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Students Applaud the Government for an increase in Student Financial Assistance and a higher Increase in Operating Grants for Universities

Fredericton, NB - On Tuesday March 21st, 2023, the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) announced an increase to the Student Financial Assistance program by \$7.6 million through their loans and bursary programs. The government also announced a permanent 2% increase to the operating grant and an additional 1.5% based on enrollment. The New Brunswick Student Alliance (NBSA) applauds the Government for recognizing that investing in post-secondary education will increase growth and opportunity within NB and further create a clear pathway for the future.

“This is an investment in the New Brunswick of tomorrow,” says Rohin Mckenney, Chair of the New Brunswick Student Alliance “during times of rising inflation and cost of living, students need these increases to allow us to stay in New Brunswick and contribute to the economy”. For the past few years, the NBSA has been diligently advocating to the Government to increase the operating grant. “ This increase is definitely an improvement and will certainly provide the necessary support for institutions. However, it is also a reminder that there is more work to be done for us to ensure student interests stay at the heart of every discussion,” says Alex Nguyen, Vice-chair of the New Brunswick Students Alliance.

Funding provided to universities in New Brunswick has always been a topic of conversation for student advocacy groups since the amount of funding universities receive from the government is directly correlated to university fees for students. Inadequate funding from the Government often results in an increase in tuition and university fees, which places a financial burden on students and serves as an obstacle to the accessibility and affordability of post-secondary education in the province.

“An increase in student financial assistance through loans and bursaries will help to support vulnerable students ,” says Sydona Chandon, Executive Director for the New Brunswick Student Alliance. “We are grateful to see that students are a continued priority this year, and hope that the budget will reflect more changes in the years to come that will ensure an affordable and accessible education for all ”

The NBSA will continue to actively work with the Government and stakeholders to ensure that New Brunswick provides a post-secondary education system where any student can attain an accessible, affordable and equitable quality of life. As the province is looking at



creating opportunities to grow our economy amidst population increases, our students will continue to play a vital role in achieving these priorities as we secure a brighter future for the province.