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(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 19 November 2008**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Mercredi 19 novembre 2008**

**Standing Committee on  
Estimates**

Ministry of Training,  
Colleges and Universities

**Comité permanent des  
budgets des dépenses**

Ministère de la Formation et des  
Collèges et Universités

Chair: Tim Hudak  
Clerk: Sylwia Przedziecki

Président : Tim Hudak  
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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DES BUDGETS DES DÉPENSES

Wednesday 19 November 2008

Mercredi 19 novembre 2008

*The committee met at 1603 in committee room 1.*

### MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Good afternoon, members of the committee, Minister and Deputy Minister. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Estimates. Today we are beginning the consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for a total of five hours.

The ministry is required to monitor the proceedings for any questions or issues that the ministry undertakes to respond to at a later time. Deputy, hopefully you've had a chance to identify someone within the staff who can liaise with Mr. Johnston here if there are questions that will need a follow-up. You can always work together after the meetings to ensure that we've recorded those questions accurately. Are there any questions before we start the proceedings?

Seeing none, I will now call vote 3001. As folks know, that means we'll start with a statement by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities for up to 30 minutes to discuss his ministry. That will be followed by 30 minutes to the official opposition and then 30 minutes to the third party. We then go back to the minister for an up to 30-minute reply to the issues that the critics have raised. After that, the committee will then hit 20-minute rotations, beginning with the official opposition. Is that all clear? Mr. Marchese, you are a rookie at this—is that right?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** We're good.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Minister, the floor is yours, sir. You have 30 minutes for opening comments.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's a pleasure to be here. Some of you may know I'm an alumnus of the estimates committee, having sat on the committee for two years. I have to confess there was the odd time, especially in the summer, when we used to sit for eight hours in a row, I wondered what it would be like to actually be a witness. So, I'm going to find that out today.

I'm very pleased to be here today to talk about our 2008-09 estimates, Ontario's economy and the role the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities plays in it. First, I'd like to make mention of some senior ministry officials who are here today who may be called on from time to time to provide some technical background infor-

mation. Beside me is the acting Deputy Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Marie-Lison Fougère. We also have Kevin French, the assistant deputy minister of the employment and training division; David McIntosh, senior manager, corporate resource planning and analysis; Barry McCartan, director, post-secondary finance and information management branch; and Richard Jackson, director of the student support branch and the superintendent of private career colleges. I want to begin by acknowledging the hard work, leadership and commitment to education and training this team and all our ministry staff demonstrate every day.

I think you'd agree that if Ontario is to succeed in today's increasingly challenging and competitive global economy, we need every Ontarian to be at their best. That's why our government is so committed to investing in the skills and knowledge of our people.

These are not times to be complacent. Our government has stepped forward with a five-point plan for Ontario's economy. We are reducing the cost of doing business by cutting taxes and keeping Ontario among the most competitive tax jurisdictions in North America. We're making a \$60-billion commitment over 10 years to infrastructure, including our colleges and universities that are experiencing unprecedented growth. We're partnering with businesses in key sectors to help keep them competitive and growing into the future. This includes partnering with the vital auto sector, the cornerstone of our manufacturing sector, to build the new Automotive Centre of Excellence in Oshawa and a new Centre for Engineering Innovation in Windsor, helping to ensure new investments come to Ontario. We're focusing on innovation, recognizing that it's the ingenuity of our people that will ensure our future success. We know that if we can provide the innovative goods and services the world needs, then the world will beat a path to our door. Fifth, and finally, we're investing in our people. This is what I'm here as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to focus on today.

We live in a time of economic change, and Ontario's one competitive advantage is having a highly skilled, highly trained workforce that can compete for the best jobs in the world. On the one hand, we have an economy that's shedding jobs. On the other hand, we have many jobs that go wanting every year for a lack of skilled workers. More than at any time before, Ontario needs to address training and education at every level, from making sure new Canadians have access to literacy and

basic skills, to supporting college training and increasing apprenticeships, to supporting PhD work at the university level. The McGuinty government has a vision and a plan to ensure that every Ontarian is able to get the training and education they need to fully participate in our economy and so Ontario can continue to attract the jobs and investments that will keep our province and our people moving forward.

By supporting our colleges and universities and our skilled trades sector through a range of Employment Ontario programs, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is taking a very strategic approach to education and training. I'll share with you some details on our various programs and initiatives.

First, training: The skilled trades sector is a critical part of Ontario's economic well-being, especially in these trying times. The entire province relies on a strong skilled trades sector, from the individual consumer to industry and government. This government, for example, has announced its intention to commit some \$60 billion to infrastructure projects over the next number of years. That's on top of the \$30-billion ReNew Ontario program that's just wrapping up. We need skilled workers to realize those projects. Our government has been working hard to enhance Ontario's apprenticeship system. We have increased new annual apprenticeship registration by 52% since 2003 and we're on track to increase that by another 25% this term, to 32,500 by 2011-12. In fact, just over the summer, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities announced it will fund the creation of 4,484 new apprenticeship and skills training spaces per year, along with about 8,700 new full-time student spaces, with a \$190-million investment in college capital projects.

Despite our successes, we know we need to do a better job to make sure Ontario has enough skilled workers to support our economy going forward.

#### 1610

Entry-level requirements for careers continue to rise, calling for higher levels of training and education. Seventy per cent of all new jobs demand some form of post-secondary education or training, yet only about half of registered apprentices are completing their training. We need to understand the challenges related to completion rates and fix them. We also need to do a better job of attracting aboriginal people, women and people with disabilities to the trades. We need to have a strong, modern skilled-trades system in place to help attract more people. We're working to accomplish all those things by investing in Employment Ontario, expanding apprenticeship programs and creating a new college of trades.

In terms of Employment Ontario, our government invests over a billion dollars annually in this program. It offers labour market and training information and referral services in person, online and by phone in 25 languages. It serves more than 900,000 clients each year in communities across the province. Whether you need to find a job or you want to hire someone, Employment Ontario can help.

Employment Ontario responds quickly to the needs of local communities and delivers services to Ontarians when, where and how they need them. A good example is when a large layoff occurs. Within an hour of learning of a large layoff, my ministry's rapid re-employment and training service team is working to connect local workers with Employment Ontario services.

We also set up action centres that can offer counseling, job search and training help, as well as assistance for those who want to go back to school. We've helped more than 50,000 people at more than 80 action centres across Ontario.

The ministry is working to integrate federal programs and services following the 2007 labour market development agreement. The LMDA transferred a number of federal programs to the province and was the catalyst for transforming Employment Ontario into a more integrated, client-focused organization. We are enhancing Employment Ontario to be more responsive to the needs of individuals and more flexible in meeting local community needs.

The changes we are implementing focus on three goals for our clients: achieving one-stop access for workers and employers, delivering services in the community where and when they are needed, and ensuring service excellence and customer satisfaction. These changes will ensure that Ontarians receive relevant skills training and employment/career planning services in as seamless a manner as possible. Ontario will continue to integrate provincial and federal services, set clear performance measures and add new features, such as local labour market planning.

For Employment Ontario to move towards achieving its service promises, we intend to introduce a new employment service model in April 2009. This new model comprises a variety of services that target the specific stages of career planning, job search and job retention. We will continue to communicate with our service partners to obtain their feedback and advice as we transform employment services to better serve Ontarians.

Job Connect is another part of Employment Ontario. It links Ontarians, including internationally trained newcomers, to employment and training opportunities. Job Connect is delivered through colleges and non-profit agencies at 132 locations in more than 80 communities across the province. Ontarians can use Job Connect to find information on careers, occupations and the local labour market. They can also get help with their job searches, career planning and on-the-job training.

Our government has helped Job Connect to grow. The expansion includes three new sites focused on helping newcomers in the greater Toronto area, as well as additional services and resources for Ontarians across the province.

In the most recent budget, we introduced Ontario's skills to jobs action plan, which relates to the work we're doing on the training side. This plan includes a new \$1.5-billion, three-year investment which, combined with the campus renewal capital investment included in last fall's

economic outlook and fiscal review, means the government is investing \$2 billion in the skills to jobs action plan. This plan will help our economy address the need for skilled workers and will help Ontarians train for new, well-paying career opportunities.

Among the aspects of the skills to jobs action plan was \$560 million over three years for skills training. This included \$355 million for a new, unique program called Second Career.

