

# Accountability Report 2017–2018

Department of Labour  
and Advanced Education

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Accountability Report 2017–2018

ISBN: 978-1-55457-867-2

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## 1. Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education for the year ended March 31, 2018 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. The authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Labour and Advanced Education Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the department's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education's management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the department's 2017-2018 Business Plan.

Original signed by:

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Hon. Labi Kousoulis  
Minister

Original signed by:

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Duff Montgomerie  
Deputy Minister

## 2. Message from Minister and Deputy Minister

We are pleased to highlight the activities and accomplishments of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education for 2017-18.

The department is committed to creating a diverse and innovative workforce with a focus on fairness and safety. This includes ensuring Nova Scotians can learn, work and live in a creative and inclusive economy. It also involves enhancing programs that grow our workforce, connect youth and adults to learning and career opportunities and continually improves the overall health and safety of Nova Scotians.

Here are some examples of this year's achievements:

- We continue to invest in more collaborative collision spaces, called sandboxes, hosted by our universities and Nova Scotia Community College. Nova Scotia's ten sandboxes help to foster commercializable ideas across the province in areas like oceans, agriculture, and information and communications technology.
- We are establishing Research Nova Scotia and the Research Opportunities Fund to help advance the incredible research already happening here in Nova Scotia.
- We are helping all Nova Scotians connect to career opportunities through the Nova Scotia Works Centres. We also launched the Innovate to Opportunity program and added additional funding to the Graduate to Opportunity program to help more post-secondary graduates start their careers in Nova Scotia.
- We are committed to increasing the labour force participation of under-represented groups in Nova Scotia through programs such as New Opportunities for Work (NOW).
- Through amendments to the *Workers' Compensation Act*, we are making it easier and faster for front-line and emergency response workers diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder to access benefits and treatments.
- We invested in the expansion of the Connector Program to the Valley and Eastern Strait regions with support from the Halifax Partnership, as well as the Valley and Eastern Strait Regional Enterprise Networks.
- We are improving the delivery of labour services and have concluded an average of 88 per cent of Labour Board cases within six months. We have also achieved an average 95.6 per cent success rate for conciliation matters over the past 10 years.
- We made regulatory changes to clarify the holiday and business closure rules when Canada Day falls on a Sunday, as it does in 2018.
- We passed amendments to the *Labour Standards Code*, in the Spring 2018 sitting of the Legislature, to better support victims of domestic violence.
- We are helping to level the playing field and improve safety for skilled tradespersons by introducing Amendments to the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualification Act*.
- And, we continue to take the lead on coordinating youth programming and supports that connect more young people, especially those from underrepresented groups, with jobs. We're working collaboratively with the Minister and Ministerial Assistant of Youth to ensure a horizontal government approach.

These achievements are possible because of the dedication and innovation of the Labour and Advanced Education team and our many partners who are committed to ensuring our programs and services are responsive to the needs of all Nova Scotians.

I wish to thank them for the work they do each and every day.

Original signed by:

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Hon. Labi Kousoulis  
Minister

Original signed by:

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Duff Montgomerie  
Deputy Minister

### 3. Financial Results

	2017-2018 Estimate	2017-2018 Actual	2017-18 Variance
<b>Program &amp; Service Area</b>	<i>(\$thousands)</i>		
<b>Department Expenses:</b>			
Administration	803	776	-27
Corporate Policy and Services	3,917	3,836	-81
Safety	15,312	14,022	-1,290
Labour Services	7,344	6,806	-538
Skills and Learning	129,176	131,572	2,396
NS Apprenticeship Agency	17,822	16,746	-1,076
Higher Education	58,643	60,611	1,968
School Cap Amortization	4,810	5,155	345
Community College Grants	138,324	138,324	-
<b>Total Departmental Expenses Labour &amp; Advanced Education</b>	<b>376,151</b>	<b>377,848</b>	<b>1,697</b>
<b>Total Departmental Expenses Assistance to Universities</b>	<b>433,079</b>	<b>475,904</b>	<b>42,825</b>
<b>Total: Departmental Expenses</b>	<b>809,230</b>	<b>853,752</b>	<b>44,522</b>
<b>Additional Information:</b>			
Ordinary Revenues	13,350	16,213	2,863
Fees and Other Charges	1,363	703	-660
Ordinary Recoveries	131,871	138,815	6,944
<b>Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Labour &amp; Advanced Education</b>	<b>146,584</b>	<b>155,731</b>	<b>9,147</b>
Ordinary Recoveries	31,408	31,714	306
<b>Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Assistance to Universities</b>	<b>31,408</b>	<b>31,714</b>	<b>306</b>
<b>Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries</b>	<b>177,992</b>	<b>187,445</b>	<b>9,453</b>
TCA Purchase Requirements	14,004	16,492	2,488
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	266.2	251.1	-15.1

#### Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:

Department of Labour and Advanced Education expenses were \$1.7M or 0.5% higher than estimate. This was due to a \$6.7M increase in Federal funding for the Labour Market programs, which was partially offset by operational efficiencies and vacancy savings within the Safety and Labour Services branches of \$1.7M. Other offsets include underspends in the Innovate to Opportunity and Graduate to Opportunity programs of \$1.7M and \$1.6M respectively.

Assistance to Universities expenses were \$42.8M or 9.9% higher than estimate. This was primarily due to an investment of \$20.0M for the Nova Scotia Research Trust, \$11.0M to Saint Mary's University for their Entrepreneurship, Discovery and Innovation Hub, \$1.5M to support the Innovation Tables and other capital investments.

**Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Variance Explanation:**

Department of Labour and Advanced Education revenues and recoveries were \$9.1M or 6.2% higher than estimate. This was due to an increase of \$6.7M in Federal funding for the Labour Market programs, a 1.8% increase to the TCA cost shared revenue associated with Nova Scotia Community College Pictou and Lunenburg Strategic Infrastructure Fund (SIF), and a \$1M increase in concessionary interest on student loans also contributed to the overall variance.

**TCA Purchase Requirements Variance Explanation:**

TCA was over budget by \$2.5M primarily due to the participation in the Federal SIF program for the Nova Scotia Community College.

**Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:**

The 15.1 FTE variance is due to staff turnover.



## 4. Measuring Our Performance

### 4.1 Advancing Inclusive Economic Growth

**LAE Mandate:** *To provide a fair, equitable, safe, protective, and inclusive environment in which to learn, work, and live*

- Regulatory responsibility for occupational health and safety, technical safety, the workers' advisers program, labour relations, and labour standards.
- Improving access among Nova Scotians to labour market information, employment services and learning programs that support their labour market attachment and growth. Strategic action is taken to align the needs of employees with those of employers to help all Nova Scotians prepare for, find, and keep employment.
- Providing opportunities for individuals to advance at home, in the community, or in the workplace through adult learning, literacy and essential skills, and skills development programs.
- Providing funding, services, and support to post-secondary institutions and post-secondary students to ensure high-quality post-secondary education and training remains relevant, accessible and affordable.

#### LAE's Strategic Actions:

**Work with post-secondary institutions to implement a province-wide experiential learning program, including internships and co-op placements, to provide more hands-on learning opportunities for students.**

- We continue to help all Nova Scotians to connect to career opportunities through the Nova Scotia Works Centres across the province. In 2017-18 over 14,000 clients received employment-related services and supports.
- In 2017-18 we continued to provide more hands-on learning opportunities for students. Over 1,000 post-secondary students participated in work placements through the Co-op Education Incentive Program and Student Summer Skill Incentive (SKILL) programs.
- The Private Career Colleges Division increased the number of their programs with experiential learning components to almost 92%.
- Students are engaged in 11 experiential learning projects at post-secondary institutions across the province.
- We have partnered with Mitacs to place graduate students in research positions within the private sector.
- We are working with universities, Nova Scotia Community College and private sector to foster entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking through the creation of ten sandbox spaces on campuses throughout Nova Scotia.

**Expand Connector Programs to create more networking and job-sourcing opportunities.**

- The Connector Program was expanded in 2017, with the launch of two new sites, in Southwestern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. In 2018 we announced continued investment in the expansion of the program to sites in the Valley and Eastern Strait regions, bringing the number of programs to five across the province.

Continue to focus provincial research funding on areas of greatest strategic impact for the province.

- In 2017-18, \$34.2M was leveraged from the federal government and other funding partners (in cash and in kind) on \$14.6M of Research Nova Scotia Trust funding for 25 projects. The funded research supports 558 jobs and 1,932 training opportunities in Nova Scotia for undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral students, as well as researchers, technicians, research associates, and others.

