



MEDIA RELEASE
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ABCS Welcomes Decision to Restore Basic Education Funding

VICTORIA, BC – The Alliance of BC Students (ABCS) commends the BC NDP’s announcement on Tuesday morning to eliminate tuition fees for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English language learning. Reversing a decision made by the previous government in 2015 to charge up to \$1600 per semester for adult learners to study means that thousands more British Columbians will be able to access programs meant to enhance education and employment potential.

This is an important step in making education more accessible for all British Columbians. **“In 2015 the ABCS lobbied the BC Government to provide ABE and English language learning free of charge to students.”** stated ABCS Chairperson Caitlin McCutchen, **“Yesterday’s announcement is a win for BC students and shows that the BC NDP are committed to ensuring K-12 education remains a basic and accessible right for British Columbians”.**

The opportunity that ABE provides to return and complete high school courses later in life is particularly valuable for marginalized groups and individuals. Traditionally marginalized groups participate disproportionately in ABE, with 64% of participants being women, 12% Indigenous people, and 72% of ABE students below the poverty line. Charging tuition for basic education resulted in a 35% drop in enrollment, and restoring free basic education will allow the most marginalized to participate in our education system.

Public education from K-12 is provided across the country, and providing ABE and English language learning tuition free for British Columbians will remove barriers that many have faced in accessing this basic right. During yesterday’s announcement Premier John Horgan stated that **“education makes us all better.”** The ABCS agrees and will continue to work to make education at all levels accessible to all British Columbians.

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The Alliance of BC Students is a non-partisan society of 5 student societies representing over 60,000 students from across the province that exists to advocate on issues that affect post-secondary students in British Columbia.