

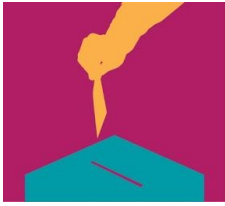
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ELECTION 2020 – POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Increasing accessibility to post-secondary education, regardless of one's ability to pay, is one of the most important investments governments can make for individuals and the public good. Post-secondary education is essential to building and training a strong workforce, conducting important research, stimulating the economy, and reducing inequalities. Universities also promote critical thinking and higher levels of participation in political and civic affairs. Significant funding increases are needed to maintain standards of high quality and accessibility to Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions.

The Sask. Party track record:

- Over the last five years, the Sask. Party government has seriously underfunded our province's universities through a combination of cuts, funding freezes and minimal funding increases below the rate of inflation. In the 2017 austerity budget, the Sask. Party government slashed funding to the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina by 5.6% and 5.5%, respectively.
- This underfunding of our province's universities has led to skyrocketing tuition fees. According to Statistics Canada, average tuition fees for an education or humanities degree program in Saskatchewan increased from \$4,479 in 2007-2008 to \$6,864 in 2019-2020 – an increase of 53%. International students at the U of R now pay three times the tuition that domestic students pay.
- In 2017, the Sask. Party government cut tax credits for tuition and education costs of post-secondary students, and reduced funding for scholarships from \$14.3 million to \$12.5 million. The government also cut student aid funding by more than \$6 million. The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for education was also eliminated January 1, 2018.
- Statistics Canada also reports that in 2019-20 full-time students in Saskatchewan paid the third highest undergraduate tuition fees among all Canadian provinces for most areas of study.
- Chronic underfunding of post-secondary education has led our universities to increase their reliance on corporate funding in the form of sponsorships and research grants, which can unduly impact research priorities.



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- While post-secondary technical institutes have fared somewhat better than our universities, the Sask. Party government announced in 2017 that it was scrapping the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), which successfully trained Indigenous and northern teachers for 40 years. It also ended the Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC) in the same year.

What Saskatchewan needs:

- A provincial government that shows its commitment to higher learning by restoring funding cuts to our province's universities and other post-secondary institutions.
- Significant and regular funding increases to our post-secondary institutions.
- An immediate tuition freeze for post-secondary students followed by a schedule of reductions, as well as a significant reduction in tuition rates for international students.
- Restoration of cuts to student aid, scholarships and tax credits.
- Re-establishment of NORTEP and NORPAC.

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