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CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS  
FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES ÉTUDIANT-E-S

January 9, 2012

Dear Sisters and Brothers

**RE: Student Day of Action - February 1, 2012**

On February 1st, students on campuses and in communities throughout the country will be mobilizing for a National Day of Action to reduce tuition fees, drop student debt and increase funding for public, post-secondary education.

Students in Canada are facing historic challenges. Tuition fees increased four-fold between 1990 and 2010, forcing students to take on unprecedented levels of student debt and preventing thousands of youth from pursuing post-secondary education. Young Canadians are not only entering the labour market at some of the highest unemployment levels in 30 years, but also with levels of debt higher than ever before.

Education in Canada is a public service that should be publicly funded. When governments allow the public education system to be underfunded, as is becoming the case today, they are preventing an entire generation of Canadians of having a fair chance at a decent living. By standing in solidarity with students, we can help stop the attacks on our public services and protect accessible post-secondary education.

We have included in this letter some more information on the Education is a Right campaign. In addition, visit [www.educationisaright.ca](http://www.educationisaright.ca) to find out what is happening in your community.

On February 1, we encourage you to take part in the fight for public post-secondary education in Canada by supporting the National Day of Action.

In Solidarity,



Denis Lemelin  
National President  
Canadian Union of Postal Workers

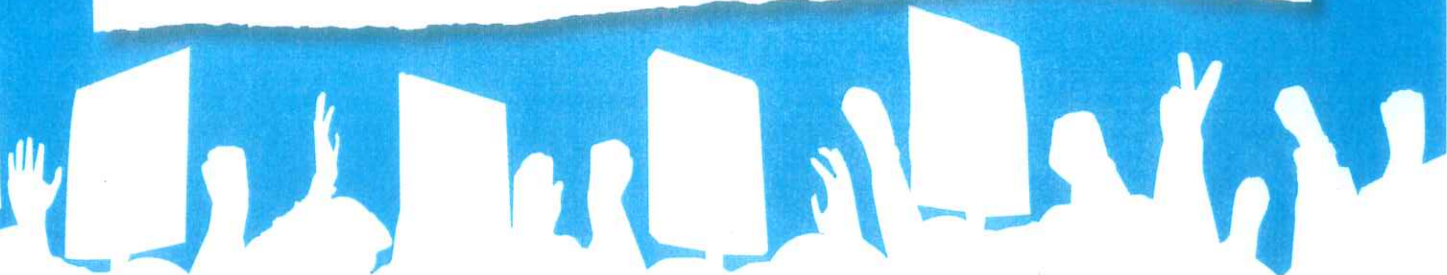


Roxanne Dubois  
National Chairperson  
Canadian Federation of Students

**EDUCATION**

**IS A RIGHT**

[www.educationisaright.ca](http://www.educationisaright.ca)



# WHY POSTAL WORKERS SUPPORT STUDENTS

On February 1st, the Canadian Federation of Students will be holding rallies and demonstrations in communities across Canada demanding that tuition fees be reduced and education be properly funded. The fight for public education in Canada is part of a global effort to maintain education as a basic right for all. Around the world, governments are tabling austerity budgets that contain massive cuts to post-secondary education and other public services.

In country after country, ordinary people are refusing to allow a crisis caused by the deregulation of international markets and corporate greed to threaten the public good. In many cases, students are the ones leading this struggle. The Education is a Right campaign is the manifestation of students' collective vision for a well-funded, high-quality, public post-secondary education system that builds a fair, equitable society.

## STUDENTS AND WORKERS UNITED!

Education in Canada is a public service that should be publicly funded. When governments allow the public education system to be underfunded, as is becoming the case today, they are preventing an entire generation of Canadians from having a fair chance at a decent living. By standing in solidarity with students, we can help stop the attacks on our public services and protect accessible post-secondary education

