

Ontario Making College and University More Affordable with Free Online Textbooks

Province Helping Postsecondary Students Focus More on Learning, Less on Paying
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Ontario is investing in free online textbooks and educational resources for students to make college and university more affordable and accessible.

Deb Matthews, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development and Minister Responsible for Digital Government, made the announcement today at eCampusOntario, alongside partners in digital education.

Ontario is partnering with eCampusOntario to develop and provide free and low-cost digital textbooks to students. The Ontario Open Textbooks Initiative will focus on Ontario-specific content in areas where the most significant impact and cost savings for students can be realized, including high-enrolment first-year courses, French language content, content for Indigenous studies, trades and technical skills content, and content for new Canadians.

New materials developed for Ontario will be added to the [eCampusOntario](#) online library of free educational resources which also launches today.

Ontario is also supporting students through the new Ontario Student Assistance Program, which will provide free average tuition to more than 210,000 students starting this fall. By next year, it is estimated that some 230,000 students receiving OSAP will have less debt.

Making education more affordable for students is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy, and help people in their everyday lives.

QUOTES

" Paying for textbooks is a challenge for too many students. By supporting a movement of free online textbooks and other open educational resources, we are removing yet another financial barrier to accessing postsecondary education in Ontario—so our students can stay focused on learning, and less on paying for their higher education."

- Deb Matthews

Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development and Minister Responsible for Digital Government

" We are excited about Ontario's investment in open textbook adoption, adaptation and creation. This investment will directly address affordability issues for students in postsecondary education. Key partners for eCampusOntario will be faculty and instructors, for whom open educational resources will provide a new outlet for the creation and dissemination of knowledge based on their research or in their teaching specialties. The open education investment by the Ontario government will provide multiple benefits for learning and teaching in the province's postsecondary education sector."

- David Porter

CEO eCampusOntario

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is investing \$1 million in the Ontario Open Textbooks Initiative.
- An open textbook is licensed under an open copyright licence, which means it can be made available online to be freely used by students, teachers and members of the public.
- A similar open textbook initiative in British Columbia has helped learners save over \$4 million over the last four years.
- Surveys suggest that about two thirds of students have skipped buying or renting textbooks because of the cost.
- Currently, Ontario's Open Textbook Library has more than 180 open textbooks available on the [eCampusOntario](#) website.
- The Ontario Open Textbooks Initiative is contributing to the growing national and global library of open-source materials supporting lifelong learning.
- Founded in 2015, eCampusOntario is a consortium of all 45 Ontario publicly-assisted colleges and universities. It is a not-for-profit corporation funded by the Ontario government to be a Centre of Excellence for Online and Technology-Enabled Learning.

LEARN MORE

- [eCampusOntario](#)
- [Open Government](#)
- [OSAP](#)

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