



# Student Priorities at the Federal Level

(Presentation to University of Alberta Students' Union, January 24<sup>th</sup> 2017)





# Agenda

- A Quick Note about CASA
- Student Areas of Interest in the Federal Government
  - Areas of Interest Briefs
- CASA's Successes
- CASA's 2016-2017 Efforts





# A Quick Note About CASA





## What is CASA?

- 21 years old
- A collective of student unions and student associations that represents and defends member's interests to the federal government
- A registered not-for-profit consisting of 21 student governments representing over 250, 000 students
- Represents undergraduate, graduate and college associations
- A democratic, member-driven organization that promotes **affordable, accessible, innovative** post-secondary education of the **highest quality**



# Federal Government and Post-Secondary





# The Federal Role in PSE

Federal government provides  
over \$20 billion per year  
in support of PSE



## Employment and Social Development Canada

- Canada Student Loans Program
  - Canada Student Grants
  - Canada Social Transfer
  - Youth Unemployment

## Global Affairs Canada

- International Student Visas
  - Study Abroad

## Finance

- Tax policy
- Federal Budgets

## Statistics Canada

- Post-Secondary Student Information System

## Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

- Post-Secondary Student Support Program
  - On-reserve education

## Elections Canada

- Voting requirements
- Polling stations

## Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

- NSERC
- SSHRC
- Copyright
- Intellectual Property
- Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)

## Health Canada

- Mental Health
- CIHR

## Citizenship and Immigration Canada

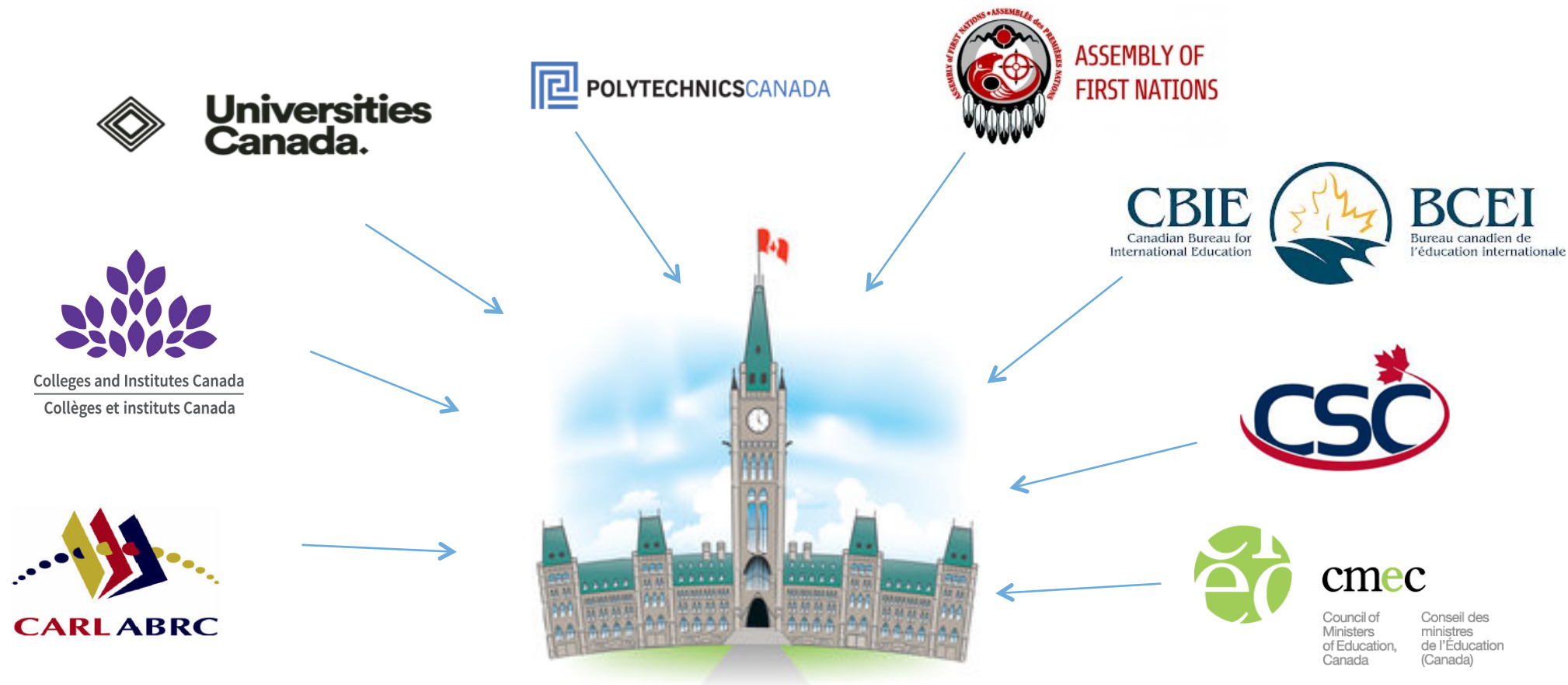
- Resident Visas for International Students
- Permanent residency for grads





