Manitoba’s Post-Secondary Education Strategy
A Partnership for Excellence and Student Success

STEADY GROWTH
GOOD JOBS

Manitoba
“New education partnerships in Manitoba link educators, employers and community leaders from across the province.”

An excerpt from the 2014 Speech from the Throne by The Honourable Philip S. Lee, C.M., O.M., Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba at the opening of the fourth session of the 40th Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

AIMS OF THE STRATEGY
Access to high quality advanced education is the key to ensuring all Manitoba citizens can reach their potential and that, together, we can build a more inclusive and more innovative society.

Advanced education equips students with the knowledge and skills they need to shape their own futures. More than just training for careers, the broader mission of education is to develop in each student a capacity for lifelong learning and the breadth of understanding needed to be a confident and fully engaged citizen.

Greater integration and coordination of post-secondary education in Manitoba will ensure that the system as a whole:

- is responsive to the needs of students and economic opportunities
- supports multiple pathways for students to attain education credentials
- is accessible and inclusive for students from all backgrounds and all regions of the province
- strives for excellence in teaching, research and student experience

FOUNDATION FOR THE STRATEGY
Manitoba’s Post-Secondary Education Strategy builds on recent expansion of our provincial system. Over the past 15 years, enrolment in Manitoba universities has grown 42 per cent overall. Enrolment in colleges has grown 52 per cent and apprenticeship placements have more than tripled.

In that period, over 400 new post-secondary programs have been developed by Manitoba educators – responding to the changing needs of students, new fields of inquiry and new technology.

Provincial policies now protect the affordability of advanced education, bring learning options closer to home for northern and rural students, and increase post-secondary participation among Indigenous youth.

Collaboration has been an essential element in all moves to expand and extend post-secondary education opportunities. New education partnerships in Manitoba link educators, employers and community leaders from across the province.
BUILDING THE STRATEGY

Manitoba’s Post-Secondary Education Strategy is based on a deepening of province wide partnerships and closer integration within the post-secondary system. The strategy is aimed at meeting the main goal adopted at the Manitoba Skills Summit held by the Premier’s Economic Advisory Council in February 2013. That goal, to add 75,000 skilled workers to the provincial labour force by 2020, recognizes that critical thinkers, equipped with the skills and problem-solving capabilities, developed through advanced education, are vital to the future growth and prosperity of our province.

Integral to the goal are commitments to:

- **Support continued innovation in education delivery**, opening new pathways for students to earn education credentials and promoting new ways to teach and learn.
- **Attract a record number of international immigrants and learners to Manitoba.**
- **Push for a significant improvement in educational outcomes for Indigenous citizens.**

Several new initiatives have been launched to support the goals of the Manitoba Skills Summit including:

- **A Skilled Trades and Technology Network**, builds on the new investments in technology training centres in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. Network plans include joint programming between colleges and a forum to assess emerging workplace trends and skills requirements.

- **A Workplace-Based Education Strategy** framed by new provincial legislation will create a more flexible model for certifying new and existing occupations. Through workplace education and training programs, it will engage more employers and open new pathways to occupations for youth and underemployed adults.

The education minister’s Advisory Committee on Advanced Education, formed earlier this year, has provided important input into the development of the strategy and will continue to advise on all aspects.

The strategy itself will be a working blueprint for action, incorporating the strategic plans developed by Manitoba post-secondary institutions, while advancing province-wide priorities that include long-term goals and short-term steps to be taken in the coming year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. **Raise Indigenous Post-Secondary Education Participation to the Provincial Average**

Improving education outcomes for Indigenous students is one of the first calls to action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. For Manitoba, it stands as a challenge and an opportunity of singular importance – one that will shape the future of our province.

Over the past 15 years, significant efforts have been made to develop new programming and culturally appropriate supports for Indigenous students at Manitoba post-secondary institutions. While participation rates and numbers of graduates from all institutions have increased, new and more comprehensive approaches are needed to address education success barriers that exist beyond classrooms for Indigenous children and youth.

