



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Ontario Students Provide Blueprint to Improve Our Post-secondary Education System**

**TORONTO, ON** - College and university students from across the province have united to tell the provincial government that investing in post-secondary education is the fundamental building block of a prosperous and just society. Highlighting Education, a joint submission by the College Student Alliance (CSA) and the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) to the provincial government, provides a clear blueprint for improving the post-secondary education system in Ontario.

Highlighting Education addresses the accessibility, affordability and quality of Ontario's post-secondary system. The recommendations provided in the report are imperative to a PSE system that will enable Ontario to become a leader in learning.

"A better educated, highly-skilled workforce is essential to the health of Ontario's economy," said Tyler Charlebois, Director of Advocacy for the College Student Alliance. "Just as important, however, is ensuring that every willing and qualified student is able to attend college or university without being prevented from doing so due to financial barriers."

Ontario's colleges and universities continue to fall behind the national average in terms of funding. The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) is still not adequately meeting the financial challenges faced by students. These two factors are crippling the ability of our system to fulfill its commitment to Ontarians. In recognition of these challenges, the CSA and OUSA have developed the following solutions:

- The Ontario government creates an OSAP Task Force mandated to undertake a holistic review of the student financial assistance system in Ontario
- OSAP cost assessment is changed to better reflect the cost of post-secondary education in our province
- Interest rates on student loans be reduced
- Funding for post-secondary institutions be increased to at least the national average
- The Ontario government undertake a review of the current tuition framework

"University and college students recognize that Ontario's post-secondary system has reached a critical juncture," said David Simmonds, President of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance. "If this government fails to invest in post-secondary education, they are failing to invest in Ontario."

OUSA represents the interests of over 130,000 professional and undergraduate, full- and part-time university students at seven institutions across the province and the CSA currently represents 16 colleges and 23 student associations with over 109,000 full-time student members throughout the province.

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