# PSE Advocacy

Numerous different groups present to the federal government on PSE issues:





# Advocacy at CASA



Media Engagement



Partnerships



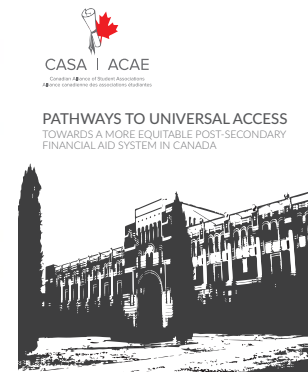
Consultations



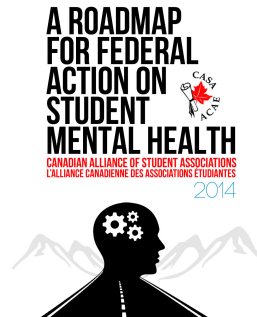
Campaigns



Meetings



Research







# Areas of Interest – Student Aid

## The Issue

The Federal Government funds the Canada Student Loans Program (CSLP), which provides approximately 60% of the funding for provincial student assistance programs, like OSAP.

## Background

- Significant invests in the 2015 budget
  - Expanded up front needs based grants by 50%
  - Increased the repayment assistance plans threshold to 25k
  - Eliminated the Educational and Textbook Tax Credits
- CSLP is in the process of implementing a flat-rate contribution system

## Current State of the Issue

The fixed-rate contribution system implemented in November – as a result income will no longer count against aid.





# Areas of Interest – Indigenous Education Funding

## The Issue

The federal government is the primary source of funding for on-reserve First Nations and Inuit students, much of which is provided directly to bands through the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP). The federal government has also provided some matching funding to other programs.

## Background

- The PSSSP has been underfunded for years
- Liberal platform included a commitment to increase funding for the PSSSP
- None materialized in budget 2016

## Current State of the Issue

Students, as well as numerous other groups, are currently advocating for significant expansions to the PSSSP.





# Areas of Interest - Copyright

## The Issue

The Federal Government sets the rules around intellectual property in Canada. Students are impacted by these rules in numerous ways (reproduction of materials, course packs, digital restrictions and locks, etc...)

## Backgrounder

- Copyright bill passed in 2011
- Included exemptions for Educational Fair Use
- Allowed for the in-part reproduction of copyrighted materials for use in the classroom
- Bill being reviewed in 2017

## Current State of the Issue

CASA will be looking to collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that education exemptions and Fair Use exemptions are preserved





# Areas of Interest – International Students

## **The Issue**

The Federal Government creates the visa rules for international students. This includes what they can (and cannot) do while studying in Canada and what (if any) impact studying in Canada has on their ability to apply to be a permanent citizen

## **Backgrounder**

- Express Visa Process updated in 2014
- Made it easier to travel to and from Canada
- Amended work restrictions
- These rules changed again to expand the eligibility of students for permanent residency

## **Current State of the Issue**

Studying in Canada now provides students with additional credit on a application for permanent residency.



# Record of Success





# Get Out The Vote

- Membership Driven (4 years ago)
- Non-partisan, Non-issue based
- Peer-to-peer driven

## CASA Provided:

- Training
  - Voter Mobilization Conference
  - Webinars
- Technical Infrastructure
  - NationBuilder
- Support





# Get Out The Vote

- Campaign Roll Out
- Media Attention
- Political Attention
- Key Partnerships
- Successes
- Key Outcomes:
  - 42 000 student engaged directly
  - Research possibilities: Abacus Data Poll
  - Advocacy: Pressing our advantage
  - Political realizations





# Seeing Success

## Budget 2014 vs. CASA Pre-Budget Submission

### Federal Budget 2014

“Many Students, especially those who live in rural and suburban communities, often require a Vehicle for travel between their residence, classes and their jobs as public transit is not an option for them. The current \$5,000 exception limit for vehicles, implemented in 1995, has not been adjusted or revised in nearly two decades”


### CASA’s 2011 Pre-Budget Submission

Many students, particularly those in suburban and rural areas, need a vehicle to get between their home, class, and jobs every day. Often public transit is inadequate in these regions, so a dependable vehicle is fundamental to their participation in post-secondary. A low of 31% of students in Atlantic Canada and a high of 49% in British Columbia rely on a vehicle to attend school. The current vehicle exemption limit of \$5,000 was implemented in 2001, and has not been revised to reflect current conditions since.<sup>5</sup>





# Budget 2015



## SUCCESSES FROM THE 2015 FEDERAL BUDGET

**KEY FACTS**

Budget 2015 saw the largest investment in student financial aid since 2008

Between now and 2020, the federal government will spend an additional **\$419 million** on student financial aid

