

Rachel Notley. Fighting for you

CONFEDERATION OF ALBERTA FACULTY ASSOCIATIONS

Thank you for your questionnaire. We are pleased to provide these responses on behalf of Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP.

What is your party's vision for the Alberta PSE system? Will your party make post-secondary education a priority?

Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP understand that a healthy society is built upon a strong education system. Our post-secondary institutions not only create a skilled, modern work force that will contribute to Alberta's future economy but also create an involved and engaged citizenry that is crucial to a strong democracy. Post-secondary education is a priority for Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP. We are working to make post-secondary education more accessible for Albertans and are committed to providing the resources institutions need to offer a high quality education experience. We also respect the need for academics and post-secondary institutions to be independent voices in the public space.

Will your party commit to providing stable, predictable, multi-year funding that will allow PSE institutions to plan effectively for the future?

One of Rachel Notley's core commitments is to ensure stable, predictable funding for post-secondary institutions. During our first term, we increased funding to universities and colleges each year, making sure they are able to keep up with increasing demand. We commit to continue to increase funding for advanced education to keep our post secondary institutions strong and viable. We will communicate clearly what our funding plans are so universities and colleges can plan ahead.

Will your party commit to increasing funding for the Alberta universities going forward to keep pace with the rising costs of delivering world-class teaching and research? How does your party plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of these institutions?

If re-elected we commit to increasing funding for post-secondary institutions each year of the next mandate to help them maintain their world-class teaching and research.

What measures does your party propose to take to reduce barriers to access and to increase participation in PSE across the province - especially among groups that are currently underrepresented - while preserving the quality of the system?

To make post-secondary more affordable and accessible we have frozen tuition for five years, and have backstopped the institutions for this freeze. Going forward we have legislated a cap on how much tuition

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and associated fees can increase to no more than the rate of inflation. As a result of these decisions Alberta has gone from being one of the most expensive places to get post-secondary education to one of the most affordable. We are creating 3,000 high-tech related spaces to increase access to important tech programs. We are also committed to work with post-secondary institutions to modernize the existing funding formula with a goal to encouraging increased capacity so more Albertans can access post-secondary education.

Will your party commit to backfilling to the post-secondary institutions the loss of revenue due to the tuition freeze for 2019-20?

We are committed to backfilling post-secondary institutions to make up for lost revenue due to the fifth year of our tuition freeze.

Does your party support ongoing efforts to align publicly-funded research carried out at Alberta's universities more closely with 'provincial priorities' determined by the government? Should the provincial government be setting the research agenda in our universities?

Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP respect the independence of Alberta's colleges and universities and value the role of academics in pursuing diverse avenues of research. We do not believe the government should be setting the research agenda at universities and commit to continue to work with Alberta's research institutions to maximize the value of publicly funded research in the province.

Does your party recognize the important role of liberal arts education in building the kind of society, and the kind of future, Albertans want? What steps will your party take to ensure that liberal arts education at our post-secondary institutions is properly supported?

Rachel Notley and the Alberta NDP recognize that a vibrant, prosperous society requires a diversity of viewpoints and perspectives. We also know that a healthy democracy needs citizens who can think critically and engage thoughtfully. That is one of the strengths of liberal arts education as it builds a strong citizenry. We are committed to ensure that all aspects of post-secondary education remain healthy. Our commitment to stable funding for post-secondary institutions will ensure that those institutions can properly resource all of their programs, including liberal arts programs.

Does your party support recent changes to the PSLA that give the Minister of Advanced Education the authority to extend to community colleges the power to grant their own degrees, as a first step towards full university status? What is your party's vision for collaboration within Campus Alberta?

Recent changes to the PSLA authorize cabinet to name a community college as an undergraduate university. These amendments serve the goal of reducing the legal steps required to re-classify a community college.. We support these changes as they allow for a greater degree of responsiveness to changing

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situations. We are committed to increasing access to post-secondary education, and this can serve a role in increasing the number of Albertans who can earn a degree. As for Campus Alberta we support its role in encouraging collaboration and innovation. We believe that the role of Campus Alberta is one of encouragement and facilitation, working with institutions to find new ways they can work together for the benefit of Alberta students.

Will your party commit to the immediate resumption of allocations from the Access to the Future Fund to support innovation across the post-secondary system?

We remain strongly committed to innovation in the post-secondary sector and will continue to work with institutions to find new ways of delivering high quality education to Albertans. We are open to discussing the role of the Access to the Future Fund in our efforts to create innovation.

Will your party commit to amending the PSLA to remove the statutory power of post-secondary boards to designate and de-designate individual employees and groups of employees as academic staff members?

In our amendments to the PSLA, we extended to all individuals the right to appeal an academic designation to the Labour Relations Board. At this time we are interested in observing how well this new process works at resolving disputes regarding designations. In the future we will evaluate the efficacy of this process and will make adjustments if necessary.