



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

25 March 2008—The Ontario Student Trustees' Association applauds the Ontario government for a progressive focus on education in this year's budget.

"This budget is a victory for the students of Ontario. The government has affirmed its commitment to an equitable, engaging and eco-friendly education. Raising student achievement remains at the core of funding announcements and we can be excited about the future of education in this province. New funding will serve to ensure schools provide safe and supportive communities of learning. Now the focus must be ensuring that funding allocations are maximised," said association president Andrew Pawluch.

The association is pleased to see new money for nutritional programmes, and artistic and athletic education. The innovative "Skills to Jobs" action plan will make a direct difference in the Ontario economy by fuelling successful training of the skilled trades.

And, notes Pawluch, "by including investments in both arts and skilled trades, the government ensures students receive a well-rounded education".

Student trustees are also very happy to learn that the new and necessary money for school repairs comes with criterion to create green schools. "Our schools taking efforts to combat the menace of climate change today is a way to frame our futures in a positive way: we need the centres of our education to support students' futures both through learning itself and through responsible stewardship of the planet," says OSTA communications director Jonathan Scott.

"While we are overall very pleased with the direction and contents of this intelligent budget, if Canada wants to experience greater economic growth we must train people capable of operating at an international level: education in another language is crucial to creating relations with other countries. Canada's must be a part of the global village, and it's hard to do so affectively if the majority of Ontarians only know one language," said Pawluch.

Pointing out the new money for French instruction and for English-as-a-Second-Language programmes, the association suggests that international language courses should also be expanded to allow Ontario to compete at an international level; language is a key part of the world economy and Ontario is uniquely placed to harness its multicultural demographics through linguistic instruction.

Pawluch summarised the association's position by saying, "The results seen for student success over the few years are real and this budget will only continue the positive trend. The focus on education as a vehicle for our province's future is the best way to create a prosperous economy".

As the largest student stakeholder in Ontario's education system, OSTA-AECO represents the 1.9 million students in the four publicly funded school sectors. The association promotes the unity without conformity of all affiliated student trustees in order to advance the student vision. Student trustees are youth representatives elected by their peers to bring the student voice to school board tables, improving the quality of education in schools across the province.

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