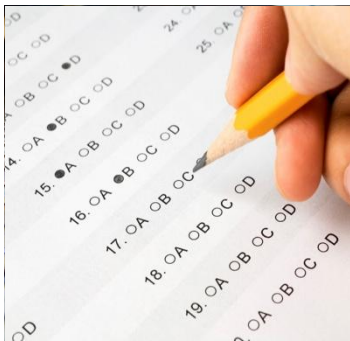
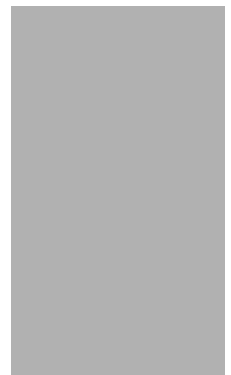

Advanced Education

Building a Stronger Post-Secondary Education System



Wildrose Alliance Caucus

Get it Right!

Advanced Education

A strong post-secondary education system is essential to unlocking opportunity for tens of thousands of Albertans. It is also critical for our province's long term economic prosperity. Unfortunately, the current PC government has done little to make post-secondary education more available or affordable for Albertans.

Tuition rates are among the highest in Canada, saddling graduates with excessive debt loads while scaring away many others from pursuing higher education entirely. If Albertans are to reach their full potential, our province must do a better job ensuring that tuition rates are more affordable and predictable than they are currently.

As more and more Albertans seek the education and training necessary to succeed in the global economy, it has become apparent that we need to tailor our post-secondary system to better suit the needs of Albertans.

It has been disappointing to watch the Stelmach Government pour billions of dollars into our post-secondary institutions only to see thousands of students turned away despite a continued shortage of workers with skills in the trades and professions our province most desperately needs.



Affordability, Accessibility, Research

A key component of building a world class post-secondary education system involves strong research and development capabilities. Post-secondary research in Alberta has resulted in phenomenal advances in medicine, energy, agriculture and a host of other areas.

It is imperative that we attract more private-sector research funding into our universities while ensuring that Alberta taxpayers receive a return on investment for commercialized technologies stemming from publicly funded research grants.

This document outlines the Wildrose Alliance Caucus' plan for building a stronger post-secondary education system. Our plan focuses on three key areas:

Affordability



Accessibility



Research



Get it Right

Albertans deserve better. A Wildrose Alliance government will improve Alberta's post-secondary education system by implementing the following reforms:

Affordability

- Establish a student loan forgiveness program that gradually forgives student loans incurred by graduates who choose to remain in Alberta to practice a trade or profession of high need over an extended period of time.
- Restore the limit on post-secondary tuition fee increases to the rate of inflation.
- Review the Alberta student loan application process to ensure loan amounts meet the basic living needs of students and eliminate parental income as a factor in determining final approved loan amounts.

Accessibility

- Invest in Internet-based learning and other technologies for the purpose of opening up thousands of additional post-secondary spaces without having to spend billions of taxpayer dollars unnecessarily on increasingly outdated teaching methodologies and infrastructure.
- In cooperation with post-secondary institutions and industry, permit trades students to select a written or verbal examination to complete their trade certification.



- Coordinate with all Alberta post-secondary schools to improve the seamless transfer of post-secondary credits between institutions.
- In consultation with Alberta’s post-secondary institutions, industry and professional associations, expand spaces for high demand degrees, diplomas, and trade certificates by allowing a substantial amount of post-secondary government funding to directly follow the student to the institution of his or her choice. Rather than setting arbitrary limits on courses of study, Alberta universities, colleges and technical schools should be competing for students by offering the programs and courses students most want to enroll in.

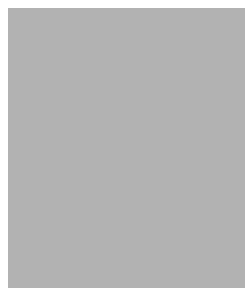
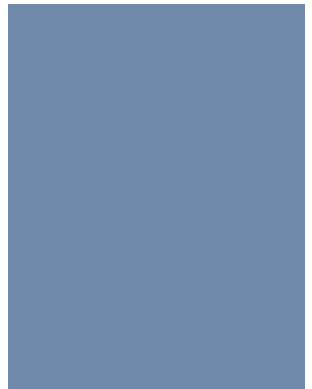
Research

- Ensure that Alberta taxpayers receive maximum value in the form of royalties and other compensation for commercialized patents and other intellectual property stemming from government-funded research grants to Alberta’s post-secondary institutions.
- Work with the federal government to expand federal and provincial tuition and related tax credits, and implement tax incentives that promote the creation and growth of post-secondary endowment funds for scholarships, research and infrastructure projects from individual and corporate donors.

Did you know?

- Statistics Canada reported that tuition and fees at Alberta universities are above the national average.
- Alberta has the lowest post-secondary participation rate in Canada, with only 17% of Albertans between 18-34 years old attending a post-secondary institution.





For more information, please visit: www.wildrosealliancecaucus.ca