reference group that was in market from August 26 to September 20, 2024. The objectives of the campaign were to increase awareness about how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose event. The target audience was post-secondary students and youth aged 18 to 30 who aren't currently enrolled in post-secondary schools.
 - On September 3, 2024, the Steering Committee released Overdose Prevention and Response: Guidelines for BC's Post-Secondary Sector (see attached Guidelines). The Guidelines recommend that all post-secondary institutions develop a Drug Overdose Prevention and Response Safety Plan.

Nasal Naloxone

- One critical component of this strategy is ensuring easy access to naloxone, a life-saving tool that reverses opioid overdoses.
- Outside of a medical facility there are two primary delivery systems for Naloxone, via intramuscular or subcutaneous injection, or via intranasal with a nasal spray.
- While both delivery system are equally effective Nasal Naloxone has some benefits which include it is better in cold climates where the recipient may be wearing several layers of clothing, and the nasal delivery system may be easier to administer for individuals uncomfortable injecting an individual in distress.
- As part of the government's response, nasal naloxone has been distributed to all public post-secondary institutions and First Nations Mandated institutes, ensuring these essential kits are available to students, faculty, and staff.
- In August 2024, the Ministry distributed 1,600 nasal naloxone kits along with 750 storage cabinets to all public post-secondary institutions as well as all First Nations Mandated Institutes with physical class space; as of October 2024, all cabinets had been installed ensuring coverage of all institutions including on campus student housing.
- The model for distributing cabinets and nasal naloxone based the number of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) on each campus.
- The general principle with AEDs is that anyone on a campus is no more than 5 minutes away from one; co-locating Nasal Naloxone with AEDs leveraged existing community knowledge where lifesaving devices are located and provides even coverage to campus spaces.
- There are approximately 500 AEDs located on public PSI campuses in B.C. in all but the very smallest campuses in B.C. (e.g. Atlin and Masset).

- Injectable naloxone kits are readily available and distributed to over 2,200 sites across the province through the BC Centre for Disease Control's Take Home Naloxone program.
- Take Home Naloxone registered sites include community health/social service agencies, some community pharmacies, some First Nations band health offices, and post-secondary institutes.
- The efficacy (5-10 minute), shelf life (2-years) and storage (no special requirements) of both delivery systems is by and large equivalent.
- The Ministry is working with other ministries (Health and Citizens' Services) to ensure post-secondary institutions can continue to obtain nasal naloxone at low to no cost.

Rich Report Overview – UVic Independent Review:

- Former Abbotsford police chief Bob Rich conducted an independent review of the circumstances surrounding the overdose and death of Sidney McIntyre-Starko at UVic.
- His findings offer critical insights into the university's response, existing protocols, and areas where improvements are needed to prevent similar tragedies in the future.
- The Rich Report, commissioned by UVic President Kevin Hall, outlines the state of overdose prevention policies before January 23, 2024, details what happened during the emergency, and provides a timeline of events following the incident.
- In response to these findings, UVic has committed to implementing all 18 recommendations outlined in the report, reinforcing the university's commitment to student safety.
- Key themes emerging from the report include:
 - Strengthened commitment to student well-being and safety.
 - Increased leadership accountability in policy implementation
 - Expanded transparency in university communications and emergency response strategies.
 - A renewed focus on operational improvements that enhance emergency preparedness, mental health support, and harm reduction efforts on campus.
- The University of Victoria has accepted all recommendations, and my Ministry will be monitoring progress on their ongoing implementation.
- We are reviewing the report now as well to see if there are learnings that can be applied to all institutions through our work on the Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee.
- The Rich Report was publicly released on UVic's website at 10:30 AM on April 3, 2025.

Coroner's Inquest

- Following this tragedy, the BC Coroners Service announced an inquest into Sidney's death in February 2025.
- The Ministry is actively participating in this process, identifying ways to improve overdose prevention and emergency response measures across post-secondary institutions in B.C.
- The findings from the inquest will be instrumental in shaping future policy decisions and informing next steps for sector-wide improvements.
- The public inquest will begin on Monday, April 28, 2025.

Mental Health Supports for Students:

- Improving student mental health is an integral component of the government's A Pathway to Hope plan, which aims to enhance access to mental health and substance use services across the province.
- The toxic drug crisis is not an isolated issue—it is deeply intertwined with broader mental health challenges affecting young people.
- The Province is working to establish a more integrated, culturally safe, and trauma-informed system of care that provides targeted support for young adults navigating mental health concerns and substance use risks.
- The Here2Talk program provides free, 24/7 mental health support to students enrolled in B.C. post-secondary institutions.
- With approximately 555,000 students attending 25 public institutions and over 320 private institutions, ensuring access to quality mental health care is a key priority in post-secondary settings.

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From: PSFS Administrative Services Collaborative PSFS:EX
Subject: June 2024 Sector Communique
Date: June 24, 2024 1:00:42 PM

Good afternoon,

Please see the below Communique.

Thank you,

Kashi Tanaka

Executive Director | Post-Secondary Operating & Emergency Support

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

c: 250 415-9706 | w: 778 698-8562 | Pronouns: he/him/his

June 2024 Sector Communique

In 2016, the province declared a public health emergency in response to significant increases in drug-related overdoses and deaths. The toxic drug crisis is a complex and evolving issue that requires all twenty-five of British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions to have focused strategies. These strategies need to reflect the unique nature of post-secondary communities as a sector and respect the differences between each individual institution.

In May 2024, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills convened a Post-Secondary Overdose Prevention and Response Steering Committee (the Steering Committee). The Steering Committee's detailed assessment of the situation is on-going, and a series of guidelines and communications will be forthcoming in the coming months.

There are three items that have been identified that all post-secondary institutions can address immediately.

Information on Contacting Emergency Services

There should be no ambiguity with respect to contacting 911 in the event of a medical emergency. Overdoses and drug poisonings are serious medical events in

which time is of the essence. Emergency medical services also have an important role in ensuring aftercare for people who have experienced an overdose. All institutions should ensure that information on who to contact in the event of an emergency is clear.

To support institutions additional guidelines will be developed to further ensure effective and timely assistance in medical emergencies.

Expanding Awareness of Toxic Drug Alerts

The BC Centre for Disease Control, in partnership with the BC Health Authorities and community partners, provides free, real-time text messaging services for anyone to receive toxic drug alerts or share information about toxic drugs in their community ([towardtheheart](#)). This service is anonymous. People can receive other information by text message, like where to find naloxone or how to get drugs tested. All institutions should sign-up for these services and share this information with students, staff, and faculty.

To support overdose prevention work on campus the Steering Committee will oversee the development of an awareness campaign that highlights when and how to use naloxone as well as information on harm reduction and treatment services and includes targeted communication for key groups including students in student housing and trades programs, as well as underserved and vulnerable populations.

Ensuring Access to Naloxone

Naloxone is a medication that quickly reverses the effects of an overdose from opioids. Institutions should ensure naloxone is readily available.

To support institutions a naloxone strategy will be developed that incorporates principles and best practices on the distribution and accessibility of naloxone, as well as training and communications about how and when to use naloxone it.

Next Steps

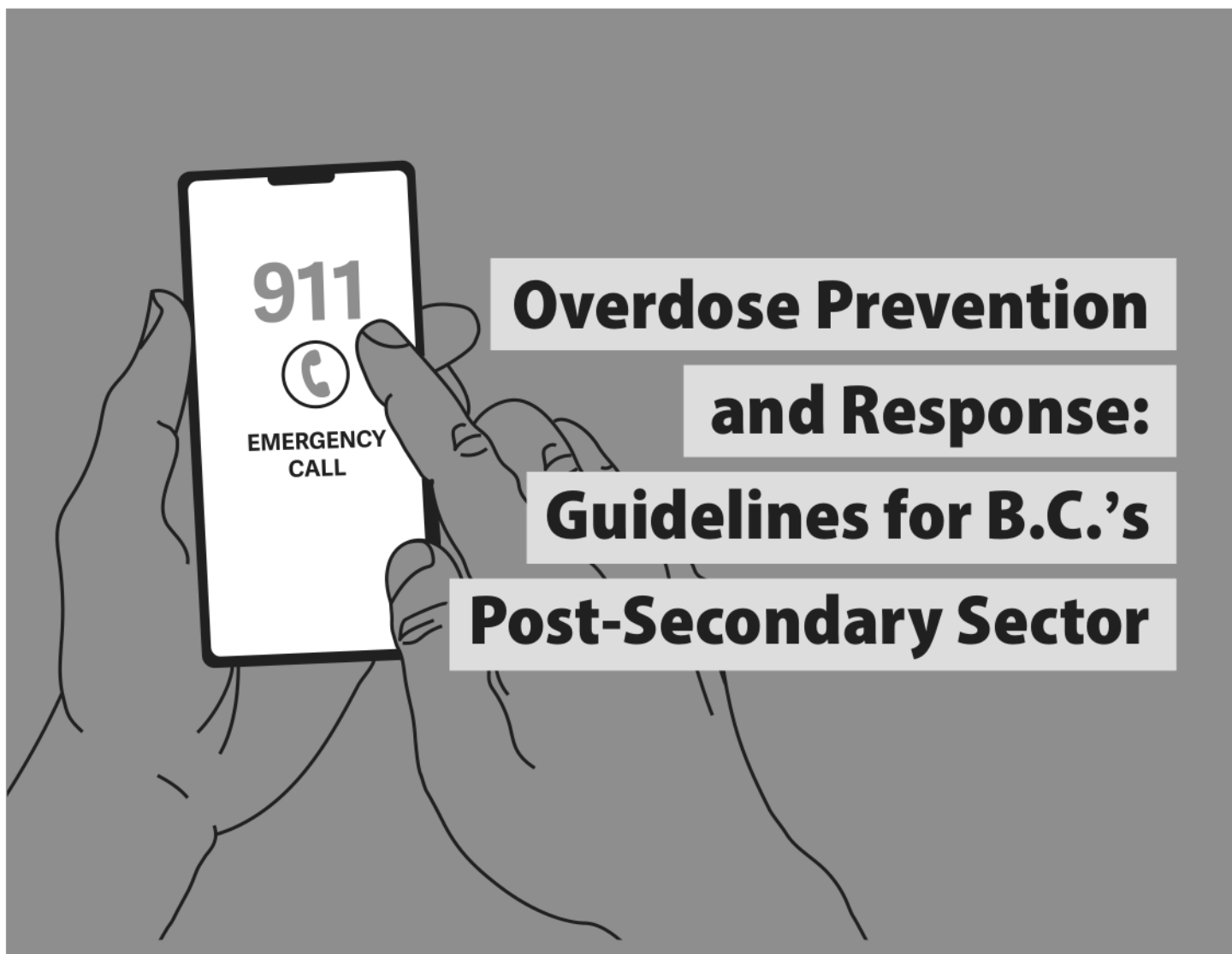
In addition to the three areas identified above, the Steering Committee will provide advice and recommendations on other items. This includes principles for training members of the campus community as well as developing best practices for on-campus overdose communication protocols that includes notifying next of kin, supporting staff affected by responding to overdoses, and communication with the campus community.

The Steering Committee will use communiques to keep you and your colleagues informed. If you have any questions, please contact ASC@gov.bc.ca and the team will direct your question to the appropriate resource.

Some resources are listed below to assist in accessing further information:

- [Stop Overdose BC](#) – BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions
- [Current Health Issues \(Overdose\)](#) – Office of the Provincial Health Officer
- [Unregulated Drug Poisoning Emergency Dashboard](#) – BC Centre for Disease Control
- [Toward the Heart](#) – BC Centre for Disease Control Harm Reduction Services
- [HelpStartsHere](#) – BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

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Overdose Prevention and Response: Guidelines for B.C.'s Post-Secondary Sector

August 2024 Edition

Guidelines produced by
B.C. Post-Secondary Institutions
with the support of the Ministry of
Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Acknowledgements

The Overdose Prevention and Response Guidelines were developed through the collaborative efforts of the Overdose Prevention and Response Committee, and they reflect the perspectives of Post-Secondary Institutions, BC Centre for Disease Control, First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Health Authority, the Provincial Health Officer and various other ministries. The Guidelines are ready for implementation by Post-Secondary Institutions for the beginning of the Fall 2024 Semester.

Steering Committee

Jason Butler [Co-Chair]

Assistant Deputy Minister, Executive Financial Officer
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Dr. James Mandigo [Co-Chair]

Provost and VP Academic
University of the Fraser Valley

Dr. Alexis Crabtree

Medical Lead, Harm Reduction and Substance Use Services
BC Centre for Disease Control

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Evan Howatson

Executive Director, Overdose Response
Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

Kashi Tanaka

Executive Director, Post-Secondary Operating and
Emergency Support
Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Purpose of the Guidelines

In 2016, the Province of British Columbia declared a public health emergency in response to a significant increase in drug-related overdoses and deaths. This toxic drug crisis, primarily driven by a highly potent and unregulated supply of illicit drugs, remains a complex and evolving issue. Over the past eight years, more than 15,000 lives have been lost in B.C. due to toxic drugs, with fentanyl—a synthetic opioid—detected in over 80% of unregulated drug deaths each year. Fentanyl's presence is not limited to opioids but has also been found in stimulants and depressants, often mixed with benzodiazepines, leading to abnormal symptoms consistent with overdose. A tiny amount of fentanyl, equivalent to three grains of salt, can cause a fatal overdose, especially in first-time users.

Given the gravity of the toxic drug crisis, all of B.C.'s 25 public post-secondary institutions (PSIs) are encouraged to develop focused strategies tailored to their unique communities. These strategies should build on existing frameworks and leverage best practices from within and outside of B.C. The guidelines provided here are designed to assist PSIs in preventing drug overdoses and responding effectively in the event of a suspected overdose on campus.

Raising awareness of the toxic drug supplies and responding quickly to suspected overdoses are critical actions to saving lives. The majority of students attending PSIs are in an age group that is particularly vulnerable, with recent data from 2023 indicating that 50% of all deaths among B.C. residents aged 19 to 39 were due to illicit drug toxicity.

PSIs are encouraged to maintain a dedicated site on their public institutional webpage to serve as a resource, where they can post their Overdose Prevention and Response Plan in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this document.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:

The historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism include intergenerational trauma, institutional racism, as well as the disruption of language and culture, which continue to permeate both the academic and non-academic setting. Through strength and resilience, Indigenous Peoples continue their healing journeys, including through the

pursuit of post-secondary education. It is important to acknowledge that BC Coroners Service data indicates that First Nations people died of drug poisonings at 6.1 times the rate of other B.C. residents in 2023. This data is provided, not to further stigmatize Indigenous Peoples, but to highlight the important work that needs to continue with local First Nations on harm reduction strategies that are culturally safe, respect their right to self-determination and seek to reconcile the lasting harm of colonial laws, policies, and practices on Indigenous Peoples.¹

The latest BC Coroners Service findings reported that approximately 20% of drug poisoning deaths occurred amongst those who worked in trades, transportation or as equipment operators. This highlights an important opportunity to educate students and PSI employees of the elevated risks of drug poisoning in trades environments.²

Most unregulated drug deaths in 2024 occurred indoors (48% in private homes and 35% inside public/community indoor settings).³ It is important to be aware of the elevated risks of drug poisoning for students living in on-campus housing and to ensure that they are aware of what to do to support someone in the event of a suspected overdose.

While most reported deaths due to toxic drug overdoses occur in large urban centres, rural communities across B.C. have also experienced high incidences of drug-related deaths. Not all these rural settings have access to the same harm reduction supports (e.g., opioid agonist therapy prescribers and drug testing sites) as urban centres. PSIs located in rural settings should work with their local health authority on how best to increase awareness of and access to harm reduction supports.

