



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Wednesday, September 10, 2014

Nova Scotia needs an open public dialogue on post-secondary education now

HALIFAX – Faculty, students, and staff are calling on the Nova Scotia Government to engage in an open, public discussion on the future of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia, in a letter sent to all three major party leaders today by the Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Education Coalition. The Coalition is comprised of the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers, the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union and the Dalhousie Faculty Association.

Despite polling results showing 85 per cent of Nova Scotians support reducing tuition fees, and 60 per cent would pay higher taxes to increase funding, last year's provincial budget increased tuition fees by three per cent for the fourth year in a row, and provincial funding was in real terms cut. Government must increase its funding of post-secondary education in the province.

"The public has shown consistent majority support for reducing tuition fees since the Coalition first started conducting public opinion polling in 2005," said Anna Dubinski, Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia. "Our government can no longer ignore the overwhelming number of Nova Scotians saying they simply can't afford to take on a mortgage-sized debt in order to pay for a post-secondary education."

The Coalition's latest poll, [*Building for the Future: Public Opinion on Post-Secondary Education in Nova Scotia*](#) (2014), also showed support for increased university accountability, both through increased financial transparency to the public, and increasing faculty, student, and staff representation on university governance bodies. When asked who they trusted most to make decisions about the future of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia, the public responded 70 per cent in favour of faculty, staff and students, and only 23 per cent in favour of administrators and governments.

"Nova Scotians understand that the faculty who teach, the staff who work, and the students who learn in our post-secondary institutions are the best positioned to govern them," said Marc Lamoureux, President of the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers. "The Nova Scotia government needs to engage faculty, students and staff when policies relating to fees, funding and governance are being set," he said. "Faculty, students and staff should be equal partners in these discussions."

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