Second Career provides up to \$28,000 per person to help people who have lost their job go back to college and train for a new career in a growing sector in their community. Since Second Career was launched in June, about 1,500 people have come forward to participate. This month, the eligibility guidelines for Second Career were expanded so we could help even more people. The program is now open to workers who were laid off as far back as January 1, 2005. Laid-off workers who have taken an interim job to make ends meet can now apply, as well. Second Career also now offers short-term training of less than six months for laid-off workers who are not eligible for employment insurance, and we're prepared to consider additional financial assistance on an individual basis to cover such expenses as academic upgrading, living away from home while taking training, and dependant care. A cornerstone of the skills to jobs action plan, Second Career will continue to help address the retraining needs of workers affected by the downturn in the economy.

I'd now like to move to the area of apprenticeships.

Ontario's apprenticeship system is the largest in Canada. There are over 150 trades in this province, covering the construction, industrial manufacturing, motive power, and service sectors. Apprenticeship programs provide a vital way of training workers on the job. Last year, 26,000 Ontarians registered as apprentices. That's a 52% increase compared to six years ago, when just over 17,000 Ontarians registered. We're committed to increasing that number to 32,500 by 2012.

Today, about 110,000 apprentices are learning a trade, nearly 50,000 more than six years ago, and more than 34,000 employers are involved in training those apprentices. Each year, more than 10,000 apprentices receive their certificates of qualification and qualify as journeypersons.

The McGuinty government has taken several steps to increase access to skilled trades and address looming skills shortages through apprenticeship training. We are investing \$75 million over three years to expand the apprenticeship system and increase registration and completion rates. We are expanding the co-op diploma apprenticeship program, with an investment of \$13 million this year. We are supporting pre-apprenticeship programs with the approval of new proposals this month. We are increasing the Ontario youth apprenticeship program participation, with an additional \$2 million being provided to school boards. We are enhancing the apprenticeship per diem with a 2% increase, effective April 1, 2008. We are increasing support for apprentices with

disabilities, providing up to \$1.8 million to colleges to accommodate apprentices with disabilities.

Through our Ontario skills training enhancement program, or OSTEP, and the apprenticeship enhancement fund, we are providing \$55 million over three years to colleges and training centres for infrastructure, equipment modernization, and facilities updating, to create greater training and skills upgrading capacity in Ontario.

Under the apprenticeship enhancement fund, we are investing \$40 million over three years for state-of-the-art equipment for colleges to train apprentices: \$10 million this year, and \$15 million in each of years two and three.

For the Ontario skills training enhancement program, we are investing \$15 million over three years to help training centres modernize equipment, build and update facilities, and train more workers. The new Ontario skills training enhancement program will modernize equipment and expand training centres so our people can train for tomorrow's high-value jobs. Our government is allocating \$15 million over three years for this new cost-sharing program, with training centres investing up to 50% of the related expense.

Our government has made additional investments in the apprenticeship system.

We've created the apprenticeship training tax credit to encourage employers to hire apprentices and extended it to January 1, 2012. First introduced in the 2004 Ontario budget, this tax credit offers employers up to \$5,000 per year, per apprentice, over a three-year apprenticeship program. This has been extended to eligible apprenticeships that begin before January 1, 2012.

#### **1620**

We are supporting out-of-school youth by expanding academic upgrading options and introducing an apprenticeship scholarship and an employer signing bonus. The 2008 budget announced the three-year, \$970-million building places to learn program. As part of that initiative, we are expanding training centres and training capacity. One of our key target groups is young people still in high school, and our government has put a number of initiatives in place to keep young people in school and promote the skilled trades as a career path.

We also have programs that target people who didn't finish high school and we've expanded the range of academic upgrading options available to them through initiatives like the Ontario youth apprenticeship program, or OYAP. This school-to-work transition program encourages high school students to stay in school while learning a skilled trade. It allows full-time students in grades 11 and 12 to earn co-operative education credits through work placements in skilled trades. In 2008-09, we are investing \$10.25 million in OYAP, funding that will give more than 25,000 young people the opportunity to apprentice in a skilled trade.

We also offer the pre-apprenticeship training program, which helps potential entrants to the apprenticeship system develop their job skills and trade readiness so that they will be prepared to find work as apprentices. We set up this program to provide support to youth, aboriginal

peoples, women and other under-represented groups, offering them the opportunity to upgrade trade-related skills so they can be eligible for an apprenticeship.

Those who left high school before graduating can also take part in the apprenticeship scholarship and employer signing bonus program. This offers participants \$1,000 to return, complete upgrading courses and register as apprentices. It also provides a \$2,000 signing bonus to employers who hire and train these people.

Quickly growing in popularity is the co-op diploma apprenticeship program, which offers young people the opportunity to complete a college diploma and, at the same time, register as an apprentice and work toward the provincial certificate of qualification. The program also includes business and entrepreneurship courses to help participants prepare to start their own businesses. When the co-op diploma program launched in 2004, six colleges delivered five programs to 200 participants. New programs and participant spaces have been added each year. For the current fiscal year, \$10 million was approved for 25 projects representing approximately 770 new student spaces. We expanded the number of programs as well through an additional \$3-million investment that means 210 new participants will be able to work toward a college diploma and a trades certificate at the same time. This program has been such a success that it is expanding every year. Next year, the government will increase its annual investment to more than \$16 million, which will add almost 1,250 new spaces for students.

One of our government's newest initiatives to support and grow the skilled trades is the creation of a new governance body for the sector, the Ontario College of Trades. We intend to introduce legislation in the spring which, if passed, will establish the College of Trades. The college was a key recommendation to arise from the compulsory certification review initiated a year ago in May. Tim Armstrong, a noted labour expert, was appointed to take a look at some of the issues we understood were holding back the skilled trades sector. Kevin Whitaker, chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, is talking to the sector right now and helping us to determine how the college should be structured, how it should be governed and what its various roles might be. One of the important responsibilities we would like to see the college take on is promoting the trades and helping to make sure Ontario has an adequate supply of skilled workers going forward.

Training Ontarians for the future is a critical aspect for our plans for Ontario's economic future. Our training and apprenticeship plans that I have discussed are what our government believes will help to make the difference for our province responding to the current global economic challenges, but also to prepare Ontario for the future global economy once this current crisis passes. One of the best ways we can do that is by preparing our students for the knowledge-based economy of the future. If Ontario is to succeed in this new global economy, we must ensure our students can succeed. Today, we are not

just competing with our immediate neighbours but with new competitors in India, China, Europe, South America and indeed everywhere on the planet.

We are helping to ensure our students' success through significant investments in our colleges and universities. Our \$6.2-billion Reaching Higher plan, the largest government investment in post-secondary education in more than 40 years, helped lay the foundation for an overall renewal of these vital institutions. Under Reaching Higher, we invested in capital projects, we increased operating funding and we provided significant increases in financial support for students.

As of 2008-09, operating grants to colleges and universities have increased by \$1.5 billion, or by 57%, since 2002, providing more help to our post-secondary institutions so they can provide the quality education experience our students need and expect.

Sometimes investing in students means investing in bricks and mortar. Through our skills to jobs action plan, the McGuinty government is providing an additional \$970 million to build places where students learn. This includes a \$289.35-million investment in 22 new capital projects at universities across Ontario, including \$25 million for a new School of International Studies at the University of Toronto. These investments will help Ontario's universities meet growing enrolment and improve the learning environment on their campuses to ensure students get the best education experience possible.

To ensure colleges can keep pace with the growing demand and need for training and apprenticeship programs, we have invested \$190 million for skills training to expand and build new facilities at 12 Ontario colleges. We've also provided our colleges with \$60 million over three years, through the college equipment renewal fund, to purchase new equipment for students to train on, so that when they enter the workforce they will be fully trained on the modern equipment used in workplaces across Ontario rather than outdated equipment no longer used in the real world.

Two hundred million dollars has been invested through a new campus renewal program for all our colleges and universities to undertake energy efficiency projects and campus safety and security initiatives, as well as to renew existing infrastructure on their campuses. An additional \$200 million has been invested in all Ontario universities for maintenance and renewal of university campus facilities.

These initiatives build on other recent investments to maintain and improve facilities or build new colleges. We've provided Ontario's colleges with \$105 million, through the college facilities investment program announced in the 2007 budget, to help maintain and improve their facilities.

We are providing a \$40-million annual investment through the facilities renewal program to upgrade college and university academic buildings. We provided a one-time \$30-million investment in 2006-07 through the economic stimulus package to support construction of new facilities that support enrolment growth and improve energy efficiency at colleges.

We are also investing \$17 million over four years to create at least 1,750 internship opportunities through a partnership with the Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems organization, or as it's known, MITACS—a national non-profit organization that connects students to research internship opportunities. MITACS connects students, universities and private sector businesses, promoting research partnerships and helping to grow a culture of research into Ontario business.

In the past four years, we have also funded 160 new first-year medical spaces, including 56 at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. That's a 23% increase in first-year undergraduate and medical enrolment.