1 An Urgent Response to a Continuing Crisis Report (gov.bc.ca)

2 More drug-poisoning prevention services for construction workers | BC Gov News

3 More than 14,500 lives lost to unregulated toxic drugs, eight years into public health crisis | BC Gov News

Developing a Drug Overdose Prevention and Response Safety Plan

The toxic drug crisis is a complex issue that impacts all PSIs in B.C. A dedicated Overdose Prevention and Response Plan is a valuable tool for addressing this issue. These guidelines were created to support PSIs as they develop or refine their own prevention and response plans.

Accessing Overdose Prevention

PSIs play a vital role in supporting the prevention of drug overdoses. As respected institutions embedded in communities throughout B.C., PSIs are seen as places of learning, truth, and knowledge. They value research-informed decision making, and bring expertise in the areas of teaching, and collaboration between research networks, government, and community organizations. Support services—including on-campus trauma-informed counseling, support groups, peer support programs, and the availability of naloxone with training—are critical to preventing overdose events. Engagement with student associations and advocacy groups in developing and implementing prevention plans enhances awareness and support.

Overdose Response

In the event of a suspected drug overdose on campus, PSIs need to have clear response protocols that provide an effective, coordinated, and rapid response. Administering naloxone and rescue breathing (if warranted) as soon as possible is one of the most effective ways to prevent further injury in the event of a suspected overdose. Readily available naloxone is critical in the event of a suspected overdose, as is ensuring that emergency medical services are immediately notified and directed through 9-1-1. These actions are vital in providing life-saving support and continuous care.

Overdose Prevention and Response Plan

All B.C. PSIs are encouraged to develop and make publicly available an Overdose Prevention and Response Plan (OPRP) that, at a minimum, incorporates the guidelines provided

in this document. PSIs may choose to include additional information into their OPRP to account for situations that are unique to their institution and/or campus. It is recognized that not all suggested actions are feasible across the sector, and in cases where PSIs are not able to meet specific guidelines, alternate approaches should be considered to achieve the intended effect.

PSIs should use existing approval processes within their governance structures to develop the supporting materials and action plans for each guideline. Engagement with local health authorities and students, as appropriate, is encouraged to ensure the effectiveness of materials. Provincial-level guidance and materials may be the best source for disseminating information. They can provide a common ‘look and feel’ across institutions that can be easily recognized by students or other campus community members who attend multiple PSIs throughout their academic journey.

To expedite access to resources, PSIs should share information and materials as soon as they are approved and become available, rather than waiting for all guidelines to be in effect before publishing.

Indigenous Considerations

It is strongly recommended that institutions work closely with First Nations on whose territory they are located to develop overdose response plans. First Nations are another level of government, and it is critical that public PSIs, as provincial entities, work closely with First Nations on all matters that impact their communities. This is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and the broader commitments of the Province to First Nations.

Guidelines for Post-Secondary Institutions

Overdose Awareness

Institutions have varied welcome programs that are tailored to their unique circumstances. Inclusion of toxic drug crisis related information in the OPRP will require customization, but basic principles for consideration include:

- All students, particularly incoming students, should be provided with information that enhances their awareness of the toxic drug crisis in B.C. Messaging should be tailored to groups who may be at higher risk in the campus community.
- Information provided should be standardized as much as possible, leveraging existing provincial materials and programs. A student who transfers from one B.C. institution to another should see similar messaging.
- Emphasize that no unregulated drug is safe, and prescription medications should also be treated with caution.
- Promote awareness of resources that can help people manage their mental health and reduce or stop drug use (e.g., HelpStartsHere, Opioid Treatment Access Line), overdose prevention sites, virtual overdose prevention services (e.g., Lifeguard, Brave), supervised consumption services, and drug checking, treatment and recovery services that may be available on campus or within the broader regional community. The intent is to ensure that the campus community is aware of available services.
- Institutions are encouraged to provide awareness materials to students and employees on the availability of personal Take-Home Naloxone kits from local distribution sites and self-help materials available through [*Toward the Heart*](#) and [*StopOverdose.gov.bc.ca*](#).

Welcome packages and orientations can provide an initial surge of information, and PSIs will need to use judgement to avoid information overload. In addition to general awareness, information regarding recognition and response to an overdose is a critical element of the OPRP. Considerations include:

- Promote the following key items within the campus community:
 - » Recognition of the overdose events (signs and symptoms).
 - » Requirement to call 9-1-1 immediately; and where feasible, contact campus emergency response.
 - » Location awareness – how to identify where you are to emergency responders.
 - » Location of first aid and naloxone kits (including nasal naloxone).
 - » Assurance that emergency responders are coming to help to provide support for those who need it.
 - » Emphasis on mitigating the stigma surrounding drug use in the community.
- Promote awareness of the provincial *Good Samaritan Act*, and the federal *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*, namely the protections that are in place with respect to civil liability and criminal prosecution. Good Samaritan principles should also be applied to internal policies within an institution and broadly communicated throughout the campus community.

- PSIs should review and revise internal policies concerning student personal drug use to reduce the fear of academic or other institutional repercussions (e.g., suspension, expulsion, removal from student housing) that may prevent a student from immediately responding to, or reporting, a safety incident where drug use is potentially involved.
- Ensure the campus community is aware of supports and services available to anyone involved in, or witnessing, an overdose or suspected overdose event.
- Care should be taken to separate educational toxic drug awareness from formal training programs. Awareness programs should focus on immediate actions to assist in initial responses, not certify individuals in first aid or emergency response measures.

PSIs should consider inclusion of toxic drug alerts within their own campus notification systems, including notifications of specific incidents where a toxic drug supply was discovered.

- Institutions should make students and staff aware they can sign up for text messages from their local health authority and campus security apps with warnings about alarming instances of toxic drug risks in their local community. Toward the Heart provides such a service province wide that can be accessed through personal mobile devices (<https://towardtheheart.com/alerts>).

Elevating awareness of the dangers posed by the toxic drug supply requires consistent messaging and effort by PSIs. Awareness promotion should consider the unique characteristics of each institution. Factors such as student population, international students, and non-standard academic schedules, may require adjustments to these guidelines. Each institution should use their best judgement while striving to follow these principles.

Considerations for long-term, consistent messaging and support include:

- Make connections with regional health authorities including First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) to regularly share information on best practices, provincial initiatives, and areas where collaboration would be appropriate.
- Provide educational materials (e.g., posters, guest speakers, information booths and other available resources) for campus visitors to aid familiarization with the toxic drug crisis in B.C.
- Support/amplify overdose prevention campaigns prepared by the provincial government and any similar future campaigns.

Overdose Response

The OPRP should outline training and response expectations for campus staff and community members. However, guidelines must emphasize that 9-1-1 emergency services should be the first call that is made when an incident is discovered or reported. The only exception is if the incident occurs in an area that is not serviced by 9-1-1, in which case local emergency response contact information should be used.

To support this principle, PSIs should:

- Review printed and online materials to remove any guidance that indicates anything other than calling 9-1-1 first in an emergency.
- Launch an awareness campaign to ensure the campus community is aware that 9-1-1 is the first call to make, regardless of any other legacy material that may indicate otherwise.

PSI campuses should have an Emergency Response Protocol (ERP) that clearly outlines required actions in the event of a suspected overdose. The ERP should include:

- Call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Campus emergency resources should be contacted after establishing communication with 9-1-1 emergency responders.
- Notification methods for campus emergency resources may vary, from bystander awareness to automated notification systems that notify campus responders whenever a 9-1-1 call is made. Consider tools and resources available to ensure that campus staff are made aware when 9-1-1 has been called.
- Develop a location awareness strategy to help emergency responders quickly identify the location of the incident, especially in buildings without distinct street addresses.
 - » As part of each PSIs OPRP, there should be collaboration with emergency service providers to create a location awareness strategy that supports the timely location of individuals in distress.
 - » Provide signage across campus to help individuals effectively share their location with emergency service providers.
 - » Consider the use of muster points (with campus escorts) to aid in timely location.

The OPRP should explain which campus resources are available to assist in an emergency after contacting 9-1-1. Helpful categories for identifying personnel and community groups include:

- Campus security and safety staff/first aid responders.
 - » Regular or contracted employees who respond to emergency events. Certified training, including overdose recognition and naloxone training, is strongly encouraged for this group.
 - » Future contracts should include this training requirement if not currently mandated. This group should receive priority in training initiatives.
 - » Expected to respond to emergency events on campus and provide aid, including naloxone administration.

- Faculty, staff, and student housing staff.
 - » Faculty and general staff who may have training in first aid and naloxone administration but are not expected to respond to emergency events.
 - » Training may not be certified and may be less comprehensive than that for on campus first responders.
 - » While protections exist under the *Good Samaritan Act*, careful review of protections and coverages will be required.
- General campus community (Volunteer).
 - » Campus community members trained in first aid or naloxone administration (through PSIs or elsewhere) are more likely to assist as a bystander. This group should be made aware of their protections under the *Good Samaritan Act* and the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*.
- Considerations for training will vary, but the following themes should be considered.
 - » The role of those receiving training.
 - » The risks and protections to those providing aid.
 - » Ensuring cultural safety and anti-Indigenous racism practices.
 - » Limitations due to collective agreements, job descriptions, and liability.

Distribution of naloxone will be a critical component of the OPRP. In considering where and how to distribute and store naloxone, the following should be considered with respect to static (e.g., stationary naloxone cabinets) and dynamic (e.g., naloxone kits carried by staff) options for use:

- Terminology surrounding cabinets, kits and doses should remain clear. Cabinets house kits, and each kit contains multiple doses of naloxone.
- Consider including naloxone in first aid kits for campus emergency responders and in first aid kits for fields trips, ensuring compliance with border regulations, if applicable. Ensure all members of the campus community are aware of where naloxone is kept, using clear signage.
- Consider distributing naloxone (including nasal naloxone) so that it is appropriately accessible within student housing (e.g., one kit per building or floor).
- Consider co-locating naloxone with existing Automated External Defibrillator (AED) units across campus.
- If a campus does not have a standalone AED unit, at least two kits of naloxone should be available with supplies to support CPR (e.g., pocket masks, medical gloves).
- Naloxone should be stored indoors at room temperature and checked regularly for expiration.
- All special events held at PSI-owned or run sites should have naloxone available, particularly events where alcohol may be served.
- Consider cabinets with tamper-evident features such as breakable glass or alarms.

For More Information

This information is based on current recommendations and may change. For the latest guidance, please see the health information from the [British Columbia Centre for Disease Control](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <https://towardtheheart.com/>
- <https://www.stopoverdose.gov.bc.ca/get-informed/identify>
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/overdose>
- <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/substance-use-harm-reduction-dashboard>
- <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/mental-wellness-and-substance-use/harm-reduction-and-the-toxic-drug-crisis>



Guidelines produced by
B.C. Post-Secondary Institutions
with the support of the Ministry of
Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

August 2024

Title: The Medical School at Simon Fraser University (SFU)

Issue: Progress on the development of the Medical School at SFU with operating and capital funding updates.

Key Messages:

- The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) is working in partnership with the Ministry of Health (HLTH) and Ministry of Infrastructure (INF) to support the development of a second medical school for British Columbia at Simon Fraser University (SFU) adjacent to its Surrey campus.
- SFU anticipates welcoming 48 medical students by summer 2026, growing to 120 seats by 2036.
- Family Medicine residents will begin training in 2027, with new family doctors graduating and entering practice by 2029.
- This new medical school is one of the key actions in B.C.'s Health Human Resources (HHR) Strategy that works to optimize the health system by expanding training and improving recruitment and retention of health care workers in the province.
- The School of Medicine at SFU will complement UBC's distributed undergraduate medical education program sites.
- The School of Medicine at SFU will be the first new medical school in Western Canada in over 55 years.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In May 2024, SFU's Senate and Board of Governors formally approved the establishment of a School of Medicine.
- On July 9, 2024, Premier David Eby announced the new School of Medicine at SFU, including the funding secured through Budget 2024 and the appointment of its Founding Dean, Dr. David J. Price.
- SFU has received candidate status with the Committee on the Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools and will work towards attaining Preliminary accreditation by Fall 2025.
- SFU is developing a three-year medical school curriculum which mirrors the content in traditional four-year programs but accelerates completion by minimizing breaks and focusing on clinical rotations.
- The medical school at SFU has proposed a community primary care clinic in the Fraser Health region that would integrate a range of health professionals and provide SFU students with hands-on training early in their medical education.

- The program will focus on preparing physicians to provide team-based community care, building physician capacity province-wide to meet the current and future needs of B.C.'s growing and diverse population.

Financial Implications:

Operational Funding

- Up to March 31, 2024, SFU had received \$14 million to support planning and start-up activities, which included developing a business case, hiring key leadership positions, developing curriculum, and accreditation activities.
 - 2021/22 - \$1.5 million awarded directly by HLTH to SFU
 - 2022/23 - \$2.5 million transferred from HLTH to PSFS
 - 2023/24 - \$10.0 million through the Health Human Resources Strategy as part of *Budget 2023*.
- *Budget 2024* committed base funding of \$27 million in 2024/25; \$30.96 million in 2025/26; and \$30.96 million in 2026/27 to further support development of the medical school at SFU.

(\$ millions)	Prior Years				Budget 2025 Fiscal Plan		
	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
Budget	1.500	2.500	10.000	27.000	30.960	30.960	30.960

- *Budget 2024* also approved \$2.11 million for HLTH to be provided to the Fraser Health Authority for planning and administration in support of the medical school project.
- PSFS anticipates future funding requirements will be addressed through the annual budget process.

Capital Funding

- *Budget 2024* notionally provided \$35.2 million in capital funding for the development of the interim space located at the SFU Surrey campus. Government approved the business plan in June 2024, including \$33.7 million for the interim space identified, and an additional \$1.4 million for future space, which can be accessed once the space needs are determined.
- *Budget 2024* also notionally allocated \$652.3 million in capital funding for the permanent space. *Budget 2025* includes an additional \$97.9 million to address potential cost escalations for a total of \$750.2 million. ^{Cabinet Confidences}

Cabinet Confidences

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Title: Skilled Trades Certification Results

Issue: Implementation results of first seven Skilled Trades Certification trades

Key Messages:

- Our government brought back and enhanced B.C.'s skilled trades certification system – and we are already seeing the benefits.
- Certification ensures steady, good-paying jobs for workers, encourages more people to pursue careers in the trades, and helps employers access the skilled workforce they need.
- With skilled trades certification now in effect for seven electrical and mechanical trades, the number of registered apprentices has reached an all-time high, with a 21 per cent increase since we brought in Skilled Trades Certification in 2022/23.
- SkilledTradesBC is focused on connecting with employers and workers to support them through the process of complying with skilled trade certification requirements.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In June 2021, Cabinet approved skilled trades certification for 10 trades, which requires workers in these trades to be either a certified journeyperson or registered as an apprentice.
- The first seven trades were fully implemented in December 2023, including:
 - Gasfitter Class A and B;
 - Steamfitter/Pipefitter;
 - Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Mechanic;
 - Sheet Metal Worker;
 - Powerline Technician;
 - Industrial Electrician; and
 - Electrician (construction).
- Data from SkilledTradesBC indicates skilled trades certification is successfully meeting government priorities. Success indicators for the first seven trades between April 2023 and March 2024 include:
 - A 41 per cent (or 5,765) increase in new apprentice registrations in the seven Skilled Trades Certification trades.
 - A 20 per cent increase in the number of Certificate of Qualifications (CofQs) issued (for a total of 1,801).

