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Adult Basic Education Students Face Government Claw Back

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VANCOUVER—Low-income British Columbians trying to upgrade their skills are now learning they face yet another roadblock, says the president of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators.

At tax time, students are discovering the provincially administered Adult Upgrading Grant is considered taxable income, so some who qualified this year could lose out because the grant puts them over the income threshold.

“When this government eliminated free tuition for students in developmental programs, the Minister of Advanced Education insisted that low-income students would not be hurt,” says George Davison, FPSE President. “But this government's so-called fix for adult basic education is no fix at all.”

Most Adult Basic Education programs don't qualify for education and tuition tax credits under federal tax regulations, so students who need help the most are the hardest hit.

The Christy Clark government could fix the problem by restoring free tuition for Adult Basic Education.

Davison says, “The bottom line is this: British Columbians who need to upgrade their education to compete in the knowledge-based economy are being left behind.”

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