

Red Deer College, October 3 - Selected Highlights

ISSUES, CONCERNS AND SUGGESTED DIRECTIONS RAISED BY PARTICIPANTS

- Why is the government doing this review process by invitation only? The government should not be excluding people who have a lot to contribute to the process. (*senior*)
- There are so many students out there who will never get a chance to get into post-secondary education. They are qualified to get in, but the access is so restricted, it means that many students are being denied the opportunity. I would not have been accepted into university today, with the marks that I had coming out of high school. (*high school teacher*)
- We need to be investing in post-secondary education to replace what has been taken out of the system. The reason tuition fees have gone up so much is that government funding has gone down so much. (*student*)
- There are many colleges around Alberta that continue to run a deficit. This means that many programs are being cut back and students cannot access the specific programs that they need. (*student*)
- There is a growing population of aboriginal people who experience many barriers to access post-secondary education. There have been comments in the media from people who talk about the aboriginal population, but I ask what are they prepared to do to help this growing population get into post-secondary education? Many colleges have very little support for native students and do not have the people who understand aboriginal issues available to help native students and to advocate for them. (*first nations student*)
- I am a single mom needing to work two jobs in order to afford to go to college. There are too many people who cannot afford to go to college. This is not only happening here in Alberta, but other provinces like B.C., where the tuition has also increased dramatically in the past three years. I am also concerned about the transferability of my courses to other parts of Alberta or other parts of Canada. (*student*)



- Without the support of my parents, I would not be able to go to school. I want to go on to do a law degree, but this will be very expensive for me and my family. What would happen to me if I could not get the support I need to carry on with my studies? (*student*)
- The amount of time we have to work in order to pay for school impacts on our ability to do well in our course. There is a real crisis for people who are in the middle, because we are unable to get loans if our parents make an average income, yet many families can not afford to cover all of the costs of education. (*student*)
- The programs that used to track students and support them through each year of their schooling have been cut. This has created a problem where students end up not taking the appropriate courses and are not able to transfer into the university programs of their choice. There are not as many transfer spots, so it is harder to transfer into university programs. I am also concerned about all the corporate influence that exists within the system now and how this is affecting the facilities, research programs and the governance of the system. (*parent*)