

Education & training your family can afford

NDP **BACKGROUNDER**

Canada's future prosperity depends on how well we equip the next generation of workers in an increasingly competitive 21st-century economy—yet education and training is becoming less accessible for all but the most privileged.

Since the early 1990s, tuition fees have tripled, pushing college and university beyond the reach of too many families. Most undergraduates now juggle debts averaging \$25,000, seriously limiting their ability to start a family, buy a first home, or start their careers. And with no progress on a training strategy, many mature workers still can't get the new skills they need for a 21st-century job market—where one third of job vacancies will soon require apprenticeship or college training.

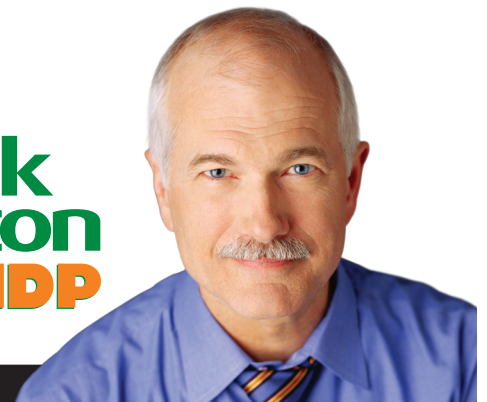
Stephen Harper can't be trusted to restore an education and training sector left struggling by 25 years of neglect. Given the chance to lead, he squandered \$50-billion on corporate tax giveaways instead. But it doesn't have to be this way.

It's time for a Prime Minister who will put you and your family first. A Prime Minister who will bring education opportunities up and costs down so every Canadian—not just the rich—can afford to get ahead.

Jack Layton will be that Prime Minister.

Don't let them tell you it can't be done.

**Jack
Layton**
NDP



Stephen Harper can't be trusted.

- As a share of GDP, federal investment in education is 40 per cent lower than it was in 1992 under the last Conservative government—but instead of reinvesting substantially, Harper squandered \$50-billion on corporate tax giveaways.
- He broke his election promise to you to protect federal post-secondary education funding by delivering it as an accountable Canada Education Transfer, as exists now for health care.
- As tuition fees and debt reached record levels, all they delivered for students were modest tax credits for textbooks, more pressure on parents to save for university from birth, and higher loan limits leading to deeper debt.
- Within a year of taking office, he cut adult literacy funding and summer job programs; he went on to oppose New Democrat bills to reform Employment Insurance to improve re-training benefits; and he never did deliver a national training strategy.

Stephane Dion is not the change we need.

- His Liberals rubber-stamped Harper's outrageous plans to squander \$50-billion on corporate tax cuts instead of reinvesting in education and training.
- In the 1990s, Liberal governments cut post-secondary education funding in half as a share of GDP and disqualified most workers from Employment Insurance retraining benefits—then squandered surpluses on corporate tax cuts instead of reinvesting in education and training.

Jack Layton's New Democrats: Putting you and your family first.

This election, Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats will release an achievable plan for better, more affordable education and training in every region of Canada. Layton's team has already led the way in Parliament:

- Tabled the **Canada Post Secondary Education Act** to bolster Canada's college and university system—linking reliable federal funding to provincial commitments to improve both quality and affordability for students.
- Launched a **Fix Student Aid Campaign** calling for a lower student loan interest rate, national needs-based grants, a national ombudsperson, and protections against predatory collections agencies.
- Released a **Green Collar Jobs** plan based on creating training spaces and partnerships to foster sustainable, environmentally-aware jobs in every region of the country.
- Tabled legislation to **broaden eligibility for Employment Insurance training benefits** to include those who participate in full-time training programs and unemployed workers who do not otherwise qualify for EI.
- Earlier, when Jack Layton **rewrote the 2005 Liberal budget**, he stopped \$4.6-billion in corporate tax giveaways and invested in regular people's priorities instead— including **\$1.5-billion to reduce education and training costs**.