

Major Parties, Major Gap: Post-Secondary Education Missing from B.C.'s Election Platforms

October 22, 2026 -- The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE) released an analysis of the three major party platforms today. While the analysis examines all proposals related to post-secondary education, only the Green Party of BC provided any real consideration of the challenges facing our sector.

“The lack of engagement with our sector is truly shocking” said Jasmine Nicholsfigueredo, FPSE President. “No other industry has seen more layoffs on a per capita basis in the past few years and it is largely a non-issue for both the Conservatives and the New Democrats,” argued Nicholsfigueredo.

There have been over 1300 layoffs and more than 180 program closures since the federal government dramatically clawed back the number of international study permits. The BC college and university sector was heavily dependent on the tuition revenue from international students because of the lack of funding for the sector in the past 20 years.

“The provincial government encouraged and sponsored the policy of attracting international students to British Columbia. However, when that policy backfired, the government blamed our sector” said FPSE Executive Director Michael Conlon. “It is bitterly disappointing that neither the Conservatives, nor the New Democrats see the renewal of post-secondary education in the province as a priority,” argued Conlon.

The Conservatives have a couple of passing references to post-secondary education, though at times it is not clear if they are referencing high school education or skills training at the college level. The New Democrats effectively guard against this ambiguity by not mentioning post-secondary education once in their platform. The Green Party of BC has a number of intriguing proposals around increasing non-repayable student financial assistance and overhauling the outdated funding formula. Though their platform is short on details.

“Our members work hard every day to educate the next generation of tradespeople, engineers, and nurses and it is a sad day for this province when that work is unrecognized in the political landscape,” said Nicholsfigueredo. “We need to revamp our strategy and keep working with allies and partners to hold political parties accountable for ignoring the social, economic, and cultural lifeblood of our province,” concluded Nicholsfigueredo.

For further information please contact Executive Director Michael Conlon at 604-873-8988. FPSE is the provincial voice of 10,000 faculty and staff at our 18 member locals at BC's universities, colleges, institutes, and private-sector institutions.