Promoting Indigenous education is a goal embraced by Manitoba’s post-secondary institutions that will be advanced throughout the education system by new legislation and protocol agreements. One aim is to increase awareness of Indigenous culture and history among all Manitoba students and faculty. Another aim is to significantly increase post-secondary participation by Indigenous students. A new Manitoba Coalition for Indigenous Education will be formed to advance the goal of raising Indigenous participation and attainment rates to the provincial average.
2. Transition Supports for all High School Students

Many young people who have successfully completed high school falter at the next step, when transitioning to university, college or career training programs. Preparation for that critical step can make a difference. The province is working with Manitoba school divisions, colleges and universities to offer more post-secondary study options, such as dual credit programs, that give students an opportunity to experience advanced learning while still in high school. The province is also introducing incentives for employers to offer jobs and career starts to young people – to help motivate education planning through real-world experience.

This year a Manitoba careers website will offer a one-stop source of information on pathways to careers and advanced education. It will be aimed at high school students and their parents. It will also be a prime resource to support career counselling in schools.

A longer term goal to be advanced in partnership with school divisions, is ensuring that all Grade 10 and 11 students in Manitoba take part in an individual career planning exercise, guided by up-to-date information on job requirements, job openings and how to obtain the skills or education credentials they’ll need to meet their career goals.

3. A Pathways Approach: Multiple Routes to Advanced Education Credentials

Labour force changes and changes in the way students pursue their educational goals have led to demands for greater flexibility in course delivery and greater mobility between programs. Increasing numbers of students engaged in post-secondary learning do so in a non-sequential manner, taking the time to balance life needs with learning goals and often drawing from life and work experiences to guide educational choices. Manitoba has added flexibility to the system by developing laddered and hybrid programs, which allow students to obtain credits for prior learning and allow them to earn degrees through coursework taken across multiple institutions.

The long term goal is to promote a culture that supports student mobility – a no wrong doors approach – and provide new tools for students to use in navigating the education system. This year an on-line Credit Transfer Portal will be launched through Campus Manitoba. It will be supported by a student advocate service and by work with Manitoba post-secondary institutions to create a more transparent system for prior learning recognition and credit transfer.

Attracting international students to Manitoba is another benefit of the pathways approach and an important part of the provincial commitment to add 75,000 new workers. A new International Education Strategy will be developed this year in collaboration with all education stakeholders.
4. Manitoba Leadership in Teaching Innovation, Research and Student Experience

Manitoba educators have won national recognition for their teaching and every post-secondary institution in our province has introduced innovations in program delivery – including online instruction and experience-based learning.

Teaching excellence and innovation will be promoted through new provincial awards. The province will fund a new Online Development Hub to produce high-quality learning materials and introduce an Open Text Policy that will help instructors adapt online textbooks for their classes and save students money.

Building on the establishment of Research Manitoba and the consolidation and expansion of provincial support for advanced research, the province will continue to work with Manitoba post-secondary institutions to create new research partnerships, including independent research on issues relating to public policy.

5. Building an Integrated, Collaborative Education System

The demands on Manitoba’s post-secondary education system are increasing, reflecting the growth and diversity of the province and the increasing importance of knowledge and skills. Meeting these demands will require a more integrated education system, capable of joint planning and strategic collaboration.

The Manitoba Education Minister’s Advisory Committee on Advanced Education, was formed this year to bring together in a single dialogue the leaders of our province’s post-secondary institutions, leaders in K-12 and adult education, faculty and students, business, labour and communities. The committee will continue to advise the minister on the development of the Post-Secondary Strategy and new education partnerships.

To better track the progress of students from high school through the entire range of post-secondary programs, the province will lead in the development of a single student identification number. Comprehensive data on education choices and outcomes will greatly enhance the ability of government and educators to strategically assess post-secondary programs, identify trends and respond to student needs.