One of our government's priorities to date has been to ensure that our students have the support systems they need to help them succeed.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Minister, sorry; you have about four and a half minutes left to speak.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Okay.

Our government is committed to helping students reach their full potential so they can get that great job of their dreams and so that we can strengthen Ontario's economy.

Over the past four years, we've introduced a broad range of financial assistance measures and we've also introduced a student access guarantee that promises that no student will be denied a post-secondary education because of a lack of funds.

Today, students in Ontario colleges and universities receive the highest amount of needs-based institutional aid in Canada.

**1630**

Here are some of the facts on student assistance: Through Reaching Higher, our government is doubling our student aid investment with \$358 million in new investment by 2010, and today, one in four Ontario students is eligible to receive a grant. Our government has doubled its investment in student assistance since 2003 and tripled the number of grants available. We're providing financial assistance to roughly 150,000 students every year. OSAP default rates are at the lowest levels since measurements started. We've capped student debt at \$7,000 per year, and we've capped tuition fees at an average of 5% annually under a framework we worked out with our colleges, our universities and our students.

Our government has introduced some other important financial supports, as well. We've introduced a new textbook and technology grant to help full-time students pay for textbooks and computers. Right now, the ministry is mailing out \$150 grant cheques to full-time college and university students across Ontario. More than half a million students are eligible to receive the grant.

We're also reaching out to help first-generation students or students who are the first in their family to go to college or university. This includes new supports for crown wards. For the first time, under our Reaching Higher plan, crown wards are receiving special support through tuition grants and application fee reinvestments.

Mr. Chair, I ask how much time I have, because—

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Two and a half.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Two and a half.

In addition, we've invested almost \$500,000 in four crown ward education championship teams that build local, community-based partnerships that provide improved support to crown wards.

Moving ahead—and I'll just summarize briefly because I'm running out of time—we've also focused on other groups of students not always well represented in our post-secondary institutions. Over three years, we're investing \$30 million in various initiatives aimed at helping first-generation students, including bursaries for students in need, as well as support for services such as mentoring and tutoring in colleges and universities. We're helping aboriginal students pursue and succeed in post-secondary education. We're supporting French-language education by increasing funding to French-language support programs by 53%. We've also made headway on private career colleges that I'd be happy to speak about during the question and answer sessions.

Finally, I'll end, perhaps, with our literacy strategy. Strong literacy and numeracy skills help workers to perform at a higher level, thereby strengthening our workforce and our economy. Our government is improving literacy and basic skills through an investment of nearly \$75 million in 2008-09. Currently, our literacy and numeracy programs result in about seven out of 10 learners going on to further education and employment. This investment includes significant support to academic upgrading, a total of \$15 million. Academic upgrading provides an alternate route to post-secondary education and training for people who have left the school system. It helps them develop their learning skills and ultimately find better jobs.

In conclusion, post-secondary education and training must remain key aspects of our government's economic plans. This is true while addressing the immediate economic challenges facing Ontario and the world. Our skills to jobs action plan is a multifaceted, ambitious plan designed to address the needs of workers displaced by economic issues beyond their control. It is also true in planning for the emerging new global economy where having skilled, highly educated workers is key to success.

When we help our people achieve their goals, Ontario will be able to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving world and attract the investments and the jobs to our province that will keep Ontario ahead of the game. That's why our government takes post-secondary education and training so seriously, that is why we have invested so much in the institutions that educate and train Ontarians, and that is why Ontario will be able to weather the economic challenges ahead and prosper in the new global economy.

That concludes most of my written text, which I think has been circulated. I'd be happy to answer questions about, as I say, the section I didn't get to.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Fantastic. You will have 30 minutes, after the official opposition and third

party, to respond to additional issues that are brought up during the discussion.

Minister, the official opposition has 30 minutes. Ms. Scott.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Thank you, Minister. I'm happy that you are here before committee today. I know that yesterday, you announced in the Legislature that your fundraiser in Oakville at the Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre had to be delayed because of your appearance here today at estimates committee. It's always good to have you here and I hope the Minister of Labour didn't have to adjust his schedule too much either because he wanted to join you there.

I do have, thanks to the good people at GO Transit, a schedule. It says that if you actually left on the 6:03 and got the train for the Lakeshore West, you'd be in Oakville in 40 minutes, which is plenty of time to be able to join the folks at the steelworkers' hall.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I do want to remind members that we are here to discuss the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I will hand this over to my colleague, Mr. Hillier, to ask the questions.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I have a few questions. I was looking through the briefing notes. You have, on page 18, essentially four broad categories for expenditures for the ministry: administration, post-secondary education, Employment Ontario and strategic policy and programs.

On page 14, you identify seven agencies, boards or commissions that report to the MTCU, and I'm wondering if you could answer under which of those four categories are the agencies, boards and commissions paid for?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm sorry. Page 14 of the—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Of the results-based plan briefing book that we were given for this committee.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I don't know if I'm looking at the wrong—I'm looking at page 14 and I see Operating and Capital Allocation. Sorry, there's page 12, Agencies, Boards and Commissions.

I'm sorry, Mr. Hillier. You're saying that on page 12 of the—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** We have four broad categories. Which category are the agencies, boards and commissions paid out of?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Okay. If I can refer that to my deputy.

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** We will refer to Noah Morris, who's the director of operations and finance.

**Mr. Noah Morris:** I'm Noah Morris, the director of finance for training, colleges and universities. The college compensation—

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I'm sorry, we didn't catch the name.

**Mr. Noah Morris:** Noah Morris. I'm the director of finance for training, colleges and universities.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Perfect. Thank you.

**Mr. Noah Morris:** The college compensation and appointments council is in the post-secondary division.

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, which we call HEQCO, is under the strategic policy and planning division. The Ontario Student Assistance Appeal Board is under the Ontario student assistance plan.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** So it comes out of different categories. They're not all out of any one category?

**Mr. Noah Morris:** They're all different categories. Would you like me to go through the list?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** No, that's fine. That's enough. I didn't know if they fell under the strategic policy, all of them, or if there was a—

**Mr. Noah Morris:** The only one that's under the strategic policy is HEQCO.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Okay. Thank you very much.

I also wanted to ask this, Minister. I see, going through the public accounts and whatnot, that you've signed cheques worth over \$25 million, or about \$25 million, to 18 different building trades unions, and these building trades unions, of course, are members of the Working Families Coalition. What column does that come under? Does that come under post-secondary education, or Employment Ontario, or does it come out of a mixed bag of categories as well?

**Hon. John Milloy:** If I could correct what you said, I have not signed any cheques. I believe you're making reference to STIP, and I'll ask an official to answer the technical side of your question, but that program was delegated to the deputy minister. There was a transparent program that came forward and the final decision was made by the deputy minister, so in fact, technically, it was my predecessor who would have signed that over to the deputy minister. There were no decisions made by either myself or the minister on that, but in terms of your question, would it be Noah who could answer where to find it?

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** Kevin.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Kevin—sorry.

**Mr. Kevin French:** Thanks for the question. Assistant Deputy Minister, Kevin French, from the employment and training division.

There are two means by which, within our approved estimates, a union training centre would receive funding. As—

**1640**

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I was just wondering if it came out of the post-secondary or under the—there's a whole host of payments out to unions. Is this under the post-secondary or is it under Employment Ontario?

**Mr. Kevin French:** It would come under Employment Ontario, and it would come out of two particular areas. The minister mentions the Ontario skills training investment program, which was administered last year, or it could be as a union training centre through the Employment Ontario program itself.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Okay. So it's either under STIP or under some other training program?

**Mr. Kevin French:** That's correct.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** All right. Would you, Minister, have a complete list or the aggregate total of payments by the MTCU to the building trades unions?



**Hon. John Milloy:** Why?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** For all programs.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I don't really understand your question in terms of building trades unions. We could certainly provide you with information on support to union training centres, union employer training centres and training centres, but we don't have a program for—the way you phrased the question, I don't think we really keep records that way, but we could certainly provide you with a list of the various programs and the funding received, and then you could make whatever analysis you wanted as to—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** That have been distributed to the building trades unions. Okay? So we'll get a list of those—

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I said, we'll get a list of programs under which a building trades union might have received it, and you can do the analysis, as I say, of union training centres and employer-union training centres. Yes, we can certainly provide that.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Thank you. As a past member of an electrical union and who has taken training through the unions and also as a previous teacher in post-secondary for building trades, can you tell me, out of these training programs that you fund for the unions, which ones offer diplomas or certificates of qualification or any other accreditation that is recognized province-wide by employers other than themselves? Are there any training programs that the unions do that are recognized province-wide outside of their own union?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm not sure if I follow the question. Again, Kevin, I don't know if—sorry.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Surely there are training programs. When somebody has finished their training program, there is a certificate or a diploma or something. Are those certificates or diplomas recognized by any other employers other than just the unions?