- Of these 1,801 Certificate of Qualifications, 348 were issued to Trade Qualifiers, an increase of 77 per cent from 2022/23. Trade Qualifiers are experienced tradespeople who wish to have their skills recognized and certified without completing an apprenticeship.
- A 172 per cent increase in experienced trades people that have applied to challenge the certification exam (for a total of 1,887).
- The Ministry remains focused on ensuring that the trades training system continues to meet the needs of apprentices and employers, while working with partners to find practical, fast, and efficient solutions to address shortages of skilled trades people.
- Previous skilled trades certification commitments will need to be reassessed in the context of overall budget sustainability.

Title: Trades Training Data

Issue: SkilledTradesBC and Ministry Trades Training Outcomes

Key Messages:

- B.C. is seeing a record number of apprentices, with nearly 50,000 registrations - the highest in the province's history.
- Since 2017, our colleges, institutes and trainers have equipped students with the skills they need, with 36,000 apprentices earning their Certificates of Qualification from SkilledTradesBC.
- We are committed to providing opportunities for people to build successful, sustainable careers while helping employers find the skilled workers needed to deliver the services the province relies on.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- There are nearly 50,000 registered apprentices in the province – the highest ever.
- Over the next decade, 105,300 job openings are expected in the skilled trades.
- SkilledTradesBC works with more than 11,000 employer sponsors of apprentices, a 12 per cent increase (9,889) since 2015.
- Over the past 10 years, Indigenous Peoples' representation in trades training and apprenticeships has continually increased in B.C. - from 4.6 per cent (2,100 people) to 8.8% (nearly 5,000 people) of all apprenticeships.
- Women apprentices has increased to 4,962 in March 2024, an 18 per cent increase since March 2015 – now representing 10.7 per cent of all active apprenticeships.
- There was a 25 per cent increase (1,341) in women entering (new registrations) under-represented skilled trades such as construction electrician, carpenter, automotive services technician, heavy duty equipment technician and cabinetmaker in 2023/24.
 - 98 per cent increase in women entering under-represented trades since 2017/18.
- In 2023/24, SkilledTradesBC reached the highest participation of youth in the skilled trades ever with 7,882 youth ages 16-26 participating in SkilledTradesBC Youth Programs, from 4,801 youth in 2016/17.
- There were also 5,802 Certifications of Qualifications issued to trades professionals in 2023/24 – a 12 per cent increase over 2022/23.

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Title: Trades Training Investments and Performance

Issue: SkilledTradesBC and Ministry investments into B.C.'s trades training system

Key Messages:

- We invest \$107 million a year through SkilledTradesBC for trades education and support – delivering 28,300 training seats in every region of the province.
- Nearly 70 per cent of all training seats delivered are focused on construction-related skills.
- B.C. is seeing a record number of apprentices, with nearly 50,000 registrations - the highest in the province's history.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

SkilledTradesBC Investments

- SkilledTradesBC's core budget is about \$107 million for service delivery and program management, an increase of 11 per cent (\$10.6 million) from 2016/17 (\$96.4 million)
- In addition, SkilledTradesBC receives \$8 million from the Canada-British Columbia Workforce Development Agreement to deliver pre-apprenticeship training for Indigenous people and those in equity deserving groups.
- In 2023/24, SkilledTradesBC invested \$73.1 million for 28,300 training seats of which over 20,000 was for construction related training.
- The remaining funding supports youth programs; digital services; apprenticeship advisors; dedicated completions teams to work one-on-one with apprentices who need additional supports; industry relations and engagement; Skilled Trades Certification compliance and monitoring; crown operations; and much more.
- The number of seats delivered fluctuates slightly from year to year based on economic conditions.
 - When the economy is strong and people are earning good wages, they often choose to stay in the workforce rather than attend technical training.
 - As a result, demand for seats may be lower than anticipated.
 - However, even with people continuing to work, they still progress through their apprenticeship by completing required work-based training hours for certification.
 - B.C.'s economy has been strong, with unemployment at an all time low, especially in the construction sector.

- Through SkilledTradesBC, \$9 million is invested annually to support youth in the trades with a suite of trades programs for students, in partnership with school districts and post-secondary institutions.
- Beginning in 2022/23, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills provides nearly \$7 million annually to SkilledTradesBC to implement Skilled Trades Certification.
- The Ministry of Finance also provides \$18 million towards the BC Training Tax Credit to employer sponsors and apprentices to improve access to technical trades training, encourage certification completion, and reduce relocation barriers for apprentices.
- In 2023/24, the Ministry invested \$5 million over two years to support people from under-represented groups entering and completing their apprenticeship.
- The Ministry has invested \$19.4 million of capital funding into training equipment for public post-secondary trades programs since 2017/18 (No new equipment was purchased in 2022/23 or 2023/24).

Title: Trades Training Progression Rates

Issue: The number of apprentices completing trades training courses

Key Messages:

- In 2023/24, SkilledTradesBC invested about \$107 million for trades education and support, funding 28,300 training seats across every region in the province.
- The number of seats delivered is driven by labour market demand, the economy, and the number of registered apprentices.
- SkilledTradesBC monitors the overall utilization rate – this is the number of seats filled as of the stable enrolment date.
- Post-secondary institutions are not required to report course completion rates to SkilledTradesBC. However, SkilledTradesBC tracks apprenticeship course pass rates annually.
- To help apprentices progress in their apprenticeship towards certification, SkilledTradesBC has a dedicated team that works one-on-one with apprentices who need additional supports.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The overall utilization rate, or the number of seats filled, at post-secondary institutions over the past three years:

Program Type	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Apprenticeship	81%	86%	87%
Foundation	84%	86%	88%
Total	82%	86%	87%

- Of apprentices who took the exam at the end of their technical training in a classroom, 96 per cent passed with an overall course mark of 70 per cent or higher. These pass rates are the best available indicator for the progression of students in trades training courses.

Fiscal Year	Level	Course Pass Rate
2021/22	1	96%
	2	96%
	3	95%
	4	97%
2021/22	Total	96%
2022/23	1	95%
	2	94%
	3	96%
	4	97%

2022/23 Total		95%
2023/24	1	95%
	2	95%
	3	96%
	4	97%
2023/24 Total		96%

Title: Under-represented Groups in Trades

Issue: Increasing diversity in the trades by reducing barriers to training opportunities

Key Messages:

- We are committed to removing barriers for equity-deserving groups in B.C. including Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and other under-represented groups to help them build a successful career in trades.
- An inclusive workforce will provide more people with sustainable, good-paying careers and support us in meeting labour market demands and build a stronger B.C.
- Interest in skilled trades apprenticeships has been growing, especially from Indigenous peoples, women and youth.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- SkilledTradesBC received \$8 million in 2024/25 through the Canada-BC Workforce Development Agreement (WDA), to deliver pre-apprenticeship programs for Indigenous people, women, and those in equity-deserving groups.
- In 2024/25, WDA funding was reduced by 20 per cent due to the elimination of top-up funding from the Federal Budget 2024. Despite this reduction, SkilledTradesBC increased the number of service providers and regions where programs are delivered from eight service providers to 12. Previously unserved areas now have access to these programs.
- Despite the reduction in federal funding, the number of participants remains within 10 per cent, supporting about 800 vulnerable and under-represented people annually.
- In 2022/23, the Ministry provided \$5 million over two years (2023/24 and 2024/25) to expand resources for pre-apprentice and apprenticeship training, focusing on opportunities for under-represented groups.
 - This funding supported SkillPlan's Build Your Skills online learning hub; trades and technology competitions for K-12 youth hosted by Skills Canada BC; and BCWITT's Be More Than a Bystander program supporting cultural shifts towards more welcoming, healthy, safe and respectful workplaces.

Indigenous apprentices

- Over the past 10 years, Indigenous Peoples' representation in trades training and apprenticeships has continually increased in B.C. - from 4.6 per cent (2,100 people) to 8.8 per cent (nearly 5,000 people) of all apprenticeships.
- In 2023/24, there was a 16 per cent increase (557) in Indigenous People apprenticeships

over 2022/23.

- Indigenous women participating in apprenticeship training has grown by 94 per cent over the past 10 years, from 360 to nearly 700.

Women

- Since 2019, SkilledTradesBC has invested nearly \$20 million to recruit, retain and advance women in the trades.
- SkilledTradesBC reported 4,962 women in apprenticeships at the end of fiscal 2023/24, representing 10.7 per cent of all active apprenticeships.
- In 2023/24, there was a 25 per cent increase (1,341) in women entering (new registrations) under-represented skilled trades over 2022/23.

Youth

- In 2023/24, over 10,000 youth participated in trades programs – more than twice the amount in 2016/17.

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Title: Early Childhood Education Seats

Issue: Expanding early childhood educator (ECE) training opportunities

Key Messages:

- Since the 2018 launch of the ten-year Childcare BC Plan, Government has invested \$25.9 million in the expansion of Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs, creating approximately 2,600 additional student spaces.
- In 2025/26, my ministry plans to fund 524 new student spaces in Early Childhood Education programs.
- From 2017/18 to 2023/24, system-wide enrolment is up more than 90 per cent.
- As of December 2024, there were 26,000 certified Early Childhood Educators in B.C., which is an increase of 8 per cent since 2023.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- *Budget 2023* and StrongerBC's Future Ready Action Plan included \$16 million over three years to add more than 1,300 student spaces to recognized Early Childhood Education programs at BC's public post-secondary institutions. The Ministry is currently on track to deliver more than 1,500 student spaces by the end of 2025/26 as part of the StrongerBC Future Ready Action Plan.
- Since 2018, the Ministry has supported Early Childhood Education program expansion at 17 public post-secondary institutions, including:
 - Piloting and expanding Work Integrated Learning program delivery at eight public post-secondary institutions, enabling 501 students to obtain or upgrade their provincial ECE certification while remaining employed.
 - Designating more than two-thirds of those spaces for rural and remote communities, with delivery modes including part-time, full-time, online, in-person, and Work Integrated Learning.
- For 2024/25, \$5.3 million in funding was provided to 14 public post-secondary institutions for recognized Early Childhood Education programs¹. This funding:
 - Created 579 new student spaces in 28 programs.
 - Supported 23 blended/hybrid or fully online delivery programs, enhancing accessibility for students.
 - Included Work Integrated Learning delivery in seven programs.

¹ See Early Childhood Education Map, Appendix 1 for institution-specific data from 2017/18 to 2024/25.

- More than 1,200 students completed Early Childhood Education practicums in 2023/24, up 12 per cent from 2022/23. Practicum completion is a proxy for provincial certification eligibility.
- The Ministry of Education and Child Care has also invested \$6.3 million over four years (2022-2025) in its Early Childhood Education Dual Credit Project.
 - By the end of 2025, 50 school districts and 15 post-secondary partners will have delivered about 2,500 courses to approximately 1,350 students.
- According to the Ministry of Education and Child Care, more than 18,200 ECEs work in licensed childcare facilities as of December 2024. Additionally, 41 per cent of ECEs hold either a Special Needs Educator certificate, an Infant Toddler Educator certificate, or both post-basic certificates.

Early Childhood Education Programming at Private Training Institutions:

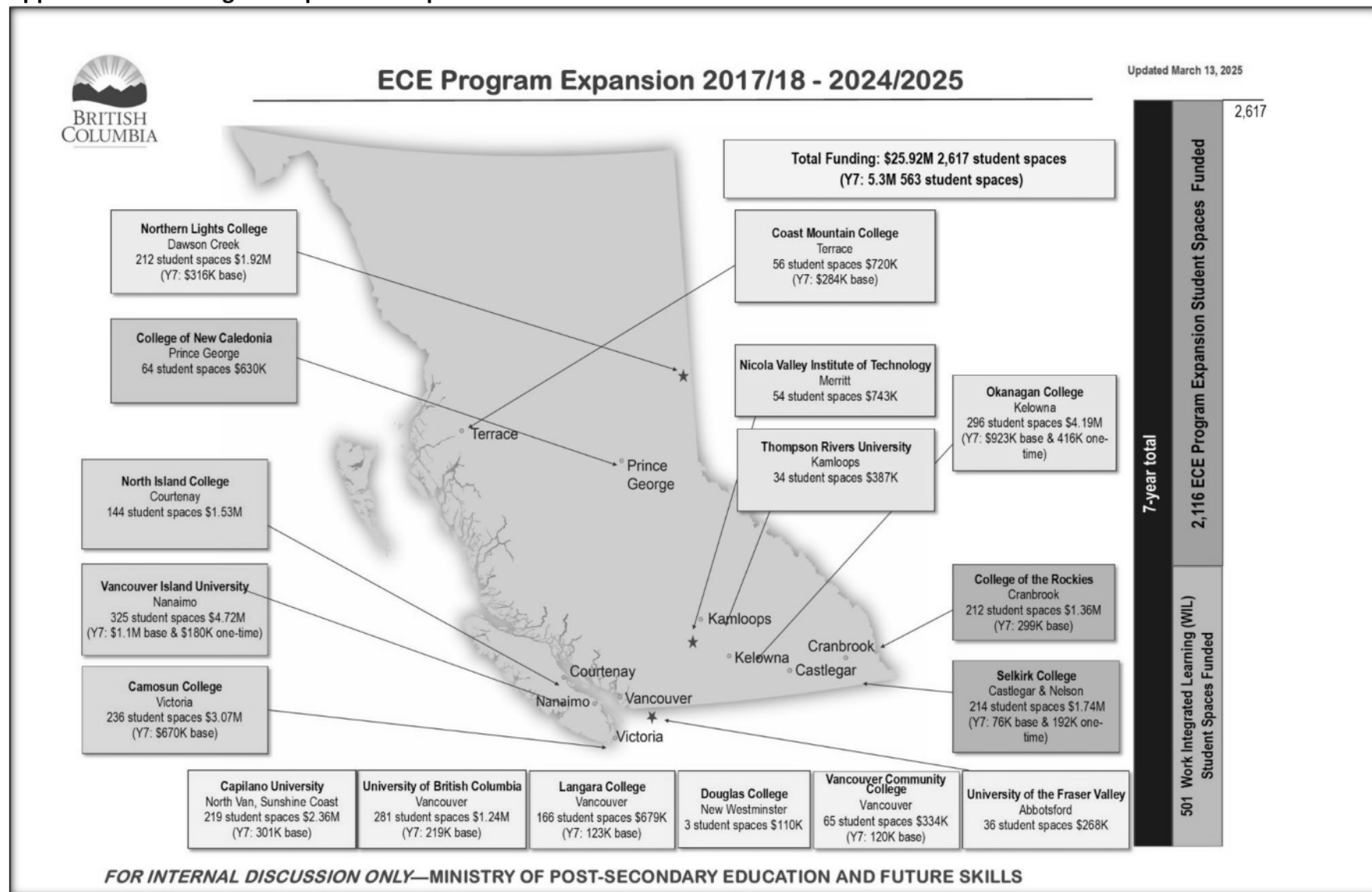
- In B.C., 12 Private Training Institutions offer recognized Early Childhood Education programs. Of those 12, ten reported the following student enrolment data² for the 2022/23 program year (most recent data available):
 - 4,805 enrolments (up 25.8% since 2021/22).
 - 78.5% of the total enrolments were domestic students.
 - Two institutions accounted for 73.4% of enrolments, with 52% of enrolments and 32% of graduates from one institution offering online delivery programs.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care Student Supports:

- The ECE Specialized Certification Grant, which was launched in January 2024, provides an annual grant of \$2,000 or \$3,000 to eligible ECEs who hold at least one valid specialized certificate (Infant Toddler Educator and/or Special Needs Educator) and meet employment criteria. Over 5,300 eligible ECEs have been approved for the grant.
- The ECE Education Support Fund provides up to \$5,000 in financial support to Early Childhood Education students attending recognized post-secondary institutions in BC. Between 2018/19 and December 2024, over 24,600 bursaries were awarded through the Education Support Fund to more than 11,800 students.

