



# Media Release

For immediate release:  
Thursday, May 6th, 2021

## **Students Reject Recommendations from “The Big Reset”**

St. John's - “The Big Reset” follows the PSE review “All Hands on Deck” by only one week, and further confirms the potential harm students and their families are being expected to bear. Among many recommendations that will impact the future of youth and workers of our province, the Big Reset recommends a 30% reduction in the operating grants of Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic over the next six years. This will spell disaster to the quality and affordability of education in NL.

“This report is an outright attack on the youth and students of Newfoundland and Labrador” said Katherine McLaughlin, Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students NL. “For more than 20 years, the government has recognized students and post-secondary education as a priority for the retention of youth and economic growth of the province. If adopted, the recommendations in this report will cause detrimental long-term impacts on students. We are calling on the government to reject this report. Now is a time to be investing in post-secondary education and to maintain affordability by keeping tuition fees frozen. Turning our backs on students would be a failure in leadership at a time where we cannot afford failure” added McLaughlin.

Students in this province are already struggling to find work and to make ends meet, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cutting operating grants to MUN and CNA would erode quality, close buildings, cancel programs, and place the burden to fund on the backs of students and our families. No amount of tuition fee increases can account for these funding cuts. Access to education in NL as we know it will never be the same, and we will lose students from other provinces and countries if the recommendations of this report are adopted. Newfoundland and Labrador has an aging and shrinking demographic, and with potential cuts and increases that will affect young people and the most marginalized in our province, this is a chance for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reaffirm its commitment to high quality, accessible, public post secondary education

“As a person who moved here for my education and intends to stay in the province, I can say with full certainty that students are not choosing NL for their education on any other grounds than affordable tuition. We don't come here for the sunny weather and beaches. Implementing these recommendations would be a big, big mistake and undo decades of progressive measures,” continued McLaughlin.

“We are joining MUNFA in calling on MUN President, Dr. Timmons, and Board of Regents Chair, Iris Petten, who assisted with the preparation of ‘The Big Reset’, to publicly denounce such a dramatic cut to our post-secondary institutions,” said McLaughlin in closing.

The Canadian Federation of Students - Newfoundland and Labrador proudly unites 25,000 public post-secondary students in NL in the fight for high-quality, affordable, post-secondary education.

-30-

**For further information, please contact:**

Alex Wicks, Organizer  
709.737.3204 (O), 709.640.2466 (M)  
a.wicks@cfs-nl.ca