**Mr. Kevin French:** If I understand the question correctly, union training centres deliver apprenticeship programs on behalf of the province through what we call a training delivery agent process. Those are recognized by other unions. The largest part of the apprenticeship system, as you're probably aware, is delivered through the public college system. So it is an accredited process by which a union would deliver apprenticeship training.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Surely a number of these unions that have received training don't offer the apprenticeship programs. That's done through the community colleges. Like the electricians' union, for example, if you're an apprentice, you go through a community college for your schooling. However, the IBEW still receives significant money from MTCU for training. I'm wondering what programs they're doing that you're paying for, that the public is paying for, and if those programs are recognized by other employers?

**Mr. Kevin French:** I can certainly clarify for the committee, but my understanding is that the ministry's relationship is through the apprenticeship system, and that's the funding that has been provided by the government to union training centres.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** So there's no funding to unions other than for recognized apprenticeship—

**Mr. Kevin French:** As I said, I'd like to clarify for the committee. That's my understanding. As Minister Milloy mentioned, the other initiative that was undertaken last year was a capital initiative.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** What about the payments to the Labourers' International Union? Of course, there is no apprenticeship for the Labourers' International Union, but they do receive training funding from the MTCU. I would like to have that clarified. It seems that there are a few things that are amiss there or at odds with MTCU.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We'll provide you with clarification. I defer to the assistant deputy minister, but my understanding is the same as his: that our relationship is on apprenticeships. You've asked about Labourers' International, and we'll get you that information.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** The question I'll ask that I'd like to have reported back to this committee is, what programs are being funded by the MTCU with taxpayers' money that are not recognized provincially?

**Hon. John Milloy:** We'll certainly get you a clarification of our funding of various training centres and what that funding specifically is for. You've mentioned one particular case, LIUNA, and we'll get you clarification on that.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** A number of these building trades unions that are receiving funding from the MTCU are also staunch supporters of apprenticeship ratios. These unions wish to restrict the labour pool and drive up labour rates. In your earlier discussions, you were talking about increasing apprenticeships, but here it is, a public ministry financing and funding unions whose goal is to restrict apprenticeships through ratios. How do you reconcile it, Minister, when you're funding, on one hand, groups that restrict apprenticeships, but then also saying that you want to advance more apprenticeships?

**Hon. John Milloy:** First of all, I differ with your characterization of "funding unions." I think we should be a little more precise. I think someone listening—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Funding union training programs.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We're actually funding apprentices who are seeking their training through a union, as they might through a community college. I just want to clarify for the record and for anyone who cares to follow up. People might think that somehow your question—and I realize you're not intending to do this. We don't fund unions, in the sense of core operating funding. Unions are involved in training activities, as are community colleges, as are employers. We work with various training delivery agencies to supply training opportunities for apprentices. You raise—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Excuse me for a minute. We've already established that we're not quite sure what we're training with the funding provided by MTCU, and you're going to provide some clarification to that after.

**Hon. John Milloy:** What we have said is that our relationship with union training centres, since you're zeroing in on them, is to provide apprenticeship funding.

You have asked us to follow up to ensure that there are no other opportunities where training dollars have gone which are outside of apprenticeship, and we're going to get that 100% clarification for you. I think we should move on, then, to the issue of ratios. I just wanted to give a little context for your question.

Ratios, as I think members of the committee understand, go back, from what I understand from experts in the field, to the Middle Ages, where it talks about how many apprentices, in the old guild system, a particular journeyman can have. That, of course, has evolved over the years. Here in Ontario, the apprenticeship system as we know it has moved forward. When you look at ratios, ratios govern a number of things. They govern the fact that we're talking about a teacher-student relationship and that we want to ensure that there's proper supervision, that there's proper—

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**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I think we've gone off the question, Minister. These unions that are staunch supporters of rigid apprenticeship ratios, which restrict the labour pool—you are financing some elements of their training or other programs. You spoke earlier of wanting to advance and increase the number of apprentice positions in this province, but at the same time you're funding organizations whose expectations and whose goal is to restrict the labour pool. Those don't reconcile with one another. They're a contradiction to one another. I'm wondering how you can explain that instead of funding public facilities like community colleges that are open to all residents of the province and whose certificates of qualifications and whose diplomas are recognized province-wide, you are taking money out of the public system and putting it toward organizations that wish to restrict the labour pool and whose training is not open to other individuals of this province?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** On a point of order, Chair: While respecting Mr. Hillier's freedom to ask a question pertaining to the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, he is suggesting a motive or something that is unavowed against a body that he hasn't named which would be pursuant to an objective of an entity that is not the subject of these estimates. The ministry can fund whichever body it so chooses, but Mr. Hillier is asking a generic question about the objectives of a body that he won't name that may be funded by the ministry. I think he's a little over the line on this. He's welcome to ask a question of the ministry, but not necessarily of the objectives and mission of the entities that it funds.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I've chaired this committee now for a number of years, and I think folks know that I do allow, as is the tradition of estimates, for a broad range of questioning that pertains to the estimates before us. I've been listening closely to Mr. Hillier's questions. I do believe the questions he is asking are within the rules.

Secondly, I think folks know that in the initial 30-minute segment, generally the approach has been to give a broad range for discussion on policy items, as well. Thereafter, the rules are a bit more strict.

So, I appreciate the point of order—I'll make sure Mr. Hillier does get his full time—but I do believe his questions are within the rules of the estimates.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Thank you.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think it was my turn to answer.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** It's your turn.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Hillier, the problem is that I reject the premise of your question.

First of all, we do fund community colleges. As I mentioned in my remarks, \$190 million in expansion for apprenticeship-related infrastructure was made this summer, and we worked very closely with them.

I, as a minister, have had an opportunity to meet with numerous stakeholders involved in the apprenticeship trade, including those who are members of the building trades unions, and I have yet to meet a single one who wants to limit the number of apprentices. They want to make sure that we have an apprenticeship system which properly trains apprentices and sees them through to completion.

On the issue of ratios, there are different views. Even those individuals who are calling for looser ratios, if I can use that term—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I think we're going off topic again, Minister.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm trying to answer your questions.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Yes, I know, but the training for these union training funds is not open or accessible to other individuals within the province. They're only there for union members. They're not open to the general public. So we're funding unions at a significant rate for training, but we're denying residents of Ontario access to that training, instead of putting that money into community colleges where the training would be accessible to all individuals—union, non-union, employers, whoever. That was the last question—

**Hon. John Milloy:** May I respond?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Yes.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We fund apprentices, Mr. Hillier. Individuals come forward; they have a relationship with an employer. There's an in-class opportunity. They may seek that at a community college; they may seek that at a union training centre or an employer-union training centre. People are not being denied access to apprenticeship opportunities. We are, in fact, creating those apprenticeship opportunities. As I say, when a young person comes forward and wants to seek that, they may seek it through a number of delivery agents.

Again, I'm always conscious that I have experts here in the room, and I'm certainly happy to call Mr. French forward to have him explain, in some detail, the apprenticeship opportunities and finding them. But, again, I think you're mischaracterizing it to say that somehow we go and say that these are restricted opportunities, and that a young person who wants to be an apprentice can't find that in-class opportunity.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Well, again, I'm speaking from my experience being involved in unions and being in-

volved in community colleges. For example, here, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers have received, in 2007-08, \$1.5 million for training. The IBEW has all their in-class training for apprentices done at community colleges. That's where the apprenticeship education is done. So what is that \$1.5 million for? It's not for apprenticeship. Those apprentices are being trained in community colleges, so what is \$1.5 million going to the IBEW for? It's not going to the general public, and it's being used strictly for their workers, as compared to putting that money into the public system where all people can get that training. That's how it works.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, can I ask the document that you're referring to with the \$1.5 million? I will get you—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Well, that was a spreadsheet that I did up of all the payments that I've seen under the STIP program from the MTCU to the building trades unions that are also members of the Working Families Coalition. So here we have the ironworkers, the operating engineers, the UA locals, IBEW locals and elevator constructors etc.

There's one example. The IBEW does not train apprentices academically. They get their work experience with union contractors. They get their schooling at community colleges. Why are they getting another \$1.5 million?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, I think, first of all, there's a little bit of mixing of apples and oranges here. We were talking about apprenticeship funding they've received; we're now talking about the STIP program, which was going out to union training and union-employer training centres where they were receiving capital for the training that takes place. I could get you the details on the various IBEWs and what they've received.