² Private training institution student data is self-reported by institutions and should be considered approximate.

Appendix 1 - ECE Program Expansion Map



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Post-Secondary Programs

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Last Updated: March 13, 2025

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Title: Find Your Path Digital Services

Issue: The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan provides \$43.49M over three years to improve digital services and tools for learners in post-secondary education and skills training, and career-seekers in B.C.

Key Messages:

- The Find Your Path Digital Services initiative is making it easier for people in B.C. to plan their career and access relevant post-secondary education and skills training.
- This initiative includes: enhancing the Find Your Path digital service, including aligning and integrating related digital platforms, implementing B.C.'s Post-Secondary Digital Learning Strategy, and scaling up high-value aspects of the recently concluded Contact North BC pilot into provincial scale services.
- These initiatives magnify the reach of other StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan projects by using digital platforms to improve access to provincial education and career programs and services.

Component	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
StrongerBC: Find Your Path Initiative	\$12.22	\$15.48	\$15.79	\$43.49
Find Your Path Digital Services	\$6.08	\$8.13	\$7.96	\$22.17
Digital Learning Strategy	\$2.14	\$3.35	\$3.83	\$9.32
Access to online supports and learning opportunities in rural, remote, and Indigenous Communities (NOTE: 23/24 and 24/25 funding was for the Contact North B.C. pilot)	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$12.00

Find Your Path Digital Services

The Find Your Path digital service provides people with seamless access to provincial education and career programs and services by:

- Launching, expanding, and enhancing a new digital tool that maps education and career pathways (launched in Fall 2023).
- Providing people with easily accessible information needed to make informed decisions about their education and career opportunities by making the tools and resources available to people online more responsive, accessible, and relevant.
- Making student financial assistance information more accessible and reducing financial barriers to prospective learners.

Digital Learning Strategy

In Spring 2023, the B.C. government released a post-secondary Digital Learning Strategy (DLS) and the Ministry is now implementing the recommended actions to:

- Strengthen the post-secondary system's capacity to deliver high-quality online and blended learning opportunities.
- Improve access to post-secondary education for learners who encounter barriers to accessing in-person learning.
- Foster collaboration in the post-secondary system to reduce costs related to digital technologies required for post-secondary education.
- Funding supports the ministry and post-secondary system partners in the implementation of a series of initiatives to help reduce costs for post-secondary institutions and support learners in accessing high quality, flexible post-secondary education, including:
 - Developing resources for educators to support learners in building their digital literacy and the digital skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and in the workforce.
 - Modernizing professional development for post-secondary instructors and staff so that the use of digital technologies in post-secondary classrooms and online learning environments supports delivering high quality learning experiences.
 - Facilitating collaboration in the post-secondary system in the development of digital supports and shared educational resources and technology to reduce costs and enhance learning for students.

Contact North B.C.

Contact North B.C. was a pilot program initiated by Coast Mountain College in 2020 and funded by the B.C. government to support learners in rural and remote communities across northwestern B.C.

- Despite efforts to help the program become self-sustaining, the Contact North B.C. pilot program is set to end March 31, 2025.
- Government is now working to expand high value aspects of the pilot to a provincial scale, supporting access to cost-effective, high-quality online post-secondary education and supports for students in rural and remote areas.
- We are working with core provincial partners like EducationPlannerBC, BCcampus and the BC Electronic Library Network to ensure that students will continue to have access to online advising and support services.

Title: Health Education Programs and Seats

Issue: New and expanded health education opportunities to address health sector workforce needs.

Key Messages:

- Government is investing \$150.4 million over three years, including \$63.3 million in 2025/26, to support the development and implementation of more than 2,800 spaces in priority health and medical programs across the province.
- This funding builds upon the \$96 million for expanded health programs announced as part of Budget 2021, which has supported more than 600 additional new nursing seats and more than 320 new allied health program seats across the province.
- Since 2017, Government has invested nearly \$500 million in new funding to support priority health program expansions.
- These investments have collectively supported the creation of more than 4,575 new ongoing health program training seats and more than 6,300 one-time health program training seats across the province.
- Additional seats are being added to priority training programs as part of the Ministry of Health's Cancer Care Action Plan, with announcements pending.
- Government's total annual investment in targeted health education has more than doubled to more than \$250 million per year, up from \$125 million in 2017/18.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Government funds health education programs at public post-secondary institutions based on priorities established by the Ministry of Health.
- The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills works collaboratively with the Ministry of Health to ensure funding for health education seats is aligned with demand in communities across the province.
- Training is one piece of government's broader approach to addressing health human resource needs that includes system re-design, recruitment, and retention.
- Health programs are delivered at 23 post-secondary institutions across BC. Programs are funded through a combination of targeted funding, institutional base funding, and cost-recovery delivery.
- There are more than 20,700 Health program full-time equivalent spaces (FTEs) delivered across the public post-secondary system annually; this is an increase of more than 25 per cent since 2017.

- Health program investments since 2017 have significantly increased training in areas of direct patient care. For example:
 - 366 per cent increase in Nurse Practitioner seats
 - 250 per cent increase in Diagnostic Medical Sonography seats
 - 100 per cent increase in Physiotherapy seats
 - 71 per cent increase in Midwifery seats
 - 40 per cent increase in Licenced Practical Nursing seats
 - 24 per cent increase in Registered Nursing seats
- Since 2017, government has also allocated nearly \$142 million in capital funding to institutions to support these expansions.
- In 2024, the Province announced an investment of more than \$155 million to help retain and recruit allied health and clinical support staff and more than \$237 million for initiatives that will retain, encourage the return of, and recruit new nurses into the health-care system.
 - These investments include \$2,000 per year tuition bursaries for students enrolled in priority health profession programs, with an additional \$5,000 available for Indigenous students in eligible programs.
- Health program expansions are implemented over several years in partnership with the Ministry of Health, Health Authorities, and post-secondary institutions.
- The Ministry continues to work with the Ministry of Health to develop options to meet workforce needs with a training component identified through specific strategies, like the Cancer Care Action Plan and the Health Human Resources Strategy, as well as overall caseload needs.
- Further health education program expansions will require innovative solutions to increasing physical space at post-secondary institutions, faculty availability and, importantly, clinical placement capacity within the public health sector.

Title: Micro-Credentials

Issue: Expanded micro-credential offerings and system coordination initiatives

Key Messages:

- Micro-credentials are short, competency-based programs that enable individuals to quickly obtain the skills that are in demand in a changing economy.
- Since 2020, the Province has invested nearly \$21 million to develop and deliver over 200 micro-credentials to address competency gaps in a range of high-demand sectors across B.C.
- The StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan includes an \$8.8 million investment to further develop a micro-credential system that supports clear and accessible learner pathways to in-demand occupations.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Micro-credentials are short, competency-based programs that allow individuals to quickly obtain the skills needed in the labour market.
- Since 2020, the province has invested nearly \$21 million in the development and delivery of more than 200 micro-credentials in a range of high-demand sectors, including technology, healthcare, natural resources and environment, construction, education, agriculture and food processing, life sciences, film and media.
- To help develop a coordinated and consistent approach to micro-credentials in the province, the Ministry has worked with post-secondary sector partners to develop the B.C. Micro-Credential Framework and the BCcampus Micro-Credential Toolkit for B.C.
- Under the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan the ministry is investing \$8.8 million in micro-credentials through the Rapid Response Training initiative.

2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
\$3.6M	\$2.6M	\$2.6M	\$8.8M

- The funding in 2023/24 and 2024/25 supported the development and delivery of 65 micro-credentials across 15 public post-secondary institutions and 5 First Nations.
- In addition, this funding supported initiatives that further contributed to system coordination and collaboration, including:
 - Micro-Credential Credit Pathways project (led by Thompson Rivers University - Open Learning) – establishing a trusted process for assessing non-credit micro-credentials for credit pathways and better enabling individuals to use micro-credentials towards further learning.

- Collaboration Framework Pilot (led by Vancouver Community College) – to develop and test a framework for improved curriculum and resource sharing across institutions to leverage existing programming, reduced duplication and rapidly expand access to in demand programming across the province.

Related Initiatives

- As part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, the ministry continues to support:
 - the Future Skills Grant, which covers tuition and other eligible fees for short-duration skills training - including several micro-credentials – to help British Columbians upskill and reskill to support high-demand industries and government priorities (see tab 29, Future Skills Grant note).
 - TradeUpBC, which provides existing trades workers and apprentices with a one-stop shop to learn about short-term training opportunities available at institutions around the Province (including several micro-credentials), that help them update skills and advance their careers.

Title: Teacher Education Programs and Seats

Issue: Teacher training and education, including Indigenous teachers, French teachers, and teachers in rural and remote communities

Key Messages:

- Since 2018, Government has invested \$10.2 million in teacher education, including \$4.1 million in targeted one-time funding to create 430 additional student spaces.
- We are working closely with the Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC), as well as education partners, on the implementation of a K-12 Workforce Plan.
- We are investing to train more teachers and improve program accessibility by:
 - Expanding UBC's Rural and Remote Teacher Education program to allow students to remain in rural communities while studying;
 - Supporting the creation of two new teacher education programs to be delivered partly online; and
 - Funding additional seats in French teacher education programs.
- In 2023/24, 1,720 new teachers trained in approved B.C. public teacher education programs received a Certificate of Qualification from ECC's Teacher Regulation Branch.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- As of December 2024, there were over 49,000 teachers (including Teachers Teaching on Call) working in public schools in B.C.
- Seven public post-secondary institutions in B.C. offer teacher education programs that produce an annual average of 1,773 new teacher candidates eligible for certification by ECC's Teacher Regulation Branch, with 3,674 students enrolled system-wide (public) in 2023/24 (see Appendix 1).
- The 2024 Edition of B.C.'s Labour Market Outlook forecasts 21,910 job openings for secondary, elementary and kindergarten teachers in B.C. from 2024-2034.
- Since 2018, Government has invested approximately \$10.22 million, including:
 - \$2.94 million in 2023/24 and 2024/25 through ECC's K-12 Workforce Plan to support teacher recruitment and retention in B.C. PSFS is working closely with ECC to support the implementation of its K-12 Workforce Plan initiatives, with additional planned funding of \$1.72 million to be allocated in 2025/26.
 - \$3.01 million to support Indigenous teacher education, including \$1.63 million to support 130 additional student spaces for Indigenous students and Indigenous in-community program delivery.

- \$2.12 million to support French teacher recruitment and retention, and 160 additional student spaces in French teacher education programs.
- \$0.43 million to support curriculum development and 90 additional Special Education, Math, and Physics student spaces.

Indigenous Teacher Education

- Indigenous students make up approximately 12%¹ of K-12 public school students. Since 2019, on average, 5.7%² of teacher education program graduates are Indigenous, and approximately 5.4%³ of teachers self-identify as being Indigenous.
- ECC has convened a working group with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) and PSFS to implement *Declaration Act* Action Plan Action 4.2: “Develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system”.
- PSFS is working with Métis Nation BC to develop a plan to support the recruitment and retention of Métis teachers.

French Teachers:

- In October 2024, ECC signed a 2024-2028 bilateral agreement with the Government of Canada that will see \$6.9 million of federal funding annually (over four years) flow to post-secondary minority-language education and second-language instruction, including recruitment and retention of minority-language and second-language teachers.

Rural and Remote Communities:

- There are five established rural teacher education programs (see Appendix 1) which provide students with access to teacher training, assist local school districts in teacher recruitment and help address the shortage of teachers in rural regions.
- Over three years, through to 2025/26, ECC has been allocated \$2 million in funding to increase teacher training in rural and remote communities, including \$0.8 million for additional student spaces in teacher education programs and \$1.2 million in financial support for teacher candidates choosing to complete their final certification practicum in a northern B.C. school district.

¹ B.C. Education System Performance - B.C. Public School Results School District: Contextual Information

² Student Transitions Project, fall 2022 submission (data is not publicly available)

³ Based on voluntary self-identification of teacher certification applicants since 2019.

Appendix 1 – B.C. teacher education programs, enrolment, and completion data

B.C.'s approved teacher education programs

- University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Okanagan)
 - Includes West Kootenay Rural Teacher Education Program in Nelson and surrounding communities
- Simon Fraser University
 - Includes Alaska Highway Consortium on Teacher Education, offered in partnership with Northern Lights College's Fort St. John campus
- University of Victoria
 - Includes East Kootenay Teacher Education Program in Cranbrook, in partnership with College of the Rockies
- University of Northern British Columbia
 - Includes regional teacher education intakes in Quesnel and Terrace
- Thompson Rivers University
- University of the Fraser Valley
- Vancouver Island University
- Trinity Western University (private)

Programs are offered in a variety of forms and program lengths, including:

- One- or two-year post-baccalaureate Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degrees
 - Approximately 85-90 per cent of B.C.-trained teachers complete this credential
- Four- or five-year B.Ed. degrees
- one-year post-baccalaureate, non-degree programs

Table 1. Domestic FTE enrolment¹ in new teacher certification eligibility programs²

Fiscal Year (April 1 – March 31) 2019/20 to 2022/23

Institution	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
University of the Fraser Valley	115	81	77	77
Thompson Rivers University	128	169	143	140
Vancouver Island University	591	642	636	635
University of British Columbia Okanagan	233	235	217	230
University of British Columbia Vancouver	1,468	1,501	1,459	1,458
Simon Fraser University	624	665	685	672
University of Northern British Columbia	100	68	82	114
University of Victoria	391	484	496	473
Grand Total	3,651	3,846	3,794	3,799

Source: Central Data Warehouse, May 2024 submission; BC HEADset

¹ FTE methodology is based on the principle that each full-time student in a full-time program should generate 1.0 FTE over an academic year.

² Intended to identify the FTE enrolment in programs eligible for new teaching certification from the Teacher Regulation Branch at the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Table 2. Annual number of students receiving a teaching Certificate of Qualification, by B.C. teacher education program

Academic Year (September 1 – August 31) 2019/20 to 2023/24

Institution	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
University of the Fraser Valley	88	97	65	58	57
Thompson Rivers University	49	73	72	95	57
Vancouver Island University	162	176	144	168	191
University of British Columbia-Okanagan	100	118	109	102	104
University of British Columbia-Vancouver	696	703	676	693	690
Simon Fraser University	414	417	433	463	398
University of Northern British Columbia	57	42	52	36	51
University of Victoria	223	218	153	193	172
Public Total	1,789	1,844	1,704	1,808	1,720
Trinity Western University	44	38	14	74	43
System Total	1,833	1,882	1,718	1,882	1,763

Source: Ministry of Education and Child Care: Teacher Regulation Branch – Certification Unit

- Over the 2023/24 school year, there were 1,720 new teachers receiving a Certificate of Qualification (CoQ) that were trained in approved B.C. public teacher education programs.
- The highest volume of new CoQs came from the University of British Columbia-Vancouver (40 per cent), followed by Simon Fraser University (23 per cent).

