



For Immediate Release

The Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations responds with caution to the provincial budget

Fredericton, NB (December 2nd, 2009) --- The federation uniting New Brunswick's six university faculty associations has responded with both cautious optimism and serious concern to the Graham government's financial plans for postsecondary education, citing a continuing failure to commit to funding universities at sustainable levels.

"Of course, we applaud any action that will help student accessibility," said Linda Lequin, President of the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations (FNBFA), in reference to the ongoing tuition freeze for students.

"But a 3% new investment in university operating grants, while welcome, may not be enough even to maintain the status quo," continued Lequin. "And the status quo, in the current historical moment, is one that sees university operations continuing to deteriorate. We are building new buildings, and renovating old ones, with capital stimulus funding, but without more stable, realistic operations funding, those buildings will continue to house ever larger classes because universities will remain unable to replace retiring professors, and universities in New Brunswick will fail to meet the needs of a twenty-first century knowledge economy."

According to the FNBFA, increases in provincial operating grants in New Brunswick have not kept pace with other provinces. Between 1999 and 2008, provincial operating grants across Canada rose by 43.8%, compared to just 7% in New Brunswick. Operating grants increased more rapidly in Nova Scotia (22.3%), Prince Edward Island (28.6%), and Newfoundland and Labrador (60.2%).

Of all provinces in Canada, New Brunswick witnessed the smallest overall percentage increase in total revenues, provincial operating grants, total expenditures, and sponsored research activities over the last decade.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact the Executive Director of the FNBFA, Gilles Allain, at (506) 458-8977, or by email at fnbfa@nb.aibn.com