

David Eggen

MLA for Edmonton-North West

SHADOW MINISTER FOR ADVANCED EDUCATION, CAUCUS
CHAIR



Hon. Myles McDougall
Minister of Advanced Education
ae.minister@gov.ab.ca

Dear Minister McDougall,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Advanced Education. I write to you today with serious and pressing concerns about the pause of 18 programs at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), in particular the pause of the Captioning and Court Reporting Program. I have had many impacted students reach out to me in dire straits as the pause of this program will leave them unable to complete their diploma, as NAIT was the only institution in all of Canada that offered this program.

This creates serious concerns for not only the students who are now unable to complete their diploma but also for the larger justice system as well. Court Reporters are essential to not only providing the verbatim records of court reporting but also supporting federally protected accessibility rights by doing real time captioning through Communication Access Realtime Transcription (CART).

NAIT and so many post-secondary institutions across the province are struggling under the massive cuts that have been levied on them since 2019. We have seen program closures across the province and these are not just in programs with low enrollment or a lack of need. The recent program pauses at NAIT are just the latest evidence that post secondaries do not have adequate funding to continue to provide the education necessary for Albertans and the demands of our labour market.

I implore you to increase the funding to Albertan's post secondaries and to work collaboratively with NAIT to see what immediate measures can be undertaken to stave off these program pauses. We must ensure programs like the Captioning and Court Reporting Program remain available to students and the current cohort of students are able to complete their program.

Regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Eggen".

David Eggen, MLA
Edmonton - North West
Shadow Minister for Advanced Education