



April 5th, 2024

Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1
Email: Premier@ontario.ca

Minister Jill Dunlop
Ministry of Colleges and Universities
5th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto ON M7A 1N3
Email: Jill.Dunlop@pc.ola.org

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Dunlop (Colleges and Universities),

I am writing on behalf of CFUW Ontario Council, a voluntary, self-funded, non-profit, non-partisan Ontario women's organization with 48 clubs and 4,500 members, all seeking to provide life-long learning, improve public policy and advocate for gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

CFUW Ontario Council acknowledges and thanks the Ontario Government for its recent announcement regarding the provision of nearly \$1.3 billion in funding over the next three years to Ontario public universities and colleges, as well as allowing post-secondary institutions to increase tuitions for out-of-province domestic students and Canadians living outside of Ontario (limited to only 5% for 2024/2025). These are important first steps towards correcting the chronic underfunding of this sector.

CFUW Ontario Council also commends the recent announcement of the strategic placement of 235,000 foreign students primarily into public Ontario universities and colleges. This move lessens the financial impact of fewer international students overall on our public institutions. Plus, priority is being given to programs in high demand areas, such as childcare for which CFUW Ontario Council has long been a strong advocate. Placing students in high priority career programs will further enlarge and strengthen our Province's skilled tradespersons' pool, action that is so desperately needed.

However, it is well documented that Ontario universities have the lowest per student funding in Canada. With increased inflation, and a freeze on both grants and tuition, our public universities and colleges have reached a breaking point. The \$1.3 billion in funding is simply not enough.

As a result, **CFUW Ontario Council requests** that the Ontario Government reconsider recommendations outlined in the *Ensuring Financial Sustainability for Ontario's Postsecondary Sector* report of the Ontario Government-appointed Blue Ribbon Panel, specifically the inclusion of \$2.5 billion into base funding over the next three years, a raise in grants by 10% and a raise in tuition rates across all domestic students by 5%.

CFUW Ontario Council would also ask that increased efficiencies be removed as a qualifier for funding as years of underfunding have likely exhausted the ways in which Ontario's universities and colleges can find increased efficiencies. In the above-mentioned report, the Blue Ribbon Panel declared that Ontario universities have managed costs well.

Lastly, **Ontario Council suggests** that the Ontario government stabilise funding over a period greater than the three years announced to allow Ontario's universities and colleges to plan appropriately for their futures and the futures of Ontario post secondary students.

Premier Ford and Minister Dunlop, our universities and colleges are educating the future contributors to Ontario's wealth and financial stability. We need them to design and run effective programs and provide stellar teaching so their graduates can secure Ontario's rightful place in Canada's economy, but they cannot do it with chronic underfunding. Ontario secondary students are applying to our universities and colleges in record numbers. Since these students represent Ontario's future, we need to support them with universities and colleges that can provide them with the quality of education they deserve. CFUW Ontario Council is firm in its requests and knows the Ontario Government will undertake to improve funding to support our most important resource – Ontario post-secondary students.

Sincerely,



Teresa Habs

President

CFUW Ontario Council (<https://cfuwontcouncil.org/>)

Email: president.cfuwontario@gmail.com

Cc: Peggy Sattler, Critic, Universities and Colleges, PSattler-QP@ndp.on.ca
Marit Stiles, Leader, Official Opposition, MStiles-QP@ndp.on.ca