They've received that funding for training that goes on. I've had a chance to visit a number of those centres. There's training that goes on for journeypersons in terms of safety, apprenticeships in terms of safety, in terms of upgrading, in terms of—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** That goes back to my earlier question, Minister. What training is being provided and paid for by MTCU other than the apprenticeship, and is that training recognized by other employers, recognized and accredited across the province, that it's transportable, that it's portable—that training—or is it only recognized by those union employers?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, again, I think there's a mixing of apples and oranges here. There are apprenticeship programs which are offered by various training centres outside of community colleges, and they may reach agreements with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. An apprentice may come forward and choose to do it there.

At the same time, there was a program, STIP, which was brought forward. As they say, it was an application-driven program to provide equipment to various training centres, some of which provided training strictly to apprentices while others provided a range of training. I'd

be happy to get you lists of what the equipment was. As I say, having visited them, they're involved in safety training; they're involved in a variety of upgrades for individuals that are associated with the centre as well as apprentices.

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**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Well, that's good to hear. You mentioned that these unions make applications for STIP and whatever, and obviously there are rigorous criteria involved with that. Do you or your officials today have a copy of that application so we can see just what the criteria are for these building trades unions to receive funding?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Certainly I can get that for you.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** You can get that for me? It would be much appreciated, the application and if there are any criteria that are established.

Unfortunately, I have a train to catch, so I'm going to end off. Again, speaking in the broader concept of improving access to apprenticeship, improving the number of apprenticeship roles, the skilled trades are fairly unique in this province. For most professions, whether it be architects, engineers or lawyers, we allow the free market to determine how many lawyers there ought to be or engineers or architects, and there doesn't seem to be any shortage of lawyers, architects or engineers at the moment. But we have this ratio for skilled trades, and we have a shortage in skilled tradesmen. Minister, do you not recognize that things are being done wrong and that both the funding and the policy is leading to this problem? Instead of interfering with the marketplace, as we do with the building trades, should we not be like other professions and let the market determine supply and demand of labour and need?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, Mr. Hillier, I'll go back and complete the answer I gave to an earlier question where you said I had gotten off topic. The issue of ratios, as I said, I think you can trace back to the Middle Ages. It's a very unique situation of a teacher and student, where that student is also an employee. The principle of a ratio, the number of apprentices per journeypersons, is based on a number of factors. There's the whole issue of health and safety. There's the issue of—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** But only for building trades, not for any other profession in this province. We don't have a ratio for historians or librarians or even for doctors or nurses. The building trades are the only ones where the government interferes with the supply and demand, the interest and opportunities for our young people. Anyway, thank you. I'm going to pass it over to Laurie Scott, because I have to leave.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** How many minutes do I have?

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** You have two minutes.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I've got two minutes. It will be a quick question. A recent economic update from your government says there's going to be a \$500-million deficit. We've got Ontario being a have-not province, receiving bailout money from Newfoundland and Labra-

dor. Can you guarantee that all the programs in your ministry, including the much-talked-about apprenticeship and skilled trades program that we've been discussing this afternoon, all those programs that have been promised in your ministry, are going to be implemented?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, the scope of today's discussion is obviously the 2008-09 fiscal year. We have programs in place and spending plans moving forward, and that's our intention: to move forward. I guess the Minister of Finance has been here the last few days. He's ultimately in charge of each budget update, which in some cases sets a new course and in other cases changes the direction slightly, but we'd have to wait for next year's estimates, I guess. As I said, I've outlined where we are now and how we're moving forward.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** So you don't anticipate that you're going to have to cut any of your programs, as we speak now. You don't anticipate you're going to have to cut any of your programs.

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I say, we're talking about this fiscal year, and I've outlined obviously through the briefing book in front of you, and in the overview I gave of our plans moving forward. I think the question you're asking is about the upcoming budget, which is the purview of the Minister of Finance, who I guess was here for the last number of days.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Thank you, Ms. Scott. We now turn to the third party. Mr. Marchese, you have 30 minutes.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Welcome to this committee, as the minister. Normally, I would have a lot to say by way of statements, but I'm going to just forgo that and just get right into the questions.

As I remember it, the Reaching Higher plan was supposed to, as part of a promise, bring us to the middle of the pack when you compare it to all the other provinces. Is that true, a fair statement to make?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think the Reaching Higher plan was a recognition of the importance of post-secondary education and, quite frankly, a recognition that it was an area that was needing resources very badly.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I understand, but my question was, if I recall—and I was trying to find it the other day and I just couldn't. I think the promise said that with the Reaching Higher dollars we would get to the middle of the pack. Did your government ever say that?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I was not minister, as you know, at that time. You've just admitted you couldn't find it, so I have no recollection of that, but it may be true. I was not the minister.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay. That's fine. Would Madam Fougère know that, by any chance? It's not a political statement. It's a question.

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** I'm not aware of a statement specifically stating "middle of the pack."

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay. Can you confirm, Minister, whether we are number 10 in per capita funding?

**Hon. John Milloy:** No, I cannot confirm that. I hear—and I say this with respect, and you know I do; I'm not saying this sarcastically—sometimes you throw that around. I'd ask you for your source of that.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay, that's interesting. Madame Fougère, would you know, as a civil servant, whether we are number 10 in per capita funding, or would you track it yourself? Would you have a way of knowing that, or who would know?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, can I—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Madame Fougère?

**Hon. John Milloy:** How does this work, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Well, Minister, you have staff here. If you want to answer the questions, go ahead. If you feel you've already answered the question, then the deputy doesn't have to answer it.

**Hon. John Milloy:** No, but I just meant, can I answer? Mr. Marchese is directing the question directly to the deputy. I just wondered if I have the opportunity to jump in.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Absolutely.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Marchese, I'm aware that there are different comparisons that are thrown around. Every one that I have seen has figures that go back several years in terms of the comparison. I have not seen a study that's up to date. I'm not trying to muzzle my deputy.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay, that's fine.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm just saying there are different groups that come forward and, God bless them, they say—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I understand. So, you yourself have no sense of where you are in terms of per capita funding in Canada vis-à-vis the other provinces? You have no comment or knowledge of where you might be, as a province?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Simply because the studies that have been done are out of date and the comparisons get I think the deputy is here for that.

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** Yes, because the studies that are available to date all go back to the pre-Reaching Higher period, so they actually do not reflect all of the investments made since the initiation and the implementation of Reaching Higher.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I see. So whatever figures we have are prior to 2005?

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** Up to 2005.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** So whatever information we're getting from any source is completely outdated, is what you're saying as well?

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** The official sources that we are aware of come from Stats Canada and those sources go back to pre-Reaching Higher times.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay. So would you have a way of calculating yourself, based on all of the numbers that you have, and be able to tell us where we might be, or Stats Canada, whenever it does its numbers—we will know then? Is that the way it works?

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** I would, perhaps, like to get Barry to come to the—he knows more about all these calculations and the modelling behind it.

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**Mr. Barry McCartan:** Could you run that by me again? I want to make sure I'm answering the right question.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Sure. The deputy was just saying that sources come from Stats Canada and the last number that she has seen was for 2005. She's arguing—and the minister is arguing differently—there are different ways of calculating it, which suggests that people have different definitions of this. Is it true that there are different ways of comparing this, or is there some standard that you as a civil servant accept, or is it that we just don't know where we're at?

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** No. First of all, in order to do a provincial comparison, we need a whole range of variables which are from a number of dependent sources. StatsCan is the source of the funding piece. Of course, you need to know about enrolments in order to do per capita comparisons in terms of numbers of students served. Population—of course, we know that's more recent data of provinces—and so on. Each of those variables has to come into place, and StatsCan is the only really reliable way to bring all that information together.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And the last time that Stats Canada did this study was in 2005?

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** The last interprovincial comparison that was done was in 2005, and I believe it was for the 2004-05 year. So, yes, that's right.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Based on the way they compare it and based on what you have by way of knowledge, where do you think we are in per capita funding?

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** I wouldn't—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You wouldn't have a clue.

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I think you pointed out—and I'm not being critical of different groups and organizations that come forward; some of them come to Queen's Park—there are different ways to calculate different things. I can—and I'm sure you're heard me provide them to you in the House now and again—give you the statistics of Ontario, where we were and where we've gone, and I think you would agree that that's a very important standard for us to look at.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My point is, you would want to be proud of yourself. You would want to say to the public, "Look, some of these numbers are wrong." But I never hear you saying in public that these numbers are wrong.

There are different comparisons. StatsCan did a study in 2005. Maybe the next one will reveal where we're at. Do you have a sense of when the next one is coming up?

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** Actually, the main problem is that Stats Canada has gone through a massive overhaul of its post-secondary information system, and as a result they've slipped a number of years on a lot of key variables. So I'm afraid I don't.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay, let's leave that one.