An additional **\$889 million** will go directly into the hands of students within the next 5 years

### FINANCIAL AID

**1** **\$119 million** will be invested by the federal government to decrease the expected parental contribution under the needs assessment process

**81%** of parents support the removal of the parental income level qualification<sup>1</sup>

**92K** students will benefit from this measure

**2** **\$184 million** allocated to expand the Canada Student Grants eligibility to students in short-duration programs

**42K** This expansion will help students per year gain eligibility to Canada Student Grants

Students who receive grants as a portion of their financial assistance are more likely to stay in school and complete their studies

**3** **\$116 million** to eliminate in-study student income from the Canada Student Loans Program needs assessment process

**87K** will benefit from this change to the needs assessment process

Increases in public loans help reduce student dependence on expensive and risky private loans

## MENTAL HEALTH

The Government of Canada renews the mandate of the Mental Health Commission of Canada for another 10 years (2017-2027), ensuring a focus on students and youth

Approximately **20%** of Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime<sup>2</sup>

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**1** **LABOUR PROTECTIONS FOR INTERNS**

Ensuring a safe and healthy work-place for interns under federal jurisdiction by strengthening Canada Labour Code protections

**2** **LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS**

The federal government commits to improving data collection and data dissemination

Helping students make clear choices about their future through a Labour Market Indicator portal

**1** Abacus Data Polling Information, National PSE Parent Survey, May 2014.  
**2** Mental Health Commission of Canada. Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada. 2013. Accessible Online: [http://strategy.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Case\\_for\\_Investment\\_Mar2013\\_ENG.pdf](http://strategy.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Case_for_Investment_Mar2013_ENG.pdf), p.2.

**CASA | ACAE**  
 Canadian Alliance of Student Associations  
 Alliance canadienne des associations étudiantes

130 Slater Street | Suite 410 | Ottawa | Ontario | Canada | K1P6E2

@CASADAILY  
 /CASA.ACAE  
 INFO@CASA.CA



# Budget 2016



## STUDENT SUCCESSES FROM THE 2016 FEDERAL BUDGET



### FINANCIAL AID

1 SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH HIGH LEVELS OF NEED



Budget 2016 saw the largest investment in the Canada Student Grant Program since its inception in 2009

\$1.53 billion

to increase the student grant dispersal by 50% for low-income, middle-income, and part-time students



338,000

students will benefit from this measure<sup>1</sup>

Needs-based grants continue to be extremely effective in promoting accessibility to post-secondary education and reducing debt levels

2 MANAGING STUDENT DEBT

\$131.4 million

allocated to increase the Repayment Assistance Plan threshold to \$25,000

This measure will help reduce the burden of repayment for over

200,000

graduates on their student loans<sup>2</sup>

RAP has proven to be a successful and cost-effective program for reducing default on student debt, while allowing students to make affordable payments on their loans



### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

1 WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

\$165 million

allocated to expand Canada's Youth Employment Strategy

This investment will help an estimated

17,000

young people gain valuable work experience<sup>3</sup>



\$73 million

to increase co-op placements for students in high-demand fields



An estimated 7,500 students will access paid co-op placements<sup>4</sup>

Compensated internships, apprenticeships and co-ops continue to be linked to strong employment outcomes post graduation

2 LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

The federal government commits to improving data collection and data dissemination ensuring students can make informed decisions about their future



### RESEARCH

INCREASING TRI-COUNCIL FUNDING



\$141 million

allocated to Canada's tri-council granting agencies, the highest amount in annual funding for research in over a decade

Supporting research and innovation ensures students are empowered to conduct top-tier research

### INFRASTRUCTURE

INVESTING IN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Up to \$2 billion

for a new Post-Secondary Institutions Strategic Investment Fund, enhancing and modernizing post-secondary institutions

Investing in infrastructure projects across post-secondary institutions will directly benefit the quality of students' on-campus experience and enhance their learning opportunities

CASA | ACAE

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations  
Alliance canadienne des associations étudiantes

139 Water Street | Suite 410 | Ottawa | Ontario | Canada | K1P 6E2

<sup>1</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada, Canada Student Grants Program, 2016-2017 Main Budget Review, 2016  
<sup>2</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada, Canada Student Grants Program, 2016-2017 Main Budget Review, 2016  
<sup>3</sup> Government of Canada, Youth Employment Strategy, 2016-2017 Main Budget Review, 2016  
<sup>4</sup> Government of Canada, Youth Employment Strategy, 2016-2017 Main Budget Review, 2016

@CASADAILY /CASA.ACAE INFO@CASA.CA





# Advocacy Wins – University of Alberta

## - Impact on Students

CASA achieved a major advocacy success last year when the federal government increased grant funding by 50%

What does this actually look like on campus?

