



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BUDGET 2026: Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC) Response

Like many Albertans, Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC) expected yesterday's budget release to have disciplined spending across the Board and was relieved to hear of no increases to income tax and no major program cuts. ASEC was pleased to see continued investments in Advanced Education including student aid, apprenticeship funding, province-wide capital investments, and targeted enrolment for high demand programs.

ASEC is glad to see an increase to operating grants accounting for increases in costs resulting from collective bargaining. This said, the percent own source revenue for institutions continues to climb, now forecasted at 60% for 2026-2027 compared to 58% last year and 47% in 2019-2020. Students have been united in strongly advocating for an increase in the percent government funding and are discouraged to see continued movement in the opposite direction.

"We're pleased to see that the Alberta Budget 2026 includes no cuts to post-secondary education. At the same time, students were unified in calling for an increase to operating grants, and we will continue to advocate for the stable, sustainable funding our institutions and learners need." - Joe Mooney, ASEC Chair

Student leaders offered [praise](#) to the recommendations of the Expert Panel Report that was published in October 2025, led by Dr. Jack Mintz. Budget 2026 states the recommendations, including a new funding model, remain to be under consideration. ASEC is hopeful for continued input and meaningful consultation as the Ministry works towards finalizing details related to any implementation of report suggestions and evolving student aid policies to ensure student impacts are thoroughly considered.

ASEC looks forward to continued collaboration with the Ministry of Advanced Education as the province considers next steps for the post-secondary system as a key driver of economic prosperity. ASEC added the University of Alberta Students' Union and University of Lethbridge Students' Union to its membership earlier this year, and is proud to now represent students from nearly two thirds of institutions receiving public funding in Alberta. Students remain committed to advocating for policies that improve affordability, accessibility, and educational quality across Alberta to fortify our province's economy for generations to come.

The Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC) represents more than 133,000 college, polytechnic, and university students from 16 member associations across the province of Alberta on Treaties 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 and all five territories of the Metis Nation within Alberta.

ASEC Members include the students unions/associations of the following post-secondary institutions: Alberta University of the Arts, Concordia University, Keyano College, Lakeland College, Lethbridge Polytechnic, Medicine Hat College, NAIT, Northern Lakes College, Northwestern Polytechnic, Norquest College, Olds College, Portage College, Red Deer Polytechnic, The Kings University, University of Alberta, and University of Lethbridge

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