In terms of ranking on tuition fees, as far as I know we are the second-highest. Can you confirm that?

**Hon. John Milloy:** No. I think we're falling into the same situation—I'll defer to the deputy—that we don't have the—

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** That presumed second ranking, again, is based on data that do not take into account the investments, at least from the StatsCan perspective, that were provided through Reaching Higher. The release of research on this is actually behind schedule at Stats Canada.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Where do you think we are?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I can reference one study that I'd be very happy to provide to you, which shows that Ontario has the highest needs-based assistance of any province in Canada.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's not the question I was asking, though.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm just saying that is a study that has come out.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay, but that's not what I'm asking.

Anyway, we keep saying that we are the second-highest, and I guess you'll defend yourself the best way you can, that the numbers vary and so on. By the way, Nova Scotia is the first, in terms of tuition fees, and next year, as I understand it, they're going to be lower and we're going to be proudly number one. I guess you'll be able to comment on that as the year comes forward.

We've had some difficult economic times in the last little while, and you've known for some time that the economy was going to slow down. Were there any measures that were taken by this ministry to prepare for such bad economic circumstances?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I don't mean to be thick, but I'm having trouble following your question.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay. I'm not going to waste any time if you find it difficult to understand. I'll move on to other questions. But it's a very obvious question.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, I could say that the whole ministry is about preparing the Ontario economy for bad times ahead, in the sense, I think—the fact that we came forward on post-secondary education in 2005. And I think, Mr. Marchese, you would agree that post-secondary education is not the so-called doorstep issue that you hear about in campaigns. We made significant investments, and we're seeing the fruits of those, in terms of the participation rate and the graduation rate.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I understand. That's not my question, but that's fine. Which projects or initiatives, if any, are on hold from the ministry right now, due to difficult economic circumstances?

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I said to Ms. Scott, the 2008-09 year that we're discussing is—you're talking about reaching ahead to a budget situation. As in all ministries, we're in discussion with finance as to what our priorities are.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** But are there any projects or initiatives that are on hold right now, due to economic circumstances? It's a yes-or-no kind of answer. If

everything is proceeding as it should, then your answer would be no, there are none on hold.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Well, again, we are, like all ministries, in discussion with finance as to what our priorities are. We're rolling out 2008-09 as best we can.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's why these committees are so complicated, in terms of questions and answers. That's why, as you get older and as you are here longer, you just wonder about this business.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Right now we are proceeding as planned, Mr. Marchese.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's fine. The downturn in the US market has hit Ontario universities very hard. As you know, university endowment funds are getting hit badly. Institutions like the University of Ottawa have already warned that scholarships and student aid are going to be significantly reduced if this trend continues.

My question to you is, is it a good idea for post-secondary institutions to be so reliant on ups and downs of the market to provide scholarships and student aid?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think that universities and colleges are dependent on various sources for their operations, in terms of the government, in terms of endowment, in terms of—I mean you're talking about ancillary services such as residences and athletic complexes and things like that. There are fees or rents that are charged, so I think that—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay. It was a very specific question. Do you think it's a good idea for post-secondary institutions to be so reliant on the ups and downs of the market? Because with the markets being the way they are, and universities investing in markets where they're now being hit, the University of Ottawa has warned that scholarships and student aid are going to be significantly reduced.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I guess my comment is twofold. One, you're seeing some pretty extraordinary financial situations everywhere. Two, of course, we would like institutions to have as broad a financing source as possible, which is why you've seen significant increases in terms of operating funding from the province.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Federal transfer payments: What increases in revenues have come to the ministry as a result of increases to the federal transfer payment?

**Hon. John Milloy:** The Reaching Higher framework contains significant increases every year, as I think you're aware. The federal transfer payments are received, I guess, in a sense, by the Ministry of Finance, and we've seen significant increases in our budget through Reaching Higher.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What are they? That's my question. What increases in revenues have come to the ministry as a result of that transfer payment? What's the number?

**Hon. John Milloy:** The transfer: I assume you're referring to—well, I'll ask you. Which transfer payment? The CST is received by the Ministry of Finance. At the same time, if you want to look at our budget year over year, you'll see significant increases in terms of the amount of funding we've received for our budget.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** But that's why I'm asking. I don't get it. Do you know or don't you know? Do you have a number, yes or no? Just tell me.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I can get you the increase in terms of our budget.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Does the deputy know?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Our budget, the budget this year?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Yes.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I believe it's in the results-based plan.

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** Yes, and as the minister has pointed out, basically the province has been investing a lot of money in Reaching Higher.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What's the money number? What is the number?

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**Hon. John Milloy:** We can ask someone to come forward with the increase in our budget this year.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** That's the nature of the question, Mr. Marchese, the MTCU budget for 2008-09?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm asking, what increases in revenues have come to the ministry as a result of increases to the federal transfer payments that are specific to universities? It can't be that complicated.

**Hon. John Milloy:** What I'm suggesting, Mr. Marchese, is that if you're referring to the Canada social transfer, that is received by the Ministry of Finance, by the government in general for use—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Right. That is specific for universities. There's got to be a number; you've got to know.

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I say, there's the Canada social transfer, so that is received.

I understand the Minister of Finance was here for a number of days, and I'm sure he could have talked to you about the funding relationship with the federal government and money that has come forward, that we've received. As I say, we can go through it, how much our budget has been increased. Did you want—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Are you planning to offset any expenditure reductions in the post-secondary sector with the increased funding from the Canadian social transfer?

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I say, the Canadian social transfer is received by the Ministry of Finance as part of a series of transfers that go forward. They obviously use that funding to increase in a variety of areas including post-secondary education—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I see. It's not helpful.

**Hon. John Milloy:** —and I'd be happy to—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Yes, thank you. I'm just going to ask it, and we'll get whatever we get.

How much money has the provincial government put into post-secondary education in the last fiscal year from the increased federal Canadian social transfer?

**Hon. John Milloy:** As I say, Mr. Marchese, I'm happy to call the officials forward to talk about the increases that have taken place to our ministry.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay.

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** Barry McCartan, from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Again, I apologize: if I can ask you to just state the question one more time?

**Hon. John Milloy:** He was looking for the increase in post-secondary education training.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** How much money has the provincial government put into post-secondary education in the last fiscal year from the increased federal Canadian social transfer?

**Mr. Barry McCartan:** That was the question—

**Hon. John Milloy:** I mean—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** If you don't have a number now, you'll send it to us later. Is that okay?

**Hon. John Milloy:** We can tell you what the increase is in terms of post-secondary education funding to our ministry from the Ministry of Finance, which, as I said, in turn receives the CST funding from the federal government.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Through you, Mr. Chair: I've asked this question, and could I just get an answer at another time, the next meeting that we come to?

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Sure. I believe the minister is answering that that money goes to the Ministry of Finance, right?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Yes.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** For a large bundle of products. This ministry doesn't know exactly how much the ministry is going to receive.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It must know, and that's my question. It goes to the Ministry of Finance, and they have a sense, or they know how much money is in that pot for them. The minister says, "Here's the money." They've got to know, and so if they don't have it now, I want to ask it as a question so they come back at the next meeting with a number.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We will provide Mr. Marchese with a response.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you. How much money is the provincial government putting into post-secondary education this fiscal year from the increased federal Canadian social transfer? That question was for last year; this question is for this year.

**Hon. John Milloy:** All right, we will provide an answer.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** This will be on Hansard. You don't have to write this down; you can get it at the end of the day or tomorrow, I'm assuming. Right?

The other question is, where is it going? Operating? Capital? It would be good to know the distribution of those dollars.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We will get you a response.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Very good. A further question is, what are the continuing plans for the use of this federal funding? Is it directed in the same place all the time? Does it go in different places? What are the plans for the following year, for 2009-10?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, Mr. Marchese, I'm very happy to provide you with an answer to your question, but at the same time, the management responsibility of

the CST, the Canada social transfer, I think would be—I look to the Chair for this—the Minister of Finance, who I understand was here for several days. I think he might be in a better position to give all the details of how the government manages federal transfers. I will provide you, Mr. Marchese, with—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I don't need the Chair to give me an answer, because he can't give me that answer.

**Hon. John Milloy:** No, all I'm doing is I'm giving a caveat that we will provide an answer, but it may not be as fulsome as one that might be provided by the Minister of Finance, whom, as I said, I believe you had an opportunity to question.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** All I know is that money now comes bundled up. It used to be separated by categories. I don't know whether the federal government says, "This is the specific number" or "This is the bundle of numbers." I want to know what comes to you from him.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I think the minister has indicated that he will give the best possible answer.

**Hon. John Milloy:** With the caveat that part of that may lie with my colleague the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Of course, because you're going to get that information from him.