- 8,398 Student Loan recipients
- 1,764 Student Grant recipients (middle income)
- 4,496 Student Grant recipients (low income)
- \$600 more for middle income students
- \$1,500 more for low income students

**Grand Total: \$5.13 million (yearly)**



# CASA's 2016 Priorities and Efforts





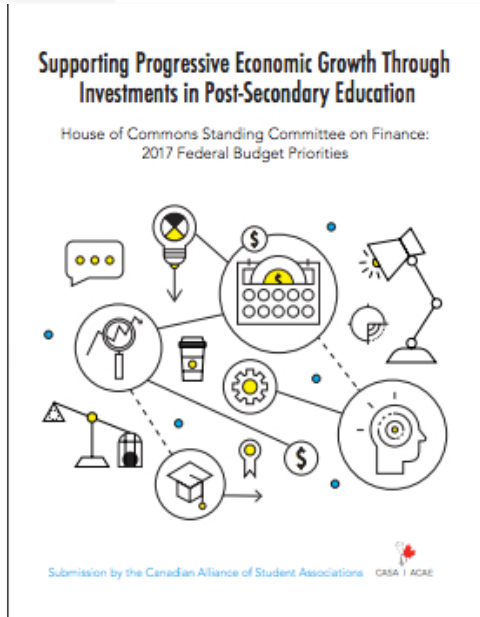
## CASA + Federal Advocacy

- Each year CASA's membership chooses different thematic areas of focus on
  - For 2016
    - Economic Barriers to PSE
    - Student Employment
    - Student Wellness
    - Research + Innovation
- Most Recently CASA conducted its advocacy week and brought forward a series of recommendations to government



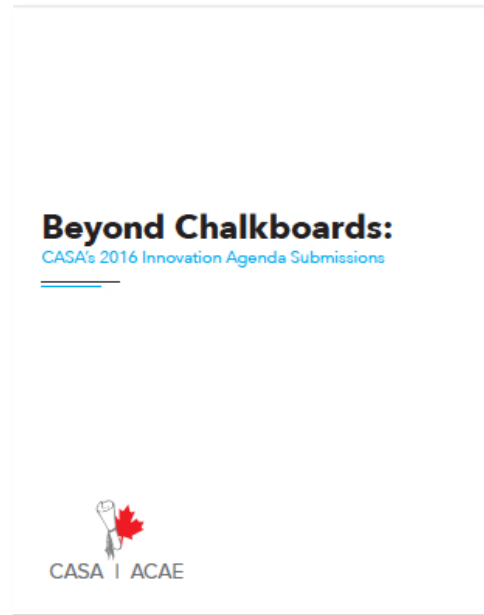


# CASA's Ongoing Advocacy Efforts



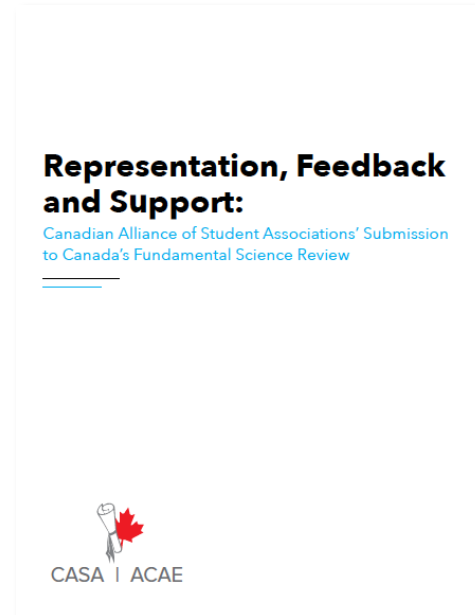
## Pre-Budget Submission

- Indirect costs of research
- Grant funding for graduates
- Student employment programs
- Increased Funding for Indigenous Education



## Innovation Agenda + Fundamental Science Review Submissions

- Reforming the tri-council application process and adding student representation on their boards
- Student IP
- Clearer paths to permanent residency for international students



## CASA's Advocacy Document

- Interest free grace period
- Mental health assessment funding
- Employer training incentive
- OERs





# CASA's Ongoing Advocacy Efforts

## Other Projects

- CASA presented to the federal Committee on the Status of Women
- CASA's New Promotional Material - Wednesday
- CASA's recommendations were included in the House of Commons Finance Committee (FINA) recommendations
- CASA held the largest advocacy presence in Ottawa in November (*source: Lobby Monitor*)
- CASA is drafting four (4) white papers on topics selected by the membership:
  - Economic barriers to PSE
  - Student wellness
  - Student employment
  - Research and innovation
- Board of Directors Identified an opportunity to develop an International Students white paper
- AGM 2017 – Acadia University





# Questions?



CASA | ACAE

