

College underfunding: On the backs of part-time workers

Community colleges in Ontario are chronically underfunded by any standard. Compared to other provinces, or even to the funding of education in Ontario, the twenty-four community colleges are being neglected by the McGuinty government. Look at the facts:

Last of the ten provinces

Of all the provinces in Canada, Ontario is dead last in spending per full-time college student when you include tuition and grants, and second last - ahead of only PEI - if only grants are taken into account. In fact, Ontario spends only 70 percent of the national average. In Ontario part-time college workers are denied the right to bargain collectively; in every other province part-time college workers are free to, and do, belong to unions.

The 'poor cousin' of the Ontario educational system

Within Ontario, colleges receive a fraction of what the government spends on universities and less than the funds allocated for secondary schools. How could this be? Part

of the reason is simply this: Part-time secondary school and university workers are able to protect themselves against exploitation by forming, and joining, unions.

Do the math

Seventeen thousand part-time college workers in Ontario are denied the right to defend themselves from exploitation. Ontario community colleges are chronically underfunded. Put two and two together. As Roger Couvrette, President of OPSECAAT recently told the Ottawa Citizen, the provincial Colleges Collective Bargaining Act, passed in 1975, which denies part-time college workers the right to bargain collectively, "has paved the way for the massive use of cheap labour to subsidize community colleges."

Subsidizing an underfunded college system on the backs of part-time workers who are forbidden - by law - to defend themselves from being exploited is just plain wrong.

**Sign up with OPSECAAT today
your membership is confidential
Call us at 416-448-7433 or 1-866-811-7274
www.collegeworkers.org**