**Youth Mandate:** *Focus on attracting and retaining youth and increasing participation in the workforce*

- Reverse outmigration numbers by attracting and retaining more 18-34 year-olds than those leaving the province.
- Retain more youth in the province and achieve youth employment levels so that the unemployment rate for 18-34 year-olds is at or below the national rate.
- Increase workforce participation, especially for underrepresented groups.

LAE's Strategic Actions:

**LAE will lead government-wide collaboration in this area.**

- The Department continues to take the lead on coordinating youth programming and supports that connect more young people, especially those from underrepresented groups, with jobs. A corporate structure with committees of Deputy Ministers and Senior Officials from 14 departments and offices work collaboratively to ensure a horizontal government approach.

Supporting Measures: LAE Mandate

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA (2016-17) Unless otherwise indicated	2017-18 YEAR DATA		
		2017-18 Target	Status Update	2018-19 Target
# of clients receiving employment services, education and training supports	13,924	10% increase	14,372	14,400
# of post-secondary students and Nova Scotia employers participating in co-op work placements through the Co-op Education Incentive Program	560 students 360 employers (2015-16)	550 students	532 students 279 employers	600 students
# of post-secondary students and Nova Scotia employers participating in the SKILL program	712 placements 560 employers	750 placements	809 placements 556 employers	800 placements
# of Private Career Colleges programs with experiential learning components	Approx. 90%	Increase	Approx. 92%	Maintain 92%
# of new business start-ups or social enterprises created by Sandboxes	94	Increase	Students developing ideas. Reporting period closes August 31, 2018	Increase
# of students participating in Sandbox programming/events	3,733	Increase	Students attending events. Reporting period closes August 31, 2018	Increase
Value of funds leveraged (federal and private) for research	N/A	To leverage additional funds	\$34.2M was leveraged from the federal government and other funding partners (in cash and in kind) on \$14.6M of Research Nova Scotia Trust	Increase

Supporting Measures: Youth Mandate

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA (2016-17) Unless otherwise indicated	2017-18 YEAR DATA		
		2017-18 Target	Status Update	2018-19 Target
Unemployment rate among youth 15-34	10.8% (2016 NS Average) 9.3% (2016 National Average)	NS rate at or below national rate	11.6% (2017 NS Average) 8.3% (2017 National Average)	NS rate at or below national rate
Unemployment rate of youth ages 15-24 <sup>1,3</sup>	10.9% (2016 NS Average) 13.1% (2016 National Average)	NS rate at or below national rate	16.8% (2017 NS Average) 11.6% (2017 National Average)	NS rate at or below national rate
Employment rate of youth ages 15-34 <sup>1</sup>	66.3% (2016 NS Average) 68.6% (2016 National Average)	NS rate at or above national rate	66.3% (2017 NS Average) 69.8% (2017 National Average)	NS rate at or above national rate
Employment rate of First Nations and African Nova Scotian youth ages 15-34 <sup>1</sup>	45.7% (First Nations in Nova Scotia) (2016) 53.4% (African Nova Scotian) (2016) 62.7% (NS Average) (2016)	As good as provincial employment rate for youth ages 15-34	2017 Not Available <sup>2</sup>	As good as provincial employment rate for youth ages 15-34
Net gain of youth aged 15-34	68 (2016)	Continued gain	45 (2017)	Continued gain
% of international students who graduate from NS post-secondary institutions become permanent residents	5.8% (2016)	10%	2017 Not Available	10%

1. The data of all youth is from annual Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the data of underrepresented youth is from 2016 census. These two data are not comparable due to their differences of methodologies.