Title: Tech-Relevant Student Spaces

Issue: More tech-relevant education to support B.C.'s growing economy

Key Messages:

- Budget 2025 includes \$35.7 million in 2025/26 towards an expansion of 3,000 new student spaces in tech-relevant education.
- This is the third year of the planned expansion, first announced in *Budget 2023* and as part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, with an investment of \$74.7 million over three years.
- Tech-relevant is a broad approach to the issue of tech skills, which is not confined to information technology or engineering, and includes a range of programming that reflects the breadth and diversity of the tech sector itself, and how technology is transforming every sector.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The 3,000 new spaces are being implemented over a five-year plan with funding for 2026/27 and 2027/28 to be confirmed in subsequent budget processes. Funding to date is as follows:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	3-Year Total
Tech-Relevant Spaces	\$12.2M	\$26.8M	\$35.7M	\$74.7M

- The Ministry's capital budget also included a total of \$20 million in capital funding for equipment and renovations to support the expansion.
- The new tech-relevant student spaces are a Key Action in StrongerBC Economic Plan, and the expansion was a 2020 mandate letter commitment.
- The 2024 Labour Market Outlook projects 120,400 tech job openings over the next 10 years. The planned expansion will help to fill these openings.
- In 2022/23, the Ministry completed a 6-year expansion with \$42 million in annual ongoing funding for 2,900 student spaces in tech programming. The expansion achieved 100% utilization overall, indicating strong student demand for tech programs.
- The current phase of expansion (3,000 new spaces) will see each of the 25 public post-secondary institutions and every region of the province receiving funding, either one-time or ongoing.

- The expansion plan supports education and training in a range of programs to address areas of high demand, industry's current and future growth areas, and government priorities such as software engineering, animation, creative technologies, life sciences, clean tech and agritech.
- A range of credentials, from certificates, diplomas to undergraduate and graduate degrees, are included in the expansion to address the tech sector's needs.
- Some examples include:
 - a computer systems technician program in the East Kootenay region,
 - an information technology systems and networking program in the Northwest,
 - data science in the Okanagan,
 - software engineering in Victoria, and
 - biomedical engineering in Vancouver.
- The new student spaces in tech-relevant programs are one example of Government's support for the tech sector and for students wishing to work in the sector. Other initiatives include micro-credentials, graduate student scholarships and internships, and short-term skills training.

Title: Veterinary Care Training Initiatives

Issue: Veterinary Care Workforce Demand

Key Messages:

- The Western College of Veterinary Medicine (the Vet College) is the only program in Canada where students from BC, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba can obtain a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. It is B.C.'s vet college funded through a longstanding interprovincial agreement.
- Government first announced a doubling of the intake of B.C. vet students from 20 to 40 in 2022. The doubling became permanent in 2023, with funding of \$21.8 million over 3 years as part of *Budget 2023*.
- *Budget 2025* includes \$8.8 million for the new seats as part of a total investment of over \$17.5 million in 2025/26 in veterinary medicine education.
- Access to veterinary care services is a complex issue that requires solutions beyond expanding vet training spaces. It includes attracting more vets across B.C. and supporting complementary professions, such as Veterinary Technologists, who are important members of a veterinary clinic team.
- We will continue to work toward a variety of solutions, including improving recognition of international credentials.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- B.C. has an interprovincial agreement with Saskatchewan and Manitoba to share the costs and benefits of the Vet College and to secure seats for B.C. students in the four-year veterinary medicine program. The current five-year Agreement expires in spring 2025, and Ministry staff are engaged in finalizing the next agreement.
- In 2023, the Vet College and the funding provinces increased the number of spaces designated for Indigenous students, including at least one from each funding province, in addition to the two Indigenous students admitted via the existing equity program.
- The Ministry also worked with the Vet College and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to establish an agriculture-focused admissions stream for 15 per cent of B.C.'s seats, for students who are more likely to work in large animal/rural mixed animal practice after graduation, addressing an area of high demand.
- In addition to graduates from the Vet College, B.C.'s veterinarian labour force needs are addressed through inter-provincial migration, B.C. students returning after being trained internationally, and immigration.

- Provincial funding also supports training for veterinary technologists, critical members of the veterinary care team. Diploma programs at Douglas College and Thompson Rivers University, including a part-time distance option, provide opportunities for B.C. students to become registered veterinary technologists.
- In 2022, Government added veterinarians and veterinary technologists to the list of priority occupations under the Provincial Nominee Program, helping to ensure vet clinics have the professionals they need to provide animal care.
- The College of Veterinarians of British Columbia and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association also work to ensure internationally trained veterinarians have the qualifications and training to practice in B.C.
- In July 2024, the International Credentials Recognition Act came into effect. The legislation will reduce barriers for internationally trained professionals by making the certification process more fair, efficient and transparent. The new legislation covers 18 regulatory authorities, including the College of Veterinarians of B.C.
- The Vet College in Saskatchewan is now at capacity and is undertaking a study to explore expansion options. As part of that process, it has reached out to B.C. institutions to discuss potential new models for veterinary medicine training. The Ministry is supportive of these early exploratory discussions.
- To address regional distribution challenges, stakeholders such as regional districts and municipalities have a role to play in engaging with the Vet College and other partners such as the Society of B.C. Veterinarians to find ways to increase access to veterinarian care in their communities, such as through clinical placements for summer students and fourth year student clinical experiences in veterinarian clinics.
- In fall 2023, Vet College representatives visited several northern B.C. communities to raise awareness of the veterinary medicine program for students and clinics. With these efforts, clinical placements in northern communities increased in 2024. For example, fourth year clinical rotations were at 12, up from just one five years ago.

Title: Work-Integrated Learning

Issue: Supports for co-op and work-integrated learning for post-secondary students

Key Messages:

- In 2023 as part of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan, Government committed to provide \$1.5 million in annual funding for three years to expand work-integrated learning opportunities at public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia.
- This funding is expected to support more than 1,800 work-integrated learning placements for post-secondary students, enhancing delivery at small institutions that are mainly located outside the Lower Mainland.
- Through this initiative, more people will have access to work-integrated learning opportunities such as co-ops, internships, practicums, and community service learning.
- These opportunities will allow students to apply classroom learning and gain relevant work experience while developing connections with employers.
- At the same time, employers benefit from a first-hand look at new talent for future recruitment after graduation.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (Ministry) is partnering with the 13 smallest B.C. public post-secondary institutions to deliver the initiative. These are defined as institutions with fewer than 5,000 actual full-time equivalent students.
- Each institution is provided with an annual grant to undertake activities to expand the number of work-integrated learning placements for students.
- These activities include recruiting new employers, improving employer access to wage subsidy and grant programs, and reducing barriers for students underrepresented in work-integrated learning programs, such as Indigenous students and students with disabilities.
- In 2023/24, funding under this initiative helped create more than 900 work-integrated learning placements for students with a wide range of employers in key economic sectors. Reporting on the number of work-integrated placements created in 2024/25 will be available this spring.
- This initiative builds on the momentum created by the Ministry's earlier investment of \$14.5 million between 2019 and 2022 under the Co-op Education and Work-Integrated Learning Initiative that created a large amount of practitioner, employer and student resources, and over 6,700 work-integrated learning placements across the province.

- Another example of support for work-integrated learning is Mitacs, which is a B.C.-based, national not-for-profit organization that delivers applied research training programs for students.
 - Through a long-term partnership with Mitacs, between 2018 and 2023 the Ministry has provided over \$75 million in funding to support internships for innovation.
 - In April 2023, funding of \$50 million was announced to support 10,000 additional internships over the next five years.
 - 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 B.C.
 - Note that Ministry funding for Mitacs is separate from the support for work-integrated learning through the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan.

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Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
2025 Estimates Debate Binder
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Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - *Estimates* 2025/26

Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE to *Estimates* 2025/26 (in 000s)

Table 1 – Budget 2025 Financial Summary Table - 2024/25 (Restated) to 2027/28

For budget documents Reference: see Table 6	Sub-Vote Description * (\$000s)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Restated Estimates	Estimates	Plan	Plan
Vote 41	Educational Institutions and Organizations	3,116,407	3,225,813	3,225,813	3,225,813
	Student Support Programs	73,697	73,792	73,792	73,792
	Private Training Institutions	1	1	1	1
	Labour Market Development	39,469	39,737	39,737	39,737
	Immigration and Strategic Planning	38,069	39,529	39,529	39,529
	Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies	106,960	107,221	107,221	107,221
	Executive and Support Services	29,263	29,775	29,775	29,775
Vote 41	MINISTRY TOTAL	3,403,866	3,515,868	3,515,868	3,515,868

* Sub-Vote budget amounts are shown net of spending funded by recoveries from other sources.

Table 2 - Summary of changes by Sub-Vote – 2024/25 to 2025/26

For budget documents Reference: see Table 6	Sub-Vote Description (\$000s)	2024/25 Estimates	Changes	2024/25 Restated Estimates	Changes (see Table 4)	2025/26 Estimates
Vote 41	Educational Institutions and Organizations	3,116,407		3,116,407	109,406	3,225,813
	Student Support Programs	73,697		73,697	95	73,792
	Private Training Institutions	1		1	0	1
	Labour Market Development	39,469		39,469	268	39,737
	Immigration and Strategic Planning	38,069		38,069	1,460	39,529
	Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies	106,960		106,960	261	107,221
	Executive and Support Services	29,263		29,263	512	29,775
Vote 41	MINISTRY TOTAL	3,403,866	0	3,403,866	112,002	3,515,868

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - *Estimates* 2025/26

Table 3 - Summary of Budget 2025 changes to Ministry operating budget (compared to 2024/25 Restated)

Description (\$000s)	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	3-Year Increase/ (Decrease)
Shared Recovery Mandate *	67,678	67,678	67,678	203,034
Minister's Office	23	23	23	69
Total Budget 2025 decisions	67,701	67,701	67,701	203,103
Impacts from previous budget decisions	44,301	44,301	44,301	132,903
Total Changes from 2024/25 restated	112,002	112,002	112,002	336,006

* See Table 3A for SRM breakdown

** See Table 4A for FRAP funding allocation

Table 3A - Summary of Budget 2025 changes for SRM

Description (\$000s)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	3-Year Increase
Shared Recovery Mandate Allocation (PSIs)	66,617	66,617	66,617	199,861
Shared Recovery Mandate Allocation (Ministry)	800	800	800	2,400
Shared Recovery Mandate Allocation (SkilledTradesBC)	261	261	261	783
Total Increase to Ministry Base Budget	67,678	67,678	67,678	203,034

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - *Estimates 2025/26*

Table 4 – Breakdown of changes by Sub-Vote and decision – 2024/25 restated to 2025/26¹

Sub-Vote (\$000s)	Shared Recovery Mandate	Future Ready Action Plan	HHR Framework	SFU Medical School	Settlement Support for Newcomers	Other Minor Changes ²	Total
Educational Institutions and Organizations (EIO)	82,241	11,100	12,186	3,960		(81)	109,406
Student Support Programs (SSP)	95						95
Private Training Institutions (PTIB)							-
Labour Market Development (LMD)	268						268
Immigration Services and Strategic Planning (ISSP)	101				1,359		1,460
Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies (TCCA)	261						261
Executive & Support Services (ESS)	372					140	512
Total Change	83,338	11,100	12,186	3,960	1,359	59	112,002

Notes

1. Base budget changes include impacts from decisions from previous budget years.
2. Other minor changes include:
 - (\$0.081)M reduction for the ECUAD Inflation Pressure in Educational Institutions and Organizations
 - \$0.117 million increase to reflect the return of a one-time budget transfer to Ministry of Infrastructure in 2024/25 and \$0.023M increase for the Minister's Office in Executive and Support Services

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - *Estimates* 2025/26

Table 4A - Breakdown of Future Ready Action Plan – 2024/25 restated to 2025/26

Initiative (\$000s)	Sub-vote	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
Tech- related Seats	EIO	8,900	8,900	8,900	26,700
Veterinary Medicine Seats	EIO	1,500	1,500	1,500	4,500
Early Childhood Educator Seats	EIO	500	500	500	1,500
Mass Timber Skills Training	EIO	200	200	200	600
Total Ministry Base Budget Increase		11,100	11,100	11,100	33,300

Vote No.	Vote Name	Blue Book Page
41	Ministry Operations – PSFS	159-162

Expenditure Management Direction

Cabinet Confidences

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills - *Estimates* 2025/26

Cabinet Confidences

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

2025/26

Cabinet Confidences

Financial Summary

(\$000s)	2024/25 Restated Estimates ¹	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Educational Institutions and Organizations	3,116,407	3,225,813	3,225,813	3,225,813
Student Services Programs	73,697	73,792	73,792	73,792
Private Training Institutions	1	1	1	1
Labour Market Development ²	39,469	39,737	39,737	39,737
Immigration and Strategic Planning	38,069	39,529	39,529	39,529
Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies	106,960	107,221	107,221	107,221
Executive and Support Services	29,263	29,775	29,775	29,775
Total	3,403,866	3,515,868	3,515,868	3,515,868
Capital Expenditures				
Executive and Support Services	504	504	504	504
Total	504	504	504	504

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2024/25 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2025/26 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

² The Labour Market Development sub-vote budget is expressed net of federal funding received under the Workforce Development Agreement (WDA) and Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA).

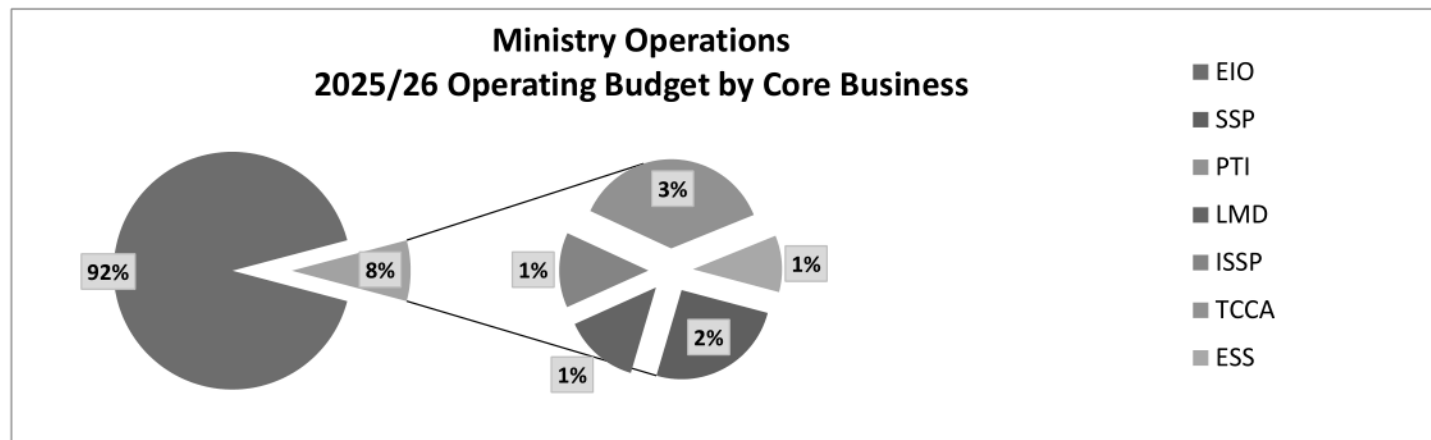
Public Post-Secondary Institutions Financial Summary

(\$millions)	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan
Combined Operating Statement				
Total Revenue	9,178	9,226	9,383	9,551
Total Expense	(8,993)	(9,182)	(9,334)	(9,540)
Operating Surplus	185	44	49	11
Gain (Loss) on sale of capital assets	2	0	0	0
Annual Surplus	187	44	49	11

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Ministry Operations
2025/26 Operating Budget by Core Business

Vote, Core Business	2024/25 Restated (\$000s)	2025/26 Estimates (\$000s)	Year-Over-Year Increase/(Decrease)	
			(\$000s)	% Change
Ministry Operations Vote				
Educational Institutions and Organizations (EIO)	3,116,407	3,225,813	109,406	3.5%
Student Services Programs (SSP)	73,697	73,792	95	0.1%
Private Training Institutions (PTI)	1	1	-	0.0%
Labour Market Development (LMD)				
Labour Market Strategic Planning	5,904	5,994	90	1.5%
Labour Market Policy and Planning	3,429	3,480	51	1.5%
Labour Market and Skills Training Programs	30,136	30,263	127	0.4%
Immigration Services and Strategic Planning (ISSP)				
Immigration Strategic Planning	348	353	5	1.4%
Provincial Nominee Program	1	1	-	0.0%
Workforce and Immigration	37,720	39,175	1,455	3.9%
Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies (TCCA)	106,960	107,221	261	0.2%
Executive and Support Services (ESS)				
Minister's Office	845	868	23	2.7%
Corporate Services	28,418	28,907	489	1.7%
Total Ministry Operations Vote	3,403,866	3,515,868	112,002	3.3%



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Educational Institutions and Organizations

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2024/25 (Restated)	Estimate s 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Educational Institutions and Organizations (EIO)	3,116,407	3,116,407	3,225,813	109,406	3.51%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for funding to universities, colleges, institutes, educational agencies, and other organizations to support the post-secondary education system and for initiatives that enhance student access and outcomes. Costs may be recovered from ministries, educational organizations, organizations within the government reporting entity, other levels of government, and parties both internal and external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

The most significant component of this sub-vote is \$3.3B in operating grants to public post-secondary institutions.

