
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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April 9, 2021

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Emergency funding boost supports student success in Metro Vancouver

VANCOUVER – Students attending post-secondary institutions in Metro Vancouver have access to emergency assistance funding to help them cope with financial pressures caused by COVID-19.

“This emergency financial assistance provides an important safety net for students to ensure they have the funds to focus on continuing their education,” said Anne Kang, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Training. “We know that pursuing post-secondary education can be challenging and stressful at any time, and particularly during a pandemic. That’s why we are taking steps to make sure students facing unexpected circumstances can access financial help.”

Since March 2020, post-secondary institutions in Metro Vancouver have received a combined total of \$2,793,500 to assist students, including Indigenous students, who are experiencing an unexpected financial emergency that may affect their ability to complete their studies and handle expenses, especially those related to COVID-19:

- British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) - \$407,500
- Capilano University - \$242,000
- Douglas College - \$286,000
- Emily Carr University of Art and Design - \$240,500
- Justice Institute of British Columbia - \$307,000
- Native Education College - \$55,000
- Simon Fraser University - \$395,000
- University of British Columbia (including UBC Okanagan) - \$525,500
- Vancouver Community College - \$335,000

The non-repayable emergency assistance can be used to help with a broad range of costs, including living expenses, food, travel, portable computers and other supports for students who are returning to campuses for 2021-22. This emergency funding is part of \$9 million invested since March 2020 to help B.C. post-secondary students.

Students who attend one of B.C.’s 25 public post-secondary institutions, as well as the Native Education College and students enrolled in post-secondary programs at Indigenous institutes, may apply to access these funds by contacting their school’s financial aid office or Indigenous student service centre.

Quotes:

Janet Routledge, MLA for Burnaby North –

“Students at BCIT here in Burnaby are facing enough challenges right now, and financial

emergencies shouldn't get in the way of their education or their goals. This fund will help students to handle unexpected expenses so they can stay focused on learning."

Bowinn Ma, MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale –

"Post-secondary students in B.C. have managed to adapt quickly to the changing environment over the last year. This emergency financial assistance will help students continue with their studies and cover some of the unexpected costs they may have had."

Brenda Bailey, MLA for Vancouver-False Creek –

"COVID-19 has turned all of our lives upside down, and this is especially true for many post-secondary students who have had to juggle their studies and make ends meet in light of job losses or a reduction in income. We know that students are under many pressures and this emergency, non-repayable funding will be there to help with unexpected costs that can prevent them from focusing on their studies and pursuing their ambitions."

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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Post-secondary student emergency assistance funding in B.C.

- Since March 2020, government has provided \$9 million to assist students throughout B.C. who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - \$1.5 million in 2020 and \$1 million in 2021 for the Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund, including \$150,000 to assist post-secondary students at Indigenous institutes across B.C.
 - \$3.5 million in 2020 and \$3 million in 2021 for the Student Emergency Assistance Fund
- This funding builds on existing emergency funding that many post-secondary institutions already provide to students facing financial hardships.
- Indigenous post-secondary institutes throughout B.C. have also received \$150,000 to assist students facing financial hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- \$3.6 million has been provided to the Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund since 2017 and has been accessed by more than 4,000 Indigenous students.
- Emergency funding for Indigenous students supports the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples articles 21.1 and 21.2 and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action number 23.i.
- \$6.5 million in extra pandemic support has been provided for the Student Emergency Assistance Fund at public post-secondary institutions. In 2020, that funding supported approximately 5,400 B.C. domestic students.
- In the years leading up to 2020-21, the annual Student Society Emergency Assistance Fund was provided \$70,000, supporting 480 students each year on average across participating public post-secondary institutions.

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