2. Census data is updated every five years. The next round of data will be available in 2021.

3. Alignment with OneNS youth employment measure (<https://onens.ca/goals/goal-9-youth-employment/>).

## Key initiatives for 2017-18

### Encourage employer participation in providing opportunities to youth and post-secondary graduates

- Working in partnership with the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Regional Enterprise Networks, two new Connector Programs were launched through the Western Regional Enterprise Network and the Cape Breton Partnership. The addition of the new programs expanded the reach of the Connector Program, adding to the work of the existing Halifax Connector Program, developed and delivered by the Halifax Partnership. The Connector Program provides opportunities for newcomers and graduates to grow their networks, while also providing employers with access to talented job-seekers. In 2017-18, the three Connector Programs worked with almost 500 Connectees, matching them with over 100 Connectors. Early in 2018, the continued expansion of the program was announced, with funding for two additional programs serving the Valley and Eastern Strait regions.
- The Skills and Learning Branch suite of Student Employment Programs continue to create additional career-related opportunities for students and recent graduates, as well as wage assistance to employers.
  - The Co-op Education program assisted 532 post-secondary co-op students find employment with 279 employers over the summer, fall and winter co-op work terms.
  - The Graduate to Opportunity program helped support 237 recent graduates to find full time employment. This included 66 graduates who were hired because of the diversity bonus.
  - The SKILL Program helped 809 post-secondary students secure career-oriented summer employment with 556 not-for-profit employers.
  - The Innovate to Opportunity Program was successfully launched in 2017-18. Three employers have been approved for funding and are hiring graduates.
- The Private Career Colleges Division continues to direct private career colleges to include relevant and effective experiential learning components in their curriculum and monitors to ensure effectiveness and delivery as approved.
- The New Opportunities for Work (NOW) program, delivered through the Nova Scotia Centre for Employment Innovation at St. Francis Xavier University, completed its project intake that helped 169 Nova Scotians from underrepresented groups access long term employment and supports.
- In 2017-18 the START program assisted 704 unemployed Nova Scotians to get meaningful employment.
- The Workplace Education Initiative and the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive completed the evaluation and recommendations are being developed and implemented to improve the programs.

### Enhance accountability through metrics and measurement

- The Private Career Colleges Division now tracks graduate outcomes of all graduates from Nova Scotia private career colleges and uses this data as key performance indicators for those programs. Graduate outcomes are now used as a key component of the accountability process for private career colleges. Private career colleges are required to report graduate outcomes one year after graduation and, for unsuccessful graduates, two years after graduation.
- Youth Deputy Ministers and Senior Officials have identified key metrics that are being used to measure the attraction, retention and participation of youth in the Nova Scotia workforce.

## Enhance programs and opportunities for Nova Scotians

- The Apprenticeship START program continues to promote apprenticeship in the province and provides wage incentives to employers to hire diverse Nova Scotians or Nova Scotians working in rural areas of the Province. The program supports small to medium sized enterprises and helps to increase apprenticeship opportunities for aboriginal Nova Scotians, African Nova Scotians, women in under-represented trades and persons with disabilities. In 2017-18 26% of the 553 active START Agreements were from diverse groups. In 2017-18, \$2M was spent on START Apprenticeship agreements.
- The Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Action Plan is currently under development as work continues implementing recommendations, including development of Culturally Welcoming Workplaces Professional Development for industry
- The One Journey program met its target for 2017-18 of helping 40 employers train and hire new employees. Many of the participants were from underrepresented groups.
- The Skills and Learning Branch continues to work with the Department of Seniors to implement the recommendations of *SHIFT: Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population*.
- In 2017-18, the actions led by the Department, related to the *Culture Action Plan*, have progressed, including: the development and implementation of Adult Education courses in African Canadian and Mi'kmaw Studies; supporting the Community Sector Council of NS with a 3-year partnership agreement; supporting 194 working Nova Scotians within the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sectors through the Workplace Education Initiative (WEI); enhancing awareness of Labour Standards, focusing on youth, international students, new immigrants and temporary foreign workers through the development of a social media campaign, presentations, career fairs, educational games, and development of print material; forming a Cultural Innovation Working Group with the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage; students in Sandboxes participating in programming to help develop an entrepreneurial skillset and connecting with mentors from the private sector; working with EduNova and seeing the successful completion of year one for the Study and Stay cohort; and the release of an Request for Proposals related to a shared space for the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and NSCAD University.

