

For immediate release

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Federal Government introduces emergency supports for students and new grads affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

Burnaby, B.C. — The BCIT Student Association welcomes [today's announcements from the Prime Minister](#). Responding to calls from student association and advocacy organizations across the country, the federal government proposes the creation of a Canada Emergency Student Benefit and a Canada Student Service Grant, as well as temporary increases both to Canada Student Grants and Canada Student Loans.

Pending parliamentary approval, the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) would provide eligible students \$1,250 per month between May and August 2020, with additional amounts for those with dependents or a disability.

“From the onset of this crisis, the uncertainty and pressures facing students have been considerable, particularly as it relates to summer employment opportunities,” said Steven Palfrey, Vice-President External of the BCITSA. *“Today’s announcement addresses this challenge by proposing measures to support recent graduates and those taking up or resuming studies in the autumn. BCITSA has been actively engaging with government to ensure that Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan included meaningful and targeted programs tailored to the unique needs of our students.”*

“CESB represents immediate relief for students whose plans for summer employment or a job after graduation have been upended,” Mr. Palfrey continued. *“We are also heartened to see the new Canada Student Service Grant, which will recognize the important volunteer work being done by students across this country.”*

The Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) represents a new benefit of up to \$5,000 towards a Canadian student’s education this fall, and will be tied to summer volunteerism supporting communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. As further details become available, BCITSA will ensure that this information is shared with our students, in addition to updates to the Canada Service Corp’s micro-grants programs.

“Canada’s COVID-19 Economic Response Plan is providing Canadians and businesses in all sectors across the country with the help they need to get through the current challenges and position them for success as we emerge from the crisis,” said the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, MP for Delta and Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion. *“The significant new supports we are providing for students and recent graduates are a reflection of the central role they will play in ensuring that Canada emerges from these challenges stronger than ever.”*

Looking beyond the summer, many students continue to have anxieties about how they will pay for their studies. Today's federal announcements include a suite of measures to enhance the existing Canada Student Loans Program and non-repayable grants. This will be in addition to \$75.2 million in new funds being invested to increase distinctions-based supports for Indigenous students pursuing post-secondary education.

Changes to the Canada Student Grants (CSG) for 2020/2021 include:

- The maximum CSG for full-time students is doubled, from \$3,000 to \$6,000;
- The maximum CSG for part-time students is doubled, from \$1,800 to \$3,600;
- The maximum CSG for students with permanent disabilities is doubled; and
- The maximum CSG for student with dependents is doubled.

Changes to the Canada Student Loans Program (CSLP) for 2020/2021 include:

- The maximum weekly amount is increased by two-thirds, from \$210 to \$350;
- The student expected contribution calculation is removed; and
- The student's expected spousal contribution calculation is removed.

The measures announced today directly address the concerns raised by student associations on behalf of our members. Securing increases to the maximum amounts for CSG and CSLP funding have been a longstanding objective of the BCITSA and were communicated to decision-makers during last fall's election, and in meetings and correspondence since that time both in Ottawa and here in the Lower Mainland.

As governments and civil society have been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BCITSA has been actively relaying members' concerns to BCIT, TransLink, and different levels of government, in order to ensure that policy responses included measures that were tailored to the unique needs of students. The Association has greatly appreciated the opportunity for productive and collaborative two-way dialogue with the offices of multiple federal Ministers, of MP Dan Albas, Official Opposition Shadow Minister for Employment, and of MP Jagmeet Singh, Leader of Canada's NDP and Member of Parliament for Burnaby South, including BCIT's main campus.

Throughout this crisis, BCITSA has ensured that students would have access to the critical information they needed, mainly through our COVID-19 Info Hub, found [here](#).

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