This funding is used by institutions to ensure approximately 209,588¹ full-time equivalent (FTE) students have access to a broad range of programs. It funds the costs associated with serving these students, including faculty, laboratories, and student services (e.g., registrar's office).

Variance Explanation:

In 2025/26 funding to institutions and organizations will increase by a net **\$109.406M** consisting of:

- **Net Increase of \$109.406M** from 2024/25 is comprised of:
 - Increase of \$82.241M for the Shared Recovery Mandate
 - Increase of \$11.100M for Future Ready Action Plan (FRAP):
 - Increase of \$8.900M for FRAP – Technology Programming Expansion, phase 2
 - Increase of \$1.500M for FRAP – Veterinary Medicine Seats

¹ For 2025/26, the student space target is comprised of 190,098 PSFS FTEs plus 19,490 SkilledTradesBC FTEs for a total of 209,588 FTEs.

- Increase of \$0.500M for FRAP – Early Childhood Educator Seat expansion, phase 2
- Increase of \$0.200M for FRAP – Mass Timber Skills Training
- Increase of \$3.96M for SFU Medical School
- Increase of \$12.186M for Health and Human Resources Strategy
- Decrease of (\$0.081M) related to the cost fluctuation for the Emily Carr University for Art and Design P3.

Estimates 2025/26

Standard Object of Expenditures

Description	2024/25 Estimates (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates (In Thousands)
Salaries and Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Government Transfers	3,160,837	-	3,160,837	109,406	3,270,243
Other Expenses	1	-	1	-	1
Recoveries	(44,431)	-	(44,431)	-	(44,431)
Total	3,166,407	-	3,116,407	109,406	3,225,813

Educational Institutions and Organizations Program Descriptions

ABE/ELL Innovation Partnership Pathways

Supporting students in completing the pre-requisites they need to transition directly into high-demand post-secondary programs of their choice.

Aboriginal Service Plan (ASP)

The ASP program is available at all 25 public post-secondary institutions to support Indigenous learner success, strengthen partnerships and Indigenize post-secondary institutions.

Annual Facility Maintenance

To support minor repairs that maintain physical assets during their economic useful life and are undertaken to avoid deterioration and systems failures.

BC Center for International Education (International Education Strategy)

Funding is provided to BC Centre for International Education (BCCIE).

BCcampus - Core Operations

Supports BCcampus core operations that contribute to meeting its mandate relating to teaching, learning and educational technology support and collaborative development of openly licensed curricular resources.

BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) - Core Operations

Supports the facilitation of student articulation, transfer, and admission arrangements among institutions.

BC Electronic Library Network

Supports BC ELN's purpose to develop, promote and maintain system-wide mechanisms that allow post-secondary libraries to meet the expanding information needs of the province's learners, researchers, and educators. Funding provided via SFU.

Community Adult Literacy Program

Support British Columbians to gain valuable skills in reading, writing, math and digital literacy.

Declaration Act Action Plan Workforce Priorities

To support Indigenous skills training and education.

Early Childhood Educator Seats (Phase 1 and 2)

Funding to support the initiative to increase training and development opportunities for early childhood educators (ECEs) throughout the province.

ECUAD P3 Annual Services Payment (ASP)

Supports ECUAD's costs associated with lifecycle, operations and maintenance, and capital repayment.

ECUAD Parking Lease Shortfall

Supports ECUAD's costs associated with the parking requirements of the City of Vancouver.

EducationPlannerBC

EPBC is intended to provide prospective students with everything they need to plan-for and apply-to post-secondary education in B.C.

EIO Planned Grants

Funding that is not yet allocated.

Find Your Digital Pathways Tool

Supports an education and career way-finding tool.

Grants in Lieu

The Grants in Lieu of Taxes (GILT) program assists municipalities hosting UVic, SFU, UNBC and RRU with a portion of the costs associated with providing services to those institutions.

Health Care Assistant Partnership Pathway (HCAPP) Related Training

HCAPP is the post-secondary education component of the Health Career Access Program.

Health Human Resource Strategy (B2023 expansion)

Funding for multi-year health education expansions targeted at the highest priority needs. Base funding has been included in Operating Grants.

Human Resource Database (PSEA)

Supports collective bargaining and human resource planning (funding provided to Post-Secondary Employers' Association).

Mass Timber Skills Training

Support the development and delivery of targeted mass timber programming.

Medical School Expansion (SFU)

To support the start-up costs associated with this expansion.

Mental Health Initiatives

Support to reduce sexual violence and misconduct and to support research about Indigenous student experiences of racism and mental health in the post-secondary education system. Hear2Talk contract.

Micro-credential Program

To expand micro-credential offerings at PSIs that are responsive to identified labour market and industry needs to provide individuals quick, affordable access to high opportunity employment and learning pathways.

Native Education College (NEC)

Funding is provided to support the Native Education College.

Operating Grants

The Ministry issues annual operating grants to each public post-secondary institution through a combination of: 1. a targeted grant for specific, priority educational programs (like the tech expansion programs and health programs); and 2, a block grant which the public post-secondary institution can determine how to allocate.

Optometry - Interprovincial Agreement

Supports Optometry seats at the University of Waterloo, for BC learners. BC does not have an Optometry program.

PSI Connectivity

To develop/upgrade technology infrastructure to enable communications and the delivery of educational content.

Stronger BC Future Skills Grant

To provide more British Columbians with access to affordable training for in-demand jobs and build the highly skilled workforce needed for B.C.'s sustainable economic growth.

Tech Expansion (Phase 1 and 2)

To respond to the immediate demand for more tech-relevant education and training by creating new tech-relevant spaces at PSIs. Base funding has been included in Operating Grants.

University, College and Institute Protection Program (UCIPP)

Supports claims and premiums related to the Provincial self-insurance program. UCIPP is an optional program for PSIs.

Western Veterinary - Interprovincial Agreement

Supports Veterinary medicine seats at the University of Saskatchewan, for BC learners. BC does not have a Veterinary medicine program.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

To expand work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities for students in B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions.

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EIO Subvote by two-digit STOB (Standard Object of Expenditure)

Government Transfers by Program and STOB
Fiscal 2025/26 Budget of Government Transfers
(\$ millions)

Government Transfers¹	77	79	80	2025/26 Budget
Annual Facility Maintenance	7.620			7.620
Operating Grants		3,095.587		3,095.587
Health Human Resource Strategy		4.914		4.914
Tech Expansion - Planned (Phase 1)		1.065		1.065
Tech Expansion Spaces (Phase 2, expanded)		4.067		4.067
EIO Planned Grants		6.286	0.359	6.644
Targeted:				
Human Resources Database (HRDB PSEA)	0.240			0.240
Medical School Expansion (SFU)		30.960		30.960
HCAPP Related Training		28.760		28.760
StrongerBC Future Skills Grant		13.000		13.000
ECUAD P3 Annual Services Payment (ASP)		7.244		7.244
ABE/ELL Innovation Partnership Pathways		3.601		3.601
Community Adult Literacy Program		3.400		3.400
BC Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT)		3.000		3.000
Native Education College (Existing Operating Funds)		2.109		2.109
Declaration Act Action Plan Workforce Priorities Expansion		2.000	10.400	12.400
Micro-credentials		2.000		2.000
International Education (British Columbia Council for International Education)		1.500		1.500
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)		1.500		1.500
PSI Connectivity (formerly PLNet/BCNet)		1.436		1.436
Mass Timber Skills Training		1.300		1.300
Early Childhood Educator Seats (Phase 1 & 2)		0.654		0.654
BC Electronic Library Network		0.600		0.600
Grants in Lieu of property taxes		0.520		0.520
ECUAD Parking Lease Shortfall		0.289		0.289
Find Your Digital Pathways Tool		0.034		0.034
Western Veterinary - Interprovincial Agreement			17.514	17.514
EducationPlannerBC ²		6.000	1.096	7.096
Aboriginal Service Plan			6.400	6.400
BC Campus - Core Operations ²		0.500	2.500	3.000
Mental Health Initiatives			1.500	1.500
Optometry - Interprovincial Agreement			0.289	0.289
Sub-Total Targeted	0.240	110.407	39.699	150.346
Total Government Transfers (before recoveries)	7.860	3,222.325	40.058	3,270.243

EIO Sub-vote	77, 79, 80	85	88, 89, 90	2025/26 Budget
Government Transfers	3,270.243			3,270.243
Operating Costs		0.001		0.001
Internal Recovery: HLTH MOU			(12.429)	(12.429)
Internal Recovery: SDPR for LMDA ³			(32.000)	(32.000)
External Recovery			(0.002)	(0.002)
Total EIO Sub-vote	3,270.243	0.001	(44.431)	3,225.813

Notes

1. **77 Grants** – includes payments to individuals, businesses, non-profit associations, and other entities which may include stipulations as to the use of the funds and which are not entitlements or shared cost arrangements.

79 Entitlements – includes payments to individuals, businesses, and other entities where eligible recipients must be paid under statute or regulation once they meet all eligibility criteria, if any, outlined in the statute or regulations.

80 Shared Cost Arrangements – includes payments that are reimbursements to individuals, businesses, and other entities under the terms of a contract or agreement.

2. While part of the budget for EducationPlannerBC and BC Campus Core Operations is held under STOB 79 Entitlements, PSFS anticipates the expenditures will likely be through STOB 80 Shared Cost Arrangements.

3. LMDA is the Labour Market Development Agreement

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Student Services Programs

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates Restated 2024/25	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Student Services Programs	73,697	73,697	73,792	0.095	0.00%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for the administration, operations, and delivery of student services programs. This sub-vote also provides financial, income, and other assistance to and for students, including scholarships, bursaries, loan forgiveness programs, transfers to students, and transfers for initiatives that enhance student performance and access. Costs may be recovered from educational organizations, the federal government, and parties external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

Many Student Services programs are need-driven. They provide financial assistance where students and their immediate families do not have the resources to meet the costs of post-secondary education, adult basic education, and basic living expenses.

Policy determining eligibility for student financial assistance is the responsibility of StudentAid BC. Decisions to change policy are made in consultation with the Ministry of Finance–Revenue Solutions Branch (FIN–RSB) who manage student loans and hold the budget for associated loan portfolio costs.

- In 2017/18, the BC government introduced the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program to remove barriers and support Former Children and Youth in Care (FCYIC) to pursue post-secondary education. The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program had a base budget of \$4M and was expanded in 2023/24 to increase eligibility, create a new Learning for Future Grant, and provide targeted on-campus support for FCYIC. This expansion was supported by an increase of \$6.4M in base budget plus a \$1.4M reinvestment of existing program funding transferred from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Following the expansion, \$0.200M in annual operating funding for implementation has been reallocated to the Learning for Future Grant budget in both 2024/25 and 2025/26.

- In 2020/21, the BC government introduced the B.C. Access Grant (BCAG) to support low- and middle-income learners in accessing post-secondary education at BC public institutions. To date, the BCAG has supported over 85,000 students with approximately \$166M in up-front, non-repayable financial assistance.^{Cabinet Confidences}

Cabinet Confidences

- In 2023/24, BC doubled weekly student loan limits, marking the first increase since 2006. While FIN received funding through the Future Ready Action Plan to cover the loan portfolio costs, there was no change to Student Services Programs. The loan limit doubling has contributed to a 13% demand increase for provincial student financial assistance in the year following implementation, increasing costs for grants funded through Student Services Programs.
- Demand for accessibility support programs has grown significantly in recent years, driven in part by advances in technology, alignment with the expanded federal disability definition in 2022/23, and doubling of weekly student loan limits in 2023/24.

Cabinet Confidences

Variance Explanation

- Total **net increase of \$0.095M** is comprised of the following:
 - Increase of \$0.095M for Shared Recovery Mandate (SRM)
 - Fiscal neutral re-allocation of Provincial Tuition Waiver Program expansion funding from *Budget 2023*:
 - Decrease of (\$0.200M) for planned reduction in printing & advertising costs
 - Increase of \$0.200M in the Learning for Future Grant

Estimates 2025/26

Standard Object of Expenditures

Description	2024/25 Estimates (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates (In Thousands)
Salaries and Benefits	6,557	-	6,557	95	6,652
Operating Costs	1,669	-	1,669	(200)	1,469
Government Transfers	68,395	-	68,395	200	68,595
Other Expenses	15	-	15	-	15
Recoveries	(2,939)	-	(2,939)	-	(2,939)
Total	73,697	-	73,697	95	73,792

Government Transfers by STOB

STOB 77 Grants

(In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates
BC Access Grant	41,332
BC Disabilities Programs – (\$6,050)	
- Suppl. Bursary for Students with Disabilities	2,700
- BC Access Grant for Students with Disabilities	2,600
- Severe Permanent Disability Benefit	600
- BC Access Grant for Deaf Students	150
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program	4,400
BC Loan Forgiveness	1,500
Nurses Education Bursary	1,000
First Nations Education Steering Committee	100
Total - Grants	54,382

STOB 79 Entitlements

(In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program	5,195
Adult Upgrading Grants	3,600
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a (WWN)	371
Total - Entitlements	9,166

STOB 80 Transfers Under Arrangements

(In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program	1,900
Assistive Technology BC	1,500
Supports for Students with Disabilities – (\$1,337)	
- Cent. for Accessible Post-Sec. Education Resources	516
- Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities	500
- Academic Communications Equity	185
- Program for Inst. Loans of Adaptive Technology	79
- Learning Disability Assessment Bursary	57
Part Time Student Assistance	210
Student Society Emergency Aid Fund	100
Total – Shared Cost Arrangements	5,047

Total – Grants and Transfers	68,595
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Student Services Program Descriptions

Academic Communications Equity - ACE (Formerly, Post-Secondary Communication Access Services - PCAS)

This program coordinates and provides quality assurance on the delivery of specialized services to deaf and hard of hearing students at public post-secondary institutions including American Sign Language interpreting, real time and TypeWell captioning. The program is delivered by the British Columbia Institute of Technology.

Adult Upgrading Grant (AUG)

This program provides needs-based grants to eligible low income learners enrolled in adult upgrading programs, including Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Adult Special Education. These grants are intended to offset the costs associated with tuition (where applicable), fees, books, unsubsidized childcare, technology, and transportation for learners most in need of financial assistance.

Assistive Technology BC (ATBC)

ATBC adjudicates disability status for student financial assistance applicants, assesses assistive technology & equipment needs, and provides assistive technology & equipment under the federal Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment - Students with Disabilities. ATBC also delivers two assistive technology & equipment 'loan banks' to accommodate situations in which the outright purchase of technology and/or equipment does not make sense. ATBC helps students overcome disability-related barriers by providing assistive technology and equipment to improve the accessibility of post-secondary studies and reduce the impact of their disability.

