



August 11, 2023
Our Ref. 130152

Carolyn Broady
President
British Columbia School Trustees Association

Email Address: cbroady@bcsta.org

Dear Carolyn Broady:

Thank you for your letter of July 12, 2023, sent to the Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, regarding the inclusion of certified teachers to the BC Loan Forgiveness Program. I am responding on behalf of Minister Robinson.

Government is aware of the financial pressures students, including teachers, experience in pursuing their educational goals. It is Government's goal to ensure that British Columbia has an accessible, high-quality post-secondary education system that is affordable and sustainable over the long term.

The [BC Loan Forgiveness Program](#) is designed to provide a financial incentive to graduates in specific occupations to seek employment opportunities in underserved locations where there is an identified shortage in British Columbia. Currently, the majority of the identified occupations eligible for the BC Loan Forgiveness Program are in health care or health care-related fields, and I note the BC School Trustees Associations resolution to expand the BC Loan Forgiveness Program to all certified teachers working with children in publicly funded facilities.

In addition to the BC Loan Forgiveness Program, Government has introduced a number of measures to help students fund their education and reduce the amount of repayable loans. This includes the elimination of interest on all existing and future British Columbia Student Loans in February 2019. This change has benefitted over 200,000 student loan borrowers and provided approximately \$40 million in interest relief to date.

In September 2020, the new [BC Access Grant](#) was launched for students attending British Columbia's 25 public post-secondary institutions. The grant provides up to \$4,000 per year to help low-and middle-income students with the up-front costs of post-secondary studies leading to a certificate, diploma or degree.

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Budget 2023 doubled the provincial weekly student loan limits to address post-secondary education affordability and access challenges facing students in today's economic landscape.

As part of their [2023 Budget announcement](#), the Government of Canada has also eliminated interest on Canada Student loans effective April 1, 2023, to further support graduates with the cost of their education.

Lastly, if a student has completed their studies and finds they are having difficulty in repayment, there are a variety of programs to help manage student loan debt. One of these programs is the [Canada-British Columbia Repayment Assistance Plan](#), which helps graduates manage their student loan payments by allowing borrowers to pay back what they can reasonably afford. Recent enhancements to program eligibility increased the income threshold for when a student loan payment is not required from \$25,000 per year to \$40,000 per year for a single person, and higher depending on your family size, and lowered the maximum payment required from 20% to 10% of family income.

I would be happy to have a follow-up conversation with you on the BC Loan Forgiveness Program or any of the other StudentAid BC programs.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Bobbi Plecas

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