REDUCE  
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FEES

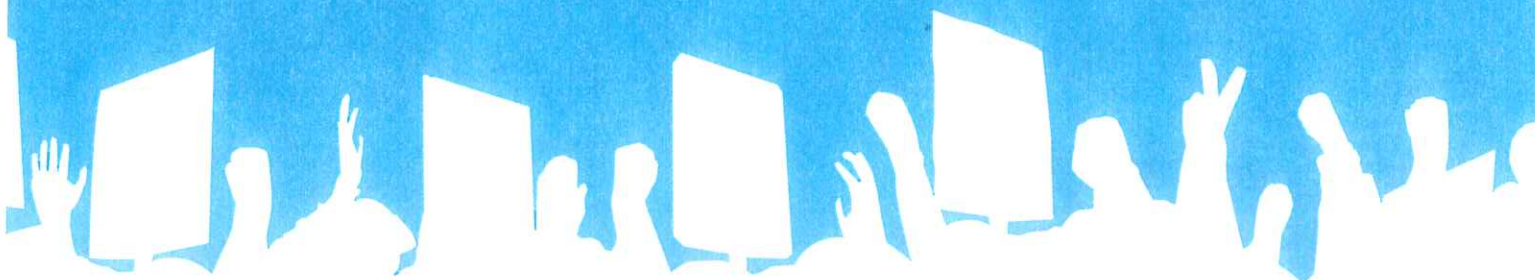
DROP  
STUDENT  
DEBT

INCREASE  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING

## FOUR WAYS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS:

1. Place an Education is a Right poster in your office, window at home, or on community billboards.
2. Send letters to your Member of Parliament, to the newspaper, online expressing support for the demands of the Education is a Right campaign.
3. Propose to your local or community group to officially endorse the Education is a Right campaign.
4. Join students on February 1st for the national student day of action in your community.

Visit [www.educationisaright.ca](http://www.educationisaright.ca) for sample letters, motions of endorsements and a list of events by region.



# THE FACTS ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

## Tuition Fees

In the past thirty years, tuition fees in Canada have grown to become the largest expense for most university and college students. Dramatic tuition fee increases during the same period were the direct result of cuts to public funding for post-secondary education by the federal and provincial governments. Universities and colleges have chosen to compensate for this lack of funding by increasing tuition fees.

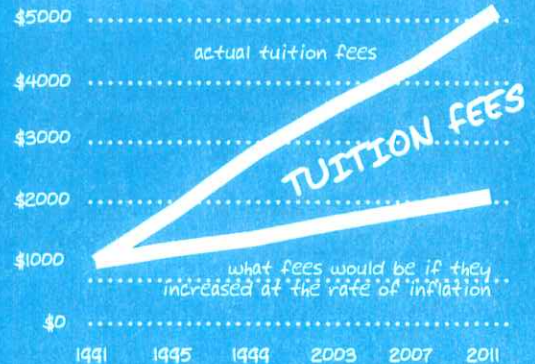
## Student Debt

As tuition fees continue to increase in most parts of the country, students are more dependent on loans to afford post-secondary education. Today, students graduate with over \$25,000 of education-related debt and by January, 2013, students will owe the federal government over \$15 billion.

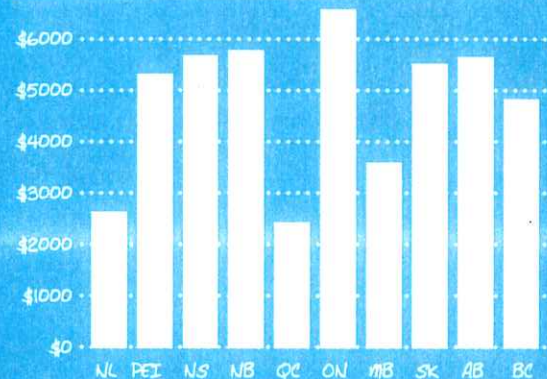
## Education Funding

Public funding currently accounts for 57% of university and college operating funds, down from 81% just twenty years ago. During the same period tuition fees have grown from 14% of operating funding to over 35%. This constitutes a rapid re-orientation of Canada's post-secondary education system away from a publicly funded model and towards a privatised user fee system. Rapidly increasing tuition fees have caused post-secondary education to become unaffordable for many low- and middle-income Canadians.