## Enhance student assistance support

- In 2017-18, Nova Scotia made two enhancements to provincial student financial assistance:
  - The weekly maximum was increased from \$180 to \$200. This is the first increase since 2013-14 and is helping Nova Scotia's post-secondary students cope with the rising financial demands of their studies; and
  - Eligibility for the Loan Forgiveness program was extended from 4 to 5 years to accommodate students who may require extra time to complete their program.
- Announced via the 2016 federal budget, two changes to the Canada Student Loan Program (CSLP) also took effect in 2017-18:
  - A flat rate student contribution to replace the assessment of student income and financial assets when calculating loan and grant eligibility and entitlement was introduced ensuring students will not be penalized for gaining valuable work experience while in study; and
  - A single progressive threshold for the determination of eligibility for Canada Student Grants, whereby grant entitlements decline based on income and family size, replaced the use of fixed low and middle-income thresholds, ensuring that more grant funding goes to those who need it most

### **Foster innovation through research and development**

- In 2017-18 the Higher Education Branch worked with the three existing provincial bodies (Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust, Offshore Energy Research Association, and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation) to establish Research Nova Scotia.
- In 2017-18, \$34.2M was leveraged from the federal government and other funding partners (in cash and in kind) on \$14.6M of Research Nova Scotia Trust funding for 25 projects. The funded research supports 558 jobs and 1,932 training opportunities in Nova Scotia for undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral students, as well as researchers, technicians, research associates, and others.

### **Help Nova Scotians meet their full employment potential**

- The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency has partnered with African Nova Scotian Affairs to provide community outreach to African Nova Scotian communities and organizations as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Framework, the Cultural Action Plan, and the Decade for People of African Descent.
- The Job Creation Partnership program continues to provide Nova Scotians with valuable work experience in the not-for-profit sector. In 2017-18 56 organizations/employers participated in the program. It should be noted that the target has been reduced from 90 in 2017-18 to 50 in 2018-19 to reflect shifting demand and increased referrals to other programs such as START or Graduate to Opportunity.
- A review of the Skills Development program, administered by Employment Nova Scotia, was completed in 2018. Recommended next steps are being reviewed for potential implementation.
- The Works for You program supported 15 projects that helped increase job readiness of non-EI eligible clients and aid in attaching participants to the workforce.
- The Skills and Learning Branch continues to advance the review of the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning. Additional resources are being sought through the issuance of an Request for Proposals.

### **Improve processes for client service and program delivery**

- Each of the four divisions of the Labour Services Branch are working to gather feedback from clients to identify and make improvements in the labour services programs delivered to Nova Scotians.
  - The Workers' Advisers Program continues to send online client satisfaction surveys to clients upon the closing of files.
  - The Conciliation & Mediation Services Division has also implemented the use of online client satisfaction surveys and is working with partners at a local university to evaluate the evaluation framework for other services.
  - The Labour Board is using online client satisfaction surveys and collects and collates evaluation data to improve program client experience.
  - The Labour Standards Division implemented a client satisfaction survey with individuals who have applied for an Employer Registration Certificate (ERC) and is taking steps to improve the ERC process in response to feedback received through the survey. The Division is also sending the client satisfaction survey to parties involved with the Division's complaint process and collecting and reviewing survey data to identify opportunities to improve the process.
- The Nova Scotia Student Assistance office explored options for ongoing service provision (current contract expires in 2018).
  - To accommodate federal program changes, Nova Scotia moved from its long standing single assessment process to dual assessment. Students still submit just one application for both

federal and provincial programs, but the new process provides Nova Scotia with greater flexibility relative to managing the impact of future federal program changes.

- Redesign and development work was done for the Confirmation of Enrolment portal, used by educational institutions, to make it more user-friendly.
- The Office continued to investigate enhancements to more fully automate and streamline the student application process.
- The Training Safety Practices and Oversight Program was deferred after the unexpected Tangible Capital Asset-IT approval of the Private Career Colleges IT solution through LaMPSS. This project provided the Private Career Colleges division with an IT solution to reliably record, store and process large amounts of data, which has enhanced tracking, enforcement and accountability. The PCC-LaMPSS project absorbed all non-essential operational capacity of staff through 2017 and is expected to continue through 2018. The Private Career Colleges Division will reschedule the project when the LaMPSS-IT solution rollout is complete.