B.C. Access Grant (BCAG)

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. public post-secondary institutions. Up to \$1,000 per academic year is available to part-time students and full-time students in programs 2 or more years, and up to \$4,000 per academic year is available for full-time students in programs less than 2 years. For full-time students, the B.C. Access grant replaces an equivalent amount of repayable loan funding.

B.C. Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities (APSD)

A needs-based grant program provides financial assistance to students with a verified permanent or persistent/prolonged disability to offset the costs of adaptive services and/or equipment to access education when Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment - Students with Disabilities funding has been fully exhausted. Up to \$10,000 is available (or \$12,000 if an attendant is required) to students attending public and private post-secondary institutions in B.C.

B.C. Loan Forgiveness Program

Forgives outstanding debt on B.C. student loans at a prorated amount up to 20% per year for up to five years for eligible professionals who provide at least 100 - 400 hours per year of in-person service at a publicly funded facility in an underserved community and/or working with children.

B.C. Access Grant for Students with Disabilities

A needs-based program that provides financial assistance to full-time students with a verified permanent or persistent/prolonged disability. This program replaces up to \$1,560 per academic year in B.C. student loan funding with non-repayable grant.

B.C. Access Grant for Deaf Students

This program helps deaf or hard of hearing students with the additional costs incurred while attending specialized post-secondary institutions where curriculum is delivered in American Sign Language. Up to \$30,000 is available per academic year.

Centre for Accessible Post-Secondary Education Resources (CAPER)

Provides alternative text format services to students and instructors. CAPER serves clients who cannot use conventional print due to visual impairments, learning disabilities, physical limitations, neurological impairments, and multiple disabilities. This program is delivered by Langara College.

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

Supports the Indigenous Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners table and supports First Nations participation and success in post-secondary education and training.

Learning Disability Assessment Bursary (LDAB)

Assists students attending B.C. public post-secondary institutions with the upfront costs of a learning disability assessment. Up to \$3,500 is available per student, and funds are reimbursed through the Canada Student Grant for Services and Equipment - Students with Disabilities if the assessment results in an eligible disability.

Nurses Education Bursary

A Bursary for students enrolled in a full-time nursing program at a designated B.C. post-secondary institution that leads to a Certificate, Diploma or Degree recognized for nursing practice in B.C. Up to \$2,000 is available per year, and bursaries are awarded to students with the highest financial need until the budget is exhausted.

Part Time Student Assistance

Funding provided to public post-secondary institutions for the data entry of part-time student financial assistance applications.

Program for Institutional Loans of Adaptive Technology (PILAT)

A service for the accommodation of students at public post-secondary institutions who require specialized adaptive technology and/or software. Through this program, institutions are able to better accommodate students with disabilities while they are on campus, improving accessibility of post-secondary education in B.C.

Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Grant

The Provincial Tuition Waiver Program improves access, services and educational outcomes for Former Children and Youth in Care (FCYIC) by waiving domestic tuition and fees for students studying below the graduate level at a B.C. public post-secondary institution, the Native Education College, or an approved union-based trades training provider. The program also includes funding to provide on-campus supports for FCYIC, and an annual \$3,500 Learning for Future Grant to help cover additional education-related costs for PTWP-eligible students.

Severe Permanent Disability Benefit

Program adjudicated by the Canada Student Financial Assistance (CSFA) program where outstanding student loan debt is forgiven for students with a severe permanent disability. Once approved for the program, students are not eligible to receive further student financial assistance funding.

Student Society Emergency Aid Fund

Assists student societies with bursaries for students in emergency financial situations, who may otherwise have to postpone their studies. SSEAF operates as a matching program whereby the Ministry matches the funds raised, up to an institutional maximum allocation, by a participating institution's student society.

Supplemental Bursaries for Students with Disabilities

Bursary program for students with a verified permanent or persistent/prolonged disability intended to cover exceptional educational costs. Up to \$800 per academic year is available to full-time students who carry 40% or greater of a full course load, and up to \$400 per academic year is available to part-time students who carry between 20% and 39% of a full course load.

Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a (WWN)

Funding is provided for the operation of WWN which is a Nisga'a post-secondary institute. This funding is provided in support of the implementation of the Nisga'a Final Agreement. Additional funding is provided to the UNBC/WWN Federation Agreement.

2025/26 Estimates
Student Services Programs
Government Transfers by Program Type
(\$000's)

	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan	STOB
<u>Disability Programs</u>					
BC Access Grant - Students with Disabilities	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	77
Severe Permanent Disability Benefit	600	600	600	600	77
BC Access Grant - Deaf Students	150	150	150	150	77
Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities	500	500	500	500	80
Centre for Access Post-Sec Educ Resources	516	516	516	516	80
Academic Communications Equity - Formerly (PCAS)	185	185	185	185	80
Program for Institutional Loans of Adaptive Technology	79	79	79	79	80
Supplemental Bursary for Students with Disabilities	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	77
Learning Disability Assessment Bursary	57	57	57	57	80
	<u>\$ 7,387</u>	<u>\$ 7,387</u>	<u>\$ 7,387</u>	<u>\$ 7,387</u>	
<u>Loan Reduction/Forgiveness Programs</u>					
BC Loan Forgiveness Program	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	77
	<u>\$ 1,500</u>	<u>\$ 1,500</u>	<u>\$ 1,500</u>	<u>\$ 1,500</u>	
<u>Aboriginal Programs</u>					
First Nations Education Steering Committee	100	100	100	100	77
Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a (WWN)	371	371	371	371	79
	<u>\$ 471</u>	<u>\$ 471</u>	<u>\$ 471</u>	<u>\$ 471</u>	
<u>Scholarships, Bursaries and Grants</u>					
BC Access Grant ⁽¹⁾	37,332	37,332	37,332	37,332	77
BC Access Grant - base funding lift ⁽¹⁾	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	77
Student Society Emergency Aid Fund	100	100	100	100	80
Nurses Education Bursary	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	77
Adult Upgrading Grants	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	79
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program ⁽²⁾	5,195	5,195	5,195	5,195	79
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Transfers ⁽²⁾	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,900	80
Provincial Tuition Waiver Program Grant ⁽²⁾	4,200	4,400	4,400	4,400	77
	<u>\$ 57,327</u>	<u>\$ 57,527</u>	<u>\$ 57,527</u>	<u>\$ 57,527</u>	
<u>Other Student Services Programs</u>					
Assistive Technology BC	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	80
Part Time Student Assistance	210	210	210	210	80
	<u>\$ 1,710</u>	<u>\$ 1,710</u>	<u>\$ 1,710</u>	<u>\$ 1,710</u>	
Total	<u>\$ 68,395</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	
STOB Totals					
STOB 77	54,182	54,382	54,382	54,382	
STOB 79	9,166	9,166	9,166	9,166	
STOB 80	5,047	5,047	5,047	5,047	
	<u>\$ 68,395</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	<u>\$ 68,595</u>	

Notes:

(1) Introduction of the new BC Access Grant in B.2020 was supported by re-investment of the BC Access Grant for Labour Market Priorities (\$5.5M) and the BC Completion Grant (incl. BC Completion Grant for Graduates) (\$31.8M) in the 2020/21 budget, plus an additional \$4m base budget lift.

(2) Provincial Tuition Waiver Program expansion in 23/24 increased the base budget funding of the program to \$11.095M which includes Tuition Waiver funding, Learning for Future Grant funding, and institution funding to provide on-campus supports for former children and youth in care.

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Private Training Institutions

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25 (Restated)	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Private Training Institutions	1	1	0	0

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for the policy, administration, operations, and compliance related to providing for quality education standards for private post-secondary institutions. This sub-vote also provides for the administration of the Student Tuition Protection Fund. Costs may be recovered from ministries, government organizations and from private post-secondary institutions for services described within this sub-vote.

As part of the System Integrity Branch (SIB), the Private Training Institutions Regulatory Unit (PTIRU) under the authority of the *Private Training Act*, regulates over 300 private training institutions in BC and provides consumer protection by assisting students affected by institution closures, handling student complaints, enforcing standards, and publishing information about institutions.

Estimates 2025/26

By Standard Object of Expenditure

Description	2024/25 Estimates (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease)	2025/26 Estimates (In Thousands)
Salaries and Benefits	2,346	-	2,346
Operating Costs	1,200	-	1,200
Other Expenses	20	-	20
Recoveries	(3,565)	-	(3,565)
Total	1	-	1

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Labour Market Development

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2024/25 Restated	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Labour Market Development	39,469	39,469	39,737	268	0.68%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for the development and implementation of policy, programs, and legislation to support the development and training of British Columbia's workforce. It includes oversight of SkilledTradesBC and the negotiation and implementation of federal/provincial agreements related to workforce development and training. This sub-vote also provides for the development of labour market information that is disseminated to British Columbians through multiple platforms and methods and development of industry-led workforce development strategies and strategic initiatives. Costs may be recovered from ministries, Crown agencies, boards and commissions, the federal government, and parties external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

Variance Explanation:

Compared to the restated 2024/25 budget, the 2025/26 budget increased by **\$0.268M**. This is comprised of:

- Increase of \$0.268M for Shared Recovery Mandate (SRM)

Estimates 2025/26

Standard Object of Expenditures

Description	2024/25 Estimates (\$ 000)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (\$ 000)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000)	2025/26 Estimates (\$ 000)
Salaries and Benefits	17,405	-	17,405	268	17,673
Operating Costs	9,336	-	9,336	-	9,336
Other Expenses	2,690	-	2,690	-	2,690
Government Transfers	124,983	-	124,983	-	124,983
Recoveries	(114,945)	-	(114,945)	-	(114,945)
Total	39,469	-	39,469	268	39,737

Government Transfers by Program Group

	2025/26 Estimates (\$ 000)
Workforce Development Agreement Programs ¹	88,283
Labour Market Development Agreement Programs	10,100
Provincial Future Ready Action Plan	16,600
Provincial Indigenous Skills & Training Development	10,000
Total	124,983

¹ - Notional WDA base funding allocation.

2025/26 Estimates
Labour Market Development
Government Transfers by Program Type
(\$ '000)

Sub-Sub-Vote	Program	Funding Source				Nature of the Government Transfer and the Recipient
		Provincial	WDA	LMDA	STOB 80 Total	
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	Skills Training for Employment	900	32,413	-	33,313	Programs delivered through the Skills Training for Employment Program focus on meeting the needs of vulnerable and under-represented groups, by assisting people facing barriers to participate in the labour market. Participants receive pre-employment, skills training and employment supports to obtain sustainable employment. The program serves six target populations: Young Adults, Young Adults at Risk, Survivors of Violence and/or Abuse, Older Workers, individuals with Multiple Barriers to employment, and Indigenous persons. Includes \$900k for FRAP Multi-Barrier Program
Labour Market Policy and Planning	BC Employer Training Grant (ETG)	-	1,000	4,000	5,000	This program provides funding for employers to support skills training for their current and new employees. The goal is to help unemployed and employed British Columbians access the skills training they need to adapt to the changing requirements of jobs and the labour market. Employers pay for the cost of the training, and then are reimbursed for a portion or all of these costs, depending on which stream they fall under.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	Community Workforce Response Grant (CWRG)	-	8,000	-	8,000	Provides funding for communities and industries to support in-demand skills training leading to secure and sustainable employment for unemployed or underemployed (part-time, seasonal or casual) British Columbians. A key goal of the grant is to provide flexible and timely responses to emerging and urgent labour and skills needs in B.C.'s communities and sectors. Eligible applicants/ recipients may be non-profit service providers, local governments, unions, First Nations, or Indigenous organizations.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	Pre-apprenticeship Programs (SkilledTradesBC)	-	8,000	-	8,000	The SkilledTradesBC Trades Training programs for equity seeking groups are designed to increase the employability of Indigenous people, women, immigrants, other under-represented participants in the trades, and/or other participants experiencing barriers to entering and succeeding in trades-related occupations.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	BladeRunners	-	6,200	-	6,200	The BladeRunners program provides young people with the support and resources they need to overcome the difficulties and barriers in their lives that prevent them from obtaining and maintaining meaningful long-term employment. The Program provides life-skills and job readiness training as well as job placement and monitoring, and ongoing 24/7 post-employment support to participants.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships program (ACBTP)	-	5,000	-	5,000	ACBTP focuses on building partnerships between Public Post-Secondary Institutions and Indigenous communities to improve access to post-secondary education and training within Indigenous communities. Participants include those from First Nations, Métis, Urban (off-reserve) locations. Recipients are the Indigenous communities or designated institutions as determined by the Indigenous community.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	SDPR Persons with Disabilities (PWD)	-	27,670	-	27,670	MOU with Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR) to deliver Programming for Persons with Disabilities funding. Funds Transfer to SDPR as part of the WDA agreement.
Labour Market & Skills Training Programs	Indigenous Skills Training Development Fund	25,700	-	-	25,700	This program is designed to help Indigenous people improve their skills and find employment. The recipient is the Indigenous partner delivering training. Includes \$15.7M for FRAP Declaration Act Action Plan
Labour Market Policy and Planning	Sector Labour Market Partnerships	-	-	6,100	6,100	This program funds sector driven and partnership-led initiatives to address current, systemic and emerging workforce challenges. Sectors work on five types of projects; sector engagement, labour market information research, strategy development, strategic implementation and evaluation.
Total - Government Transfers		26,600	88,283	10,100	124,983	

STOB 80 per Estimates 124,983

Difference -

SDPR PWD 27,670

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Transfers to Crown Corporations and Agencies

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2024/25 (Restated)	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	(\$000s)	\$000s	\$000	\$000s	%
SkilledTradesBC	106,960	106,960	107,221	261	0.24%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for transfers to Crown corporations and agencies, including SkilledTradesBC.

Net increase of \$0.261M in 2024/25 is related to Shared Recovery Mandate Allocations (SRM) lifts from *Budget 2024* approvals.