By the way, the Stats Canada figure that we're aware of was, as far as I know, released last month on this very issue. So we're going to check it and verify and give you the number the next time we meet. I'd be interested to know whether your civil servants will be able to find that information, as well.

You announced an increase in spending through the Reaching Higher plan in 2005. Then, in 2007, the federal government increased funding for post-secondary education. Will we see a compound increase in your post-secondary education allocation as a result of the new federal funds, or did you take that money and announce it as yours as part of your Reaching Higher plan?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, I think this goes back to the line of questioning that we discussed: CSTs and increases in training, colleges and universities. We're here to discuss this year's estimates for 2008-09. Obviously, you can check the briefing book in terms of increases that have taken place in colleges and universities as part of Reaching Higher and in some cases beyond Reaching Higher.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I really hope that when they come back, I'll have some written answers on some of these questions I'm asking. When I ask you what your contribution to the post-secondary education system is versus the federal government's contribution, I want to know those numbers.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I think the minister has indicated that he will get back the best possible answer from the ministry.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Right. And I don't want any caveat to fuzz the numbers that I'm looking at.

**Hon. John Milloy:** In fairness, we're talking about a CST from one government to another. So, it doesn't become federal money; it becomes provincial money

when it's transferred. The relationship between the province and the federal government is, as I say, the purview of the finance minister—who spent several days here and, I'm sure, could have done that.

I'm just saying I can only answer questions to the point of my ministerial responsibility, and I will try.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** All I'm saying to you is, as the minister, you have a responsibility to know what comes to you as a result of that fund. If you don't know, I'm a bit surprised. We are not talking about two different things. If they make a contribution to your ministry as a result of that fund, I want to know from you, and you asking the Minister of Finance what they're giving you—

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** I'd say we've beat this horse good and dead by now. The minister has given his response. There's a block for the Minister of Finance. He's going to give the best answer he can from his point of view.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What is the student-faculty ratio now, compared to before Reaching Higher was introduced? Do we know?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again I'll look to my deputy, but I also know that the definition of student-faculty ratio is one—and I have had people from the sector explain this to me. You can come up with many different mathematical formulas, depending on who you're counting, in terms of research fellows, in terms of grad students—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's good. All I want to know is, what formula do you apply, and based on the formula that you apply as a minister and as a ministry, what are the differences between those ratios before and after the Reaching Higher plan? If you don't have it today, you can give it to me another day.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We'll get you more information.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** How many new faculty have been hired in the last year by each institution? If you don't have that information, you can give it to me another day.

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**Hon. John Milloy:** We'll attempt to get that information.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Can the minister provide the number of teaching assistant, grad assistant and contract faculty positions at each college and university, and the total salary being paid to each group in each term for the current year and each of the last five years?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I can answer this one of two ways: I can say we will endeavour to get that or I can get you a list of what's available, but if you want to leave that, we can find out. As you know, there is a certain autonomy and I'm not sure—do we have all those statistics? We will endeavour to get everything that is available through our ministry. As I say, there's a certain autonomy there.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Rosario, five minutes

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Five? I'd be interested to see what you provide. Based on the information that you have, it will tell me whether or not you have it or whether you don't because they're independent, and if they're independent, I would be interested to know that too, and

interested to know whether you are interested in those numbers or not and whether you can get them from them.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I can ask the deputy to comment on what she knows immediately, what sort of detailed ones are available. Or would it be better to ask—

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** Actually, just to make sure that we cover the whole thing, we can come back with further clarifications, because it's actually—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Very good.

The other question is, how many students are currently participating in the Ontario work-study plan and how many have participated in each of the last five years at each college and university in the province? And can you please provide the total funding that was given to each college and university in the current year and in each of the last five years to provide for the Ontario work-study plan? And can you please provide an itemized salary package, including all compensation paid to the senior administrative staff during their tenure and beyond, meaning payouts, at each college and university in the province in the current year and in each of the last five years? I'm assuming you don't have any of that information today; correct?

**Ms. Marie-Lison Fougère:** No.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** OSAP and student support: Specifically, can you please give us a breakdown of what is being spent on OSAP loans, grants and Ontario graduate scholarships?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Do we have that right now? I can ask Mr. Richard Jackson, whom I think you've met before in past estimates, Mr. Marchese.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I've met with a few of them.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Hi. My name is Richard Jackson. I'm the director of the student support branch at the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. As I'm looking through my notes here, I believe you're asking about the budget for the Ontario graduate scholarship program?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** OSAP loans, grants and Ontario graduate scholarships.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** The budget that relates to student loans is the interest payment that we pay while those loans are being held when students are in school, and the budget for 2008-09 is \$24,949,409.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Okay.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Sorry. You asked for the Ontario graduate scholarship? That's \$23,100,000.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And the grants?

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Which grants would you like to know?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** What breakdown do you have?

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** There are probably, under OSAP, 20-some programs.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Really? It would be helpful to just send a copy of that without your having to read it for the record.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** I'd be quite happy to read it for the record here.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** All right.



**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Provincial funding for the Millennium/Ontario access grants and Ontario access grants is \$57,966,892. The budget for distance grants, a program implemented this year, is \$8.2 million. The budget for the Ontario student opportunity grant is \$293,871,000.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** We're completing Mr. Marchese's time. You had asked for each of those. Did you—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** If you don't mind, you could just send it for the next meeting. That would be helpful, without having you read it all. Is that okay?

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Sure.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Through the clerk?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Through the clerk, of course.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** And she can distribute it to the members.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Won't this be in Hansard tomorrow for you? But I'm quite happy to—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** This part, but you said you were going to name 23 or so.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** The Aird scholarship program, \$5,000; the Sir John A. Macdonald scholarship in Canadian history—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's just that my time has run out, is what he's saying.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Mr. Marchese did ask for each of those. If possible, you could give them to the clerk, and she'll distribute to the committee members in time for the next meeting.

**Mr. Richard Jackson:** Sure.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Terrific. Mr. Marchese, thank you very much. That does conclude your 30-minute segment.

Minister, we have 30 minutes left for your wrap-up comments. We do have a vote with a 10-minute bell coming up in the House. What I'm going to suggest is that you take about 20 minutes for your comments. If we get the bell sooner, I'll probably adjourn the committee with about five minutes left in the bell. Then you can take your remaining time, if you so choose, when we meet again on Tuesday morning.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Chair, at the outset you indicated that this was an opportunity to respond to some of the issues that have been raised, and I look forward to dealing with I think two very distinct issues, one on the apprenticeship front and one on post-secondary education. But do I also have an opportunity to put other things on the record?

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Yes. I do allow for quite a broad range, as long as it pertains to the estimates.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Because I'd like to, if I could, just put on the record some of the work that we've been doing. Then as I say, I'd like to respond to both Mr. Hillier's comments and Mr. Marchese's.

I'd like to put on the record some of the work that we've been doing in terms of private career colleges; I ran out of time there. I think private career colleges are an important issue and part of the TCU family that isn't

always recognized, that we have a role in terms of parts of their oversight.

Our government recognizes that not all Ontario students attend our publicly funded colleges, universities or training programs. Private career colleges have become another option for Ontarians that can offer important programs to help students succeed. We are working to ensure that private career colleges in Ontario maintain the same high standards of excellence and accountability as our publicly funded post-secondary institutions.

In 2006 our government passed new legislation to ensure students at private career colleges get the education and training they're promised. Under the new Private Career Colleges Act academic records are protected: Private career colleges must give students access to their transcripts for 25 years. Students are protected from misleading advertising: Private career colleges must comply with new marketing and advertising rules. Students who have a complaint about a college will have their voices heard. All colleges must have a student complaint procedure in place. If the complaint is not resolved by the college, students can also submit a complaint form to the government. The new act also ensures international students receive better financial protection: Private career colleges can collect no more than 25% of the cost of a program from international students before the program starts.

We're also setting performance standards for career colleges, developing both a career credentials framework and the first set of program standards. Furthermore, we're working to establish a key performance indicator process for these colleges, similar to the one in place for the province's community college system. We're developing a new regulation covering enforcement and compliance measures for private career colleges, and we will soon be publishing compliance and enforcement news on our website so students can easily access this information.

Mr. Chair, I was happy to put that part of the ministry's work on the record and I look forward if over the course of the next number of sessions people want to speak about private career colleges.

I wanted, if I could, Mr. Chair, to pick up on Mr. Hillier's comments about the apprenticeship system. Although, as I think I was indicating at one point, I have not met anyone involved in the apprenticeship system, when it comes to this issue of ratios, which has been the topic of some discussion in question period and certainly today, I've never met anyone who wanted to get rid of ratios. I guess Mr. Hillier has put on the record that he wants to. At the same time, I do want to recognize a certain frustration that he's brought forward in terms of the management of the apprenticeship system and say that I'm perfectly comfortable to acknowledge that there is some frustration with the system that's out there, and there is a need to enhance and modernize it. I'll perhaps share with the committee the story of how we've come to this new initiative, the college of trades, which I mentioned briefly in my opening remarks.