#### **Increase awareness and accessibility of information around minimum labour standards**

- The Labour Standards Division developed and began implementing its awareness framework for youth, foreign workers, immigrants, and new employers. The Division engaged in outreach activities, including a youth social media campaign using graphics and messaging on Twitter.
- Labour Standards significantly increased the number of presentations (including career fairs) conducted from 11 in 2016-17 to 30 in 2017-18. Several of the presentations targeted youth (primarily high school students). The Division estimates that it reached approximately 2150 people through the presentations, compared to approximately 190 in 2016-17.
- In addition, the Division worked with three universities to update their internal and external Labour Standards educational content.
- The Labour Board continues to develop Information Bulletins to enhance client experience with information presented in a useful and plain language format. The Board continues to modernize its Application Forms to enhance process efficiencies and accessibility of information. To increase awareness and accessibility the Board continues to offer Chief Administrator Early Contact Calls with self-represented parties.

#### **Promote apprenticeship as a viable post-secondary option**

- The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency has completed the first two “in-market” sessions (January 8-30 and February 26-March 26), to promote apprenticeship and educate apprenticeship partners on their roles and responsibilities. Sessions included 30 second commercial on local television, 15 second video for online distribution, and billboards in the Halifax Regional Municipality and Cape Breton.
- The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is continuing conversations with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to develop a Youth Decision Survey to determine how youth are making decisions related to skilled trades.
- The Department has removed tuition fees for apprentices taking technical training. Participation in technical training has increased by 11%.



### **Promote sustainable universities**

- The Department of Labour and Advanced Education continues to implement the key deliverables outlined in the 2015-19 Memorandum of Understanding between the Province and Nova Scotia Universities.
- The Sexual Violence Prevention Committee's (SVPC's) report, *Changing the culture of acceptance: Recommendations to address sexual violence on university campuses*, was publicly released on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The report was prepared for, and approved by, Government and the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP). The report outlines 10 comprehensive and strategic recommendations which are meant to: reduce victim-blaming; reflect primary prevention initiatives; and change the culture in which sexual violence exists to prevent its occurrence. A Provincial Sexual Violence Prevention Committee has been established to ensure effective stand-alone policies are in place.
- To advance the Standard Financial Reporting initiative, the Higher Education Branch hired a Director of Post-Secondary Operations in May 2017 to provide financial oversight to the universities, the Nova Scotia Community College, and private career colleges. The position was created to give the Higher Education Branch the internal capacity to review financial data submitted by the universities, the community college and the private career colleges.

### **Recruit and retain international and interprovincial students**

- The Study and Stay Program recruited its 50 international students in 2017-18, who started their first year of study. The program is currently being considered for expansion to all four Atlantic provinces under the Atlantic Growth Strategy. EduNova is successfully managing both Study & Stay and Stay in Nova Scotia on behalf of LAE and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.
- In February 2018, the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) released a study on the economic impact of international students in Atlantic Canada. Key findings include:
  - Atlantic provinces hold four of the top five spots in Canada for international student growth over the last fifteen years.
  - In Atlantic Canada, Nova Scotia led with the international student share of enrolments rising from 6% to 17%, a gain of 11 percentage points over the last 15 years.
  - International students add half a billion dollars in GDP and support 6,731 full time jobs in Atlantic Canada. (NS-\$302 million, 4,077 FTE).
  - On average, international student spending is \$36,394 per year, per student in Nova Scotia.

The complete report can be found at: [https://www.camet-camef.ca/images/2018-02-20\\_EconomicImpactofInternationalStudents-WEB.PDF](https://www.camet-camef.ca/images/2018-02-20_EconomicImpactofInternationalStudents-WEB.PDF).

### **Reduce barriers for business through harmonization with the Atlantic Provinces**

- To give apprentices a greater opportunity to complete their training without disruptions in the Region, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, in partnership with its Atlantic counterparts completed phase one of the apprenticeship harmonization project which involved ten high volume trades and key system processes. Phase two commenced and will extend harmonization to another ten trades.
- The Atlantic provinces explored options for aligning public holiday rules and chose not to recommend any changes as alignment would require jurisdictions to either harmonize up or down.