Estimates 2025/26

By Standard Object of Expenditure (STOB)

Description (In \$000s)	2024/25 Estimates	Increase/ (Decrease)	2024/25 Estimates Restated	Increase/ (Decrease)	2025/26 Estimates
Government Transfers	106,960	-	106,960	261	107,221
Total	106,960	-	106,960	261	107,221

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Executive and Support Services

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates Restated 2024/25	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	(\$000s)	%
Executive and Support Services	29,263	29,263	29,775	512	1.75%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for ministry leadership and direction, establishment of policy and accountability, and provides program support for the post-secondary system and student services programs. This sub-vote also provides for quality assessment for public and private post-secondary degree-granting institutions, and the *Professional Governance Act*. This sub-vote also provides for the office of the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials, and for corporate services to the ministry. This sub-vote also provides for the development and implementation of policy and programs to increase the ability for qualified, internationally trained professionals to achieve certification in British Columbia to work in regulated occupations. Costs may be recovered from ministries, organizations within the government reporting entity, other levels of government, and parties both internal and external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

Variance Explanation:

Compared to the restated 2024/25 budget, the 2025/26 budget increased by **\$0.512M**. This is comprised of:

- \$0.372M increase for the Shared Recovery Mandate
- \$0.117M increase to reflect the return of a one-time budget transfer to Ministry of Infrastructure in 2024/25
- \$0.023M increase for the Minister's Office

Estimates 2025/26 by Standard Object of Expenditure

Minister's Office

Description	2024/25 Estimates (\$ 000's)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000's)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (\$ 000's)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000's)	2025/26 Estimates (\$ 000's)
Salaries and Benefits	738	-	738	2	740
Operating Costs	107	-	107	21	128
Government Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Recoveries	-	-	-	-	-
Total	845	0	845	23	868

Note: Minister's Office sub-sub vote includes the budget for Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials

Corporate Services

Description	2024/25 Estimates (\$ 000's)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000's)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (\$ 000's)	Increase/ (Decrease) (\$ 000's)	2025/26 Estimates (\$ 000's)
Salaries and Benefits	22,501	-	22,501	372	22,873
Operating Costs	5,644	-	5,644	117	5,761
Government Transfers	800	-	800	-	800
Other Expenses	67	-	67	-	67
Recoveries ¹	(594)	-	(594)	-	(594)
Total	28,418	-	28,418	489	28,907

1. Recoveries from application fees paid by both public and private institutions for Degree Quality Assessments.

**Minister's Office
and
Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials
Budget Breakdown**

Overview of Budget by STOB

(\$000s)

	2024/25 Restated Estimates	Increase/ (Decrease)	2025/26 Estimates
50 Base Salaries	504	(2)	502
52 Benefits	159	1	160
54 Legislative Salaries	75	3	78
Salaries & Benefits¹	738	2	740
57 Employee Travel ²	75	21	96
63 Info Systems- Operating	10	0	10
65 Office & Business Expenses	22	0	22
Operating Costs	107	21	128
TOTAL Operating Budget	845	23	868

Notes

1. The net increase of \$2 thousand consists of:
 - An increase of \$3 thousand to Legislative Salaries to fund the Minister and Parliamentary Secretary's salaries to be consistent with the *Members' Remuneration and Pensions Act*
 - A decrease of (\$2 thousand) to Base Salaries and increase of \$1 thousand to Benefits to properly balance the benefits rate.
2. The \$21 thousand increase in travel is to cover inflationary pressures and provide funding for travel related to the duties of the Minister, Parliamentary Secretary and staff.

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Immigration Services and Strategic Planning

BUDGET SUMMARY:

	Estimates 2024/25	Estimates 2024/25 Restated	Estimates 2025/26	Increase/ (Decrease)	Increase/ (Decrease)
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
Immigration Services and Strategic Planning	38,069	38,069	39,529	1,460	3.84%

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2025/26:

This sub-vote provides for the development and implementation of provincial plans, programs, and policies related to immigration, including the administration of the British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program and immigrant settlement and integration services, including negotiating and entering into agreements or arrangements with parties inside and outside of British Columbia. Costs related to the British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program are cost-recoverable from fees. Costs may also be recovered from ministries, organizations within the government reporting entity, other levels of government, and parties both internal and external to government for activities described within this sub-vote.

Immigrant settlement and integration services were significantly expanded as of April 1, 2024, following a funding increase in *Budget 2023* and subsequent program design and procurement in 2023/24. Two new programs were launched through multi-year STOB 80 contracts: the BC Newcomer Services Program and the BC Safe Haven Program. The sub-vote also includes the Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants Program.

Variance Explanation

Compared to the restated 2024/25 budget, the 2025/26 budget increased by **\$1.460M**. This is comprised of:

- Increase of \$1.359M for the Settlement Support for Newcomers program
- Increase of \$0.101M for the Shared Recovery Mandate

Estimates 2025/26

Standard Object of Expenditures

Description	2024/25 Estimates (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2024/25 Estimates Restated (In Thousands)	Increase/ (Decrease) (In Thousands)	2025/26 Estimates (In Thousands)
Salaries and Benefits	16,948	-	16,948	2,447	19,395
Operating Costs	2,790	-	2,790	(255)	2,535
Government Transfers	34,052	-	34,042	1,394	35,446
Other Expenses	281	-	281	47	328
Recoveries	(16,002)	-	(16,002)	(2,173)	(18,175)
Total	38,069	-	38,069	1,460	39,529

Government Transfers by Program Group

	2025/26 Estimates (\$ 000)
Immigrant Integration Programs	35,446
Total	35.446

Immigration and Strategic Planning Program Descriptions

BC Newcomer Services Program

Funding that provides services to temporary residents and naturalized citizens to support integrating into their communities, practicing English and finding employment.

Safe Haven

This program provides specialized services for refugee claimants with the goal of reducing their vulnerability and increasing their community connections, find housing and employment, and strengthening their English language abilities.

Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants

This program helps skilled newcomers find employment that utilizes their pre-arrival skills, education and experience and includes supporting clients with navigating and making progress towards re-certification for regulated occupations.

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2025/26 Estimates
Immigration and Strategic Planning
Government Transfers by Program Type
(\$000's)

	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Estimates	2026/27 Plan	2027/28 Plan	STOB
<u>Immigration Programs</u>					
Immigrant Integration Programs	34,052	35,446	35,446	35,446	80
	\$ 34,052	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	
Total	\$ 34,052	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	
STOB Totals					
STOB 77	-	-	-	-	
STOB 79	-	-	-	-	
STOB 80	34,052	35,446	35,446	35,446	
	\$ 34,052	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	\$ 35,446	

Notes:

- (1) The budget for the Settlement Support for Newcomers program was increased by \$1.359M in 2025/26.
- (2) The Immigration Program budget was increased by \$0.035M for the Shared Recovery Manddate in 2025/26.

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Title: Deficits Approved in Principle in 2025/26

Issue: Government has provided approval in principle for 17 Post-Secondary Institutions to run a deficit in 2025/26.

Key Messages:

- Government has provided approval in principle for 17 Post-Secondary Institutions to run a deficit in 2025/26.
- The cumulative amount of these deficits is \$111.8 million.
- When other institution's surpluses and endowment earnings are included, government is forecasting that the post-secondary sector will return a cumulative surplus in 2025/26 of \$44 million.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- The *University Act*, Section 29 (1.1) and the *College and Institute Act*, Section 31 (1.1) require post-secondary institutions to obtain approval from the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills prior to running an annual deficit.
- B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions continue to be financially challenged by various factors, the federal governments decision to cap international study permits, post-pandemic effects from inflation, enrolment trends, and limited opportunities to generate revenue.
- The post-secondary sector has forecasted a surplus of \$187 million in 2024/25, that includes nine post-secondary institutions approved to run a deficit totalling \$28.5 million (see table 1).
- For 2025/26, the post-secondary sector is forecasting a surplus of \$44 million that includes a further 17 public post-secondary institutions given approval-in-principle to run deficits of \$111.8 million (see table 1).
- Providing approval in principle allows post-secondary institutions to better plan financially.
- Formal deficit approvals will be confirmed in early 2026 after Q3 forecasts are submitted from post-secondary institutions.
- The Ministry is developing a long-term strategy to monitor the financial sustainability of post-secondary institutions.

Table 1: Forecasted 2024/25 to 2027/28 PSI Annual Deficits

Post-Secondary Institution (\$ millions)	2024/25 Approved Deficits	2025/26 Deficits Approved in Principle
British Columbia Institute of Technology	-	35.0
Camosun College	4.7	4.9
Coast Mountain College	-	3.5
College of New Caledonia	1.1	1.0
College of the Rockies	-	1.3
Justice Institute of British Columbia	-	-
Langara College	4.0	-
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	-	0.8
North Island College	0.7	0.8
Northern Lights College	-	0.4
Okanagan College	2.3	12.5
Selkirk College	2.4	4.7
Vancouver Community College	-	6.6
Capilano University	-	2.0
Emily Carr University of Art & Design	1.9	2.1
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	-	-
Royal Roads University	6.0	5.9
Simon Fraser University	-	-
Thompson Rivers University	-	-
University of the Fraser Valley	-	5.1
University of Northern British Columbia	-	2.5
Vancouver Island University	5.4	22.7
Total Deficits	28.5	111.8
Total Net Deficit/(Income) for the Sector as stated in the Service Plan	(187.0)	(44.0)

Title: Post-Secondary Institution Finance and Deficits

Issue: B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions (PSIs) are facing increasing financial pressures, leading to significant deficits and risks to long-term sustainability

Key Messages:

- B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions (PSIs) continue to face operational pressures from post-pandemic inflation, labour shortages, and declining student enrollment, worsened by the sudden federal cap on international study permits that was introduced last year.
- Government Financial Information
- The Ministry is working closely with all public post-secondary institutions to ensure that they can continue to provide world class education opportunities to students across the province.
- The Ministry is considering how best to support institutions to reduce costs and increase revenues in the coming years.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- Nearly all of B.C.'s post-secondary institutions (PSIs) are struggling with the impacts of sustained inflation, labour market pressures, stagnant domestic enrolment and the federal government's decision to drastically reduce the number of study permits available to international students.
- Labour market shifts have presented challenges for post-secondary institutions to attract and retain prospective students who have increased opportunities to enter the workforce sooner.
- Operating grants from the provincial government have increased in recent years; however, this increased funding has been to offset the increased costs of negotiated wage increases and targeted seat expansions, not general funding to address increased service expectations or inflationary pressures.
- Domestic tuition increases are capped at 2 per cent annually, limiting PSIs' ability to offset inflationary pressures.

Post Secondary Institutions Deficits

- Between 2015/16–2019/20, only 3 PSIs posted an annual deficit. From 2021/22–2024/25 over 60 per cent have posted at least one annual deficit.

- Government Financial Information

- Government has approved deficits for 17 PSIs totaling \$111.8 million ^{Government Financial Information}
Government Financial Information
- Historically, public post-secondary institutions have managed deficits by drawing from accumulated operating surpluses generated from previous years. However, some PSIs are running out of accumulated surplus to offset their deficits and will require a cash injection in order to remain operational. This is despite most PSIs taking steps to restructure operations and reduce expenditures.

Actions Being Taken

- The Ministry is working closely with public post-secondary institutions across the province to find ways to bend costs curves and maximize revenues.
- The Ministry is considering a number of options but remains committed to ensuring that public post-secondary education remains accessible and world-class.
- The Ministry has invested \$0.500 million in BCNET to support PSIs to reduce their overhead costs through shared procurements and will be exploring other options to increase efficiencies and savings for institutions.
- The Ministry provides flexibility to institutions by approving annual deficits, allowing universities and colleges to restrict surplus revenues for targeted expenses in future years, and by, upon request, front loading block grants to help institutions through the summer when revenues tend to be lower. These measures help support institutions with proactive financial planning and cashflow management.
- The Ministry will also continue to leverage its strong relationships with PSIs to work collaboratively to navigate these challenging financial circumstances.

Table 1: Forecasted 2024/25 to 2027/28 PSI Annual Deficits (\$ millions)

PSI	2024/25 Deficit	2025/26 Deficit	2026/27 Deficit	2027/28 Deficit
British Columbia Institute of Technology	-	35.000	Government Financial Information	
Camosun College	4.674	4.816		
Coast Mountain College	-	3.416		
College of New Caledonia	1.060	0.990		
College of the Rockies	-	1.221		
Justice Institute of British Columbia	-	-		
Langara College	4.000	-		
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	-	0.800		
North Island College	0.618	0.750		
Northern Lights College	-	0.375		
Okanagan College	2.300	12.482		
Selkirk College	2.374	4.694		
Vancouver Community College	-	6.515		
Capilano University	-	2.000		
Emily Carr University of Art & Design	1.836	2.036		
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	-	-		
Royal Roads University	5.902	5.835		
Simon Fraser University	-	-		
Thompson Rivers University	-	-		
University of the Fraser Valley	-	5.041		
University of Northern British Columbia	-	2.426		
Vancouver Island University	5.362	22.631		
Total Deficits	28.126	111.028		

NOTE: The figures in this table differ slightly from the figures in the approved in principle for 2025/26 Estimates Note due to rounding.

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Title: Royal Roads University – Westshore Campus

Issue: Royal Roads University is opening a new campus in Langford in partnership with UVic, Camosun, JIBC, and School District 62

Key Messages:

- Royal Roads University, the University of Victoria, Camosun College, and the Justice Institute of BC will all be welcoming students to the new Westshore campus in September 2025.
- Royal Roads University is the owner and operator of the Westshore Campus and Government is providing ^{Government Financial} in incremental funding in 2025/26 and ^{Government Financial} in incremental funding 2026/27 to support the operations of the new facility.
- The completion of this project is a major milestone in bringing post-secondary education to one of the fastest growing regions in B.C.
- This new shared campus will significantly enhance access to post-secondary education in the region including several First Nations communities.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In July 2022, Government approved \$77.8 million in provincial capital investment for the construction of a new, collaborative post-secondary campus in the West Shore community.

NOTE: any questions on the status of the Westshore Campus construction should be directed to the Ministry of Infrastructure.

- The Westshore Learning Centre, located in Langford, consists of a partnership between Royal Roads University, the University of Victoria, Camosun College, the Justice Institute of British Columbia and the Sooke School District (District 62).
- Royal Roads University will receive incremental funding ^{Government Financial Information} to support the expansion of the academic programming at the Westshore Campus, all other institutions will be delivering programming from within their existing funding envelope.

Royal Roads University – Westshore Funding

(\$ millions)	2023/24 (actual)	2024/25 (forecast)	2025/26 (budget)	2026/27 (budget)	2027/28 (notional approval)
Incremental Funding	1.062	2.400	Government Financial Information		

- Programs at the new campus will cover several priority areas:
 - Computer systems technology (Camosun College)
 - Computer science and software engineering (University of Victoria)

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- Paramedic training and certification (Justice Institute of BC)
- Health Care Assistants (Camosun College)
- Early Care and Learning Diploma and Education Assistant Certificate programs (Camosun College)
- The campus will also be home to Royal Roads University's new flexible undergraduate program which utilizes personalized learning pathways to empower students to seamlessly transition from an undergraduate certificate to a diploma to a bachelor's degree.

Title: Ministry organizational changes

Issue: Explanation of additional ministry staff and their roles.

Key Facts, Data and Background:

- In fiscal 2025/26, the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (PSFS) increased by 127 FTE.
- On November 18, 2024, the majority of the Immigration Services and Strategic Planning (ISSP) Division transferred into the Ministry from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, while responsibility for Capital Projects (15 FTE) were transferred from PSFS to the Ministry of Infrastructure.
- The Immigration Services and Strategic Planning Division (ISSP) division consists of three branches:
 - Immigration Programs (114 FTE)
 - Responsible to design and deliver programs and services to attract and retain skilled workers and entrepreneurs who can best meet the province's labour market and economic needs. This is accomplished largely through the administration of the British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP). Established in 2001, the BC PNP is the province's only direct immigration tool to enhance the benefits of economic immigration to British Columbia.
 - Under *Skills Immigration*, they support B.C. employers by providing them with a tool to recruit and retain foreign trained skilled workers and locally educated international students.
 - Under *Entrepreneur Immigration*, qualified foreign entrepreneurs can establish new businesses or purchase existing businesses in B.C.
 - Immigration Policy and Integration (24 FTE)
 - Responsible for policy analysis and intergovernmental relations on a wide range of immigration matters. Part of policy work is focused on economic immigration, ensuring that businesses and communities can access international talent to address labour needs and support sustainable economic development.
 - The branch manages programs to help newcomers successfully settle and integrate in BC.
 - Overseeing three programs to support immigrant integration: The BC Newcomer Services Program, the Career Paths for Skilled Immigrants Program, and the Safe Haven Program.
 - Strategic Planning and Policy (4 FTE)

- Operating on a provincial scale, the branch delivers strategic frameworks, leads work on the planning and policy implications of immigration-driven population growth, and represents the division on corporate priorities such as the Cross-Government Working Group on Trade and Economic Security.
- 15 FTEs to support Capital Programs were transferred out of the ministry. The new Ministry of Infrastructure will now be leading and funding all PSFS's previously planned capital projects, including student housing and new educational facilities like Simon Fraser University's new medical school.