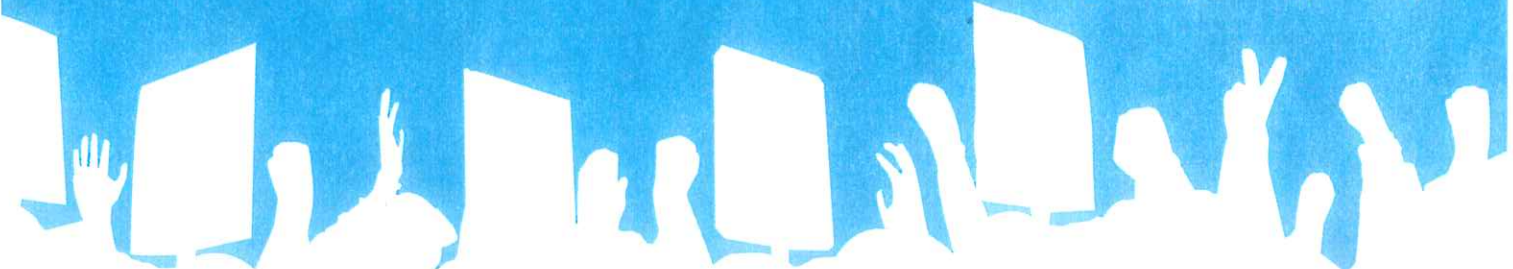
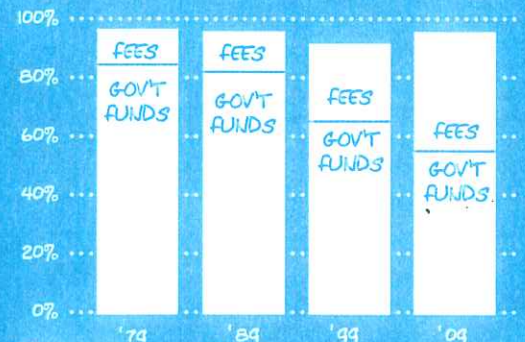
## RECORD HIGH TUITION FEES



## UNEQUAL ACCESS: AVERAGE TUITION FEES



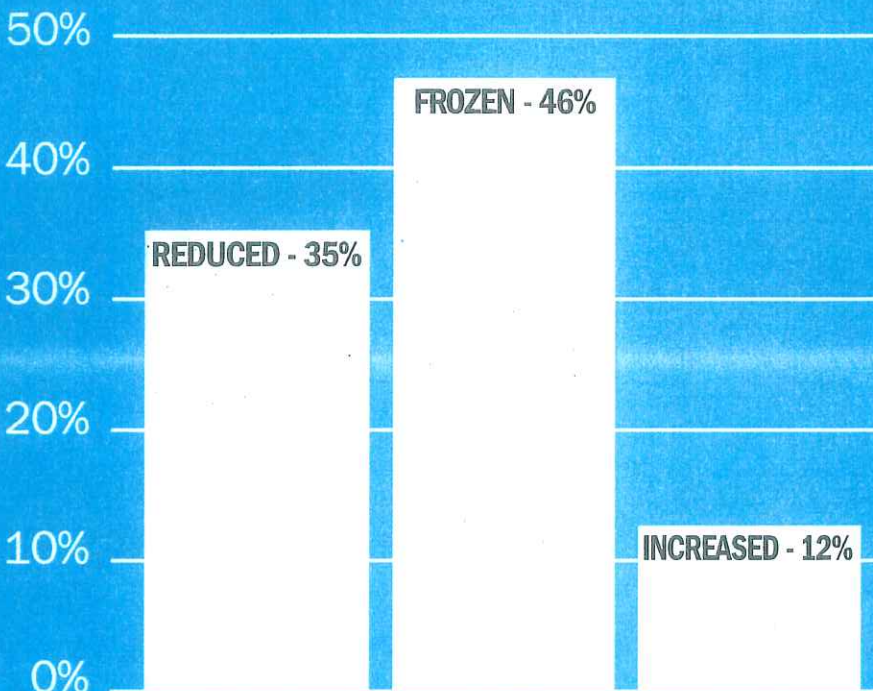
## PUBLIC FUNDING VS. TUITION FEES



# CANADIANS SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION

Affordable post-secondary education is a key issue for Canadians. In a recent poll conducted by Harris/Decima for the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the vast majority of Canadians support reducing or freezing tuition fees.

## SHOULD TUITION FEES BE INCREASED, FROZEN, OR REDUCED?



**81%**

want tuition fees to be either reduced or frozen.

**86%**

think that governments should work to ensure that all Canadian universities are high quality and affordable. Only nine percent believe that some Canadian universities should charge higher fees to reach elite status.

**70%**

want funding for university research to be allocated equally between different disciplines.

**67%**

believe that there are many people in their province who are qualified to go to university or college but don't have the opportunity to do so because university and college education is too expensive.

Results are taken from a Harris/Decima random telephone survey of 2,000 adult Canadians conducted between November 17 and November 22. The poll was commissioned by the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Federation of Students. National results are considered accurate within 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.