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## POST SECONDARY INVESTMENTS DELIVER OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Saskatchewan's 2025-26 Budget supports students in pursuing post-secondary education close to home and focuses on training programs that meet the needs of Saskatchewan's labour force and growing economy.

The Ministry of Advanced Education will receive \$788.0 million for key investments in Saskatchewan's post-secondary students and institutions.

"Post-secondary education plays a vital role in providing talented graduates who enrich and fuel our workforce and drive our province's growth," Advanced Education Minister Ken Cheveldayoff said. "This budget delivers more educational opportunities for students and supports high-quality training programs in urban, rural and northern communities across the province."

Saskatchewan students will benefit from more than \$46.0 million in direct financial support to help fund their education so they can pursue their chosen careers. This investment provides:

- \$34.4 million for the Student Aid Fund, which provides loans and grants to more than 22,000 students each year; and
- \$12.2 million for scholarships and bursaries such as Indigenous Language Scholarships, the Scholarship of Honour and Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarships.

The provincial budget also reflects a key government commitment to increase the Graduate Retention Program by 20 per cent. It now provides a maximum of \$24,000 in tax credits to eligible post-secondary graduates who live and work in Saskatchewan. Tax benefits are expected to total approximately \$67.0 million in 2025-26, a three per cent increase.

"This program helps encourage new graduates to build their lives and careers here in our province," Cheveldayoff said.

The government is extending its current multi-year funding agreement with post-secondary institutions for an additional year. This includes a permanent increase to base funding of \$12.0 million to reflect an increase provided in 2024-25 and a one-time \$6.0 million (one per cent) increase in operating funding. This one-year extension of the agreement will allow the province and post-secondary institutions time to work through

the potential impacts of the federal government's reduction of foreign student visas, before engaging in another multi-year funding agreement.

The budget delivers \$718.2 million in operating and capital funding to universities, technical schools, Indigenous institutions and regional colleges.

Health care training remains a key priority that supports the *Health Human Resources Action Plan, Labour Market Strategy* and Saskatchewan's Growth Plan. New and expanded programs will help build a stronger, more robust health care workforce to meet our residents' needs.

The Ministry of Advanced Education is delivering \$35.3 million (15 per cent increase) in operating and capital funding to continue the expansion of health training seats in areas of critical need to the province. Funding will support more than 900 training seats, including 60 new seats this year for registered nurses, nurse practitioners, registered psychiatric nurses and medical radiologic technologists. It also includes \$600,000 to enhance virtual reality capacity in registered nursing programs, improving overall student experience and access to clinical learning.

A total of \$40.9 million in capital investments in 2025-26 will improve learning environments and align academic programs with labour market needs. Key capital investments include:

- \$7.0 million to expand space at the University of Saskatchewan for new domestic occupational therapy and speech-language pathology programs;
- \$3.5 million to accommodate additional seats in medical laboratory technology, medical radiologic technology and respiratory therapy programs at Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Regina campus;
- \$714,000 to support ongoing seat expansion of the medical radiologic technology program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Saskatoon campus;
- \$700,000 to expand the University of Regina's registered nursing program;
- \$678,000 for ongoing expansion of registered nursing and registered psychiatric nursing programs at Saskatchewan Polytechnic;
- \$2.0 million for the new Saskatchewan Polytechnic, Joseph A. Remail Saskatoon Campus;
- \$1.0 million for the Carlton Trail College Technical Facility expansion in Humboldt;
- \$470,000 for planning a new North West College campus in North Battleford; and
- \$250,000 for planning the University of Saskatchewan's Western College of Veterinary Medicine expansion project.

In addition, \$24.6 million will be provided to institutions through preventative maintenance and renewal to ensure safe, functional and efficient campuses for students, faculty and staff across the province.

Saskatchewan continues to work on strategies to address the need for veterinary services in rural and urban communities across the province. The Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon will receive \$13.9 million in operating funding - a six per cent increase - and \$250,000 in capital funding for the planning

and design of an expansion that would allow increased enrolments in the future.

The province is also funding research and innovation that will drive economic growth. Funding for Mitacs will increase by \$430,000 to \$1.6 million to add more new research internships for students. In addition, the Global Institute for Energy, Minerals and Society will receive \$530,000 to support research and innovation in the energy and mineral sectors through coordinated work between the University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

In total, Saskatchewan has invested approximately \$15.3 billion in post-secondary institutions and student supports since 2007.

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