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My predecessor, Minister Bentley, was examining the issue of compulsory certification. Members of the committee may be aware that there is a limited number of trades where, in order to practise that trade, you have to be a qualified journeyman. The one that comes to mind, and actually fits with Mr. Hillier's line of questioning, is the whole field of electricians. You have to be an electrician to practise that particular trade. Ontario, as I said, has a limited number of trades which are compulsory, in a sense—you need that certification. One of the issues that's come forward over the years is that certain trades have come forward and said, "We want to be viewed as compulsory. We believe that if you're going to hire tradesperson X or tradesperson Y, or an individual to perform trade X or Y, they in fact should have gone through the apprenticeship system, have written their licences, etc., and received that certification."

The problem though, quite frankly, is that in the province of Ontario we have had no process to ever look at these applications of compulsory certification. In one sense, I guess the minister has final authority, but some have said to me that there's no real way to even say no to such a request. We haven't had a process in place. So my predecessor, Mr. Bentley, asked a noted labour expert, Tim Armstrong, a former, I believe, deputy minister of the Ministry of Labour and head of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, I believe, for a while, to take a look at compulsory certification. He held hearings across the province which sort of corresponded with my taking on my role as minister.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Folks, can we keep the noise level down while the minister is giving his reply, please? If you have a conversation, just take it out in the hall.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I had the benefit that Mr. Armstrong had been commissioned to advise the minister. I've been able to sit down with Mr. Armstrong and hear his sense of what's happening within the apprenticeship system. What was interesting was that his report came back and dealt with the issue of compulsory certification, but it took a broader view and it started to place it within a larger context. It looked at issues around compulsory certification and drew relationships to issues of ratios, to enforcement, to—and this actually, I guess, maybe segues a bit into Mr. Marchese talking about data. He was talking about the post-secondary education system. But on the apprenticeship side, the system as a whole doesn't have a great deal of robust data in terms of all the details that we'd like in terms of moving forward with public policy.

We looked at issues around completion. He looked at the system, the way it's governed, and I think members are aware that there's a series of advisory committees that bring forward advice to the minister on various topics, including ratios, and said that we need to modernize the system. I think he certainly recognizes, as ministers from TCU going back have, that we need to look to the experts in the field, which of course is what these

advisory committees do for advice, but that there might be a way to take a step forward to modernize the system and perhaps deal with some of the frustration that's out there. This is not frustration that's limited to one sector; this is across the board, that we need to take a new step in terms of apprenticeships.

The suggestion that Mr. Armstrong brought forward was for a college of trades—not a community college or an academic college, but something along the lines of the College of Physicians and Surgeons or the law society—a chance for all sectors of the economy, everyone who is involved with the trades—which goes beyond the construction sector, but that was what Mr. Hillier was focusing on today—to sit down on a level playing field to come up with processes where there is a chance for all sides to put forward their voice and to start to delve into some of these issues that I've mentioned here today.

I'm very intrigued by Mr. Armstrong's response, as was a great deal of the sector, and I must tell you that we've received very positive feedback from all sorts of different folks who are involved, particularly in the construction sector, and we decided to proceed forward with the next step and actually develop what this college might look like, with the intention of bringing forward legislation.

To do that, we called on Mr. Kevin Whitaker, who's the current chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. Mr. Marchese and others will recognize his name, as he was the provincial adviser when it came to Bill 90, which dealt with community college part-time workers. Right now, Mr. Whitaker is out conducting a consultation with various stakeholders and parties to talk about what this college might look like.

Again, just to bring it back to the general tone of Mr. Hilliard today, I think underlying it, although we may disagree on a number of specifics, we can at least find a level of agreement to say, "Hey, the apprenticeship system needs to be modernized a bit; it needs to be reformed." I've got to tell you that the overarching direction that I've given Mr. Whitaker is that at the end of the day this college of trades should always keep its eye on the goal of making sure that we have more young people particularly coming forward to the trades, that they're receiving first-rate training and that they're completing their studies, their apprenticeship work. That always has to be the overarching goal and, as we address a number of these issues, it has to be a way to move forward. Mr. Hilliard is not here. I'm sure he will follow up and perhaps be here at the next session, but again, we're trying to find a way to enhance the apprenticeship system while still relying on the best advice for those moving forward.

To Mr. Marchese, and I know the bell's going to ring in a minute or two: I think that the core of some of the issues you've brought forward today is very much about young people not being prevented from going forward to post-secondary education because of financial difficulties or obstacles. What our government has tried to do is find a balance. On the one hand, when you look at students in general, we want to make sure that post-secondary edu-

cation remains affordable. That's why we froze tuition for two years and we put in a framework based on consultation with student groups, with institutions; a framework which goes around the tuition and limits those increases that can take place.

At the same time, the other side of the balance is focusing a considerable amount of resources on those students who need them the most. We've tried to find that balance. The textbook and technology grant that was announced several months ago, which I mentioned in my remarks, is student-wide. Other ones, however, are focused very much on the basis of needs. I think I mentioned in the question and answer period a recent study that came forward—I'd be pleased to share it with members around the table—which shows that Ontario students currently receive the highest level of non-repayable assistance than ever before, but also that students at Ontario's universities and colleges receive the highest amount of needs-based assistance in Canada; and that was from a report released by the Educational Policy Institute.

I think that again speaks volumes about our approach to find that balance, to recognize that we want to have that limit which is brought in by the framework, but at the same time, with these resources we have for student assistance, we're going to make sure that a lot of it gets targeted at the students themselves who are facing problems of financial need. To support that, as I say, I talk about the Educational Policy Institute.

I also point out that OSAP loan defaults are the lowest they've ever been since measurement began, and at the same time I think the simple fact that we have a hundred thousand more students in the system—I'm in no way saying that those students don't need support; there are always struggles there—demonstrates that students are finding there aren't the barriers that were there. Reaching Higher, I think Mr. Marchese would recognize, has been a success beyond many people's imagination in terms of young people entering the system. Some of the estimates that came out a number of years ago we've far surpassed. At the same time, as we move forward—and certainly there have been articles and such in the media—we're seeing this interest in our colleges and universities moving forward and we've seen more interest with young people coming forward and more people entering them. I think we're going to see that over the coming years, particularly—

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Minister, about four minutes and then I'm going to adjourn the committee.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Okay.

Again, to deal with some of Mr. Marchese's questions in terms of the affordability of education and in terms of where Ontario ranks, we've tried to very much find that balance between limiting tuition increases and increasing operating funding but at the same time focusing on those students who have financial hardship, who come from strained financial circumstances. Along with that, along with the student assistance, I also mentioned briefly in my remarks—and I didn't get into as much detail as I'd like and I'd be happy to in the coming days—the support that we've put forward for groups that are not always as well represented in the post-secondary education system. One can think of students with disabilities; one can think of first-generation students, the first in your family to go forward to a college or university; supports for aboriginal students, both with colleges and universities and also through a number of aboriginal institutions.

Members may recall there was a bit of back and forth in the Legislature in a ministerial statement on some additional support that we put forward to the First Nations Technical Institute, FNTI, in the Belleville area, which had seen its funding, unfortunately, taken away by the federal government, a big chunk of it, about \$1.5 million, and the province was able to, in a sense, keep it open. We are working with it to put it on a better financial footing. But again, there is an opportunity to bring people from groups that are not that well represented in our colleges and universities within the system.

The final group I would mention is francophones, who don't always have that opportunity to study in the French language. We're trying to increase those supports this summer, and then maybe I'll wrap up so members can vote. This summer, I was very pleased to make an announcement in Timmins, Ontario, of a facility where—actually it's very interesting geography—we have a French-language high school, we have Collège Boréal, and Université de Hearst is going to have another presence there. So in a sense, there's almost a continuum where students who want to pursue higher education, who are geographically right there out of a high school setting, can move forward and have access to a level of education in their language that has not always been available.

So that gives, I think, a response to some of the issues raised today, and I look forward to Tuesday morning, when we will meet again.

**The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak):** Super. You'll get the rest of your time Tuesday morning. Folks, we are meeting again in room 151 on Tuesday, November 25 at 9 a.m. Until then, this committee is adjourned.

*The committee adjourned at 1754.*

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Mr. Noah Morris, director, finance and business management council

Mr. Barry McCartan, director, post-secondary finance and information management branch

Mr. Richard Jackson, director, student support branch

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