- The Technical Safety Division of the Safety Branch worked with Atlantic partners to explore the potential to align licensing between province and develop a regional license for certain trades. The Branch is also working in collaboration with its Atlantic partners toward the creation of an *Atlantic Canada Technical Safety Act*. This initiative, approved by Atlantic premiers in December 2017, will provide more efficient and cost-effective services, reduce duplication, enhance mobility and strengthen technical safety trades. The *Atlantic Canada Technical Safety Act* initiative builds upon and includes work previously underway to establish mutual recognition of licenses for activities and occupations related to technical safety. Regulatory alignment will improve harmonization in areas of elevators and lifts, pressure welding, amusement rides, electrical work, boilers and pressure vessels, propane, and compressed natural gas.
- Together with its Atlantic provincial partners, the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Safety Branch has been working to implement mutual recognition for several types of personal protection equipment and safety training. This work has been completed with a Memorandum of Understanding drafted for signing at the Council of Atlantic Premiers meeting in July 2018. This Atlantic regional work complements work underway on a Canada-wide basis to harmonize or mutually recognize occupational health and safety requirements.

#### **Steward Federal-Provincial Labour Market Agreements**

- The Labour Market Development Agreement and the New Workforce Development Agreement were signed with the federal government resulting in additional funding and program flexibility to help Nova Scotians become a more skilled, adaptable and inclusive workforce.

#### **Support fairness, safety and training through consistent compliance**

- Changes to the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* have gone forward to enhance the enforcement capabilities to the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency.
- The Safety Branch has been working to develop pathways to safety compliance and is committed to working with Nova Scotians to build a stronger health and safety culture. There are multiple pathways to support achieving compliance with safety rules. These include:
  - Setting requirements: Branch staff engages with stakeholders before setting new rules. Stakeholder impacts including efficiency and effectiveness are considered.
  - Promoting compliance: Branch staff seek to ensure that everyone involved understands the legislation, codes and standards, including the benefits of each rule and how to comply.
  - Verifying compliance: Branch staff monitor, audit and inspects to ensure that safety rules are being followed.
  - Enforcing requirements: Branch staff use a range of available enforcement tools to regulate the safety of people and equipment when safety standards are not met through voluntary compliance.
- The Safety Branch supported the establishment of two new safety associations focusing on the commercial diving industry and aboriginal communities. The Branch works closely with associations representing the fishery, agricultural and construction industries, and continued to build productive relationships with organized labour groups to address specific sectoral concerns and to promote awareness of the rights and responsibilities of workplace parties.
- The health and community services sectors jointly make up Nova Scotia's largest employer group. They also have the highest overall rate of workplace injury, with home care and long-term care presenting the greatest challenges. The Department came together with key partner organizations to

identify specific actions to help address health and safety issues in these sectors, including the key contributors to workplace injuries.

### Support youth transition

- The Transition Task Force (TTF) was formed in Fall 2015 as a deliverable of Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education. The committee was co-facilitated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Department of Labour and Advanced Education Deputy Ministers, and included representation from teachers, principals, school board superintendents, universities, Nova Scotia Community College, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and businesses. In June 2016, the Transition Task Force submitted its report, *From School to Success: Clearing the Path*, to Ministers from both departments with 15 recommendations to help students transition from public school to post-secondary education, training and the workforce. The Departments continue to co-lead the implementation of the Transition Task Force recommendations. The full report from the Transition Task Force can be found at: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/frmschooltosuccess-clearingthepath.pdf>.
- The two department's Deputy Ministers reconvened the Transition Task Force on November 28, 2017 at the Dalhousie Computer Science Sandbox, Shiftkey Labs in response to their June 2016 report. Participants discussed progress each of the five themes:
  1. Career decision-making information
  2. Meaningful hands-on experience
  3. Transitions for youth with low marks or no high school diploma
  4. Post-secondary retention and completion rates
  5. Matching education, training, and apprenticeship programs to labour market needs

Supporting Measures: Advancing Inclusive Economies

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA (2016-17) Unless otherwise indicated	2017-18 YEAR DATA		
		2017-18 Target	Status Update	2018-19 Target
# of youth & immigrant matches with NS employers through the Connector Program	323 Connectees 109 Connectors (2014-15)	600 Connectees 200 Connectors	496 Connectees 136 Connectors	600 Connectees 200 Connectors
# of connections that lead to employment	151 employed	200 employed	162 employed	200 employed
# of recent post-secondary graduates placed in full-time roles with employer in NS through Graduate to Opportunity	120 (2015-16)	200	237	250
# of Graduate to Opportunity employers that hire members of diversity groups	14	Increase	66	70
# of post-secondary graduates placed in full-time roles with employers in NS through the Innovate to Opportunity program	N/A	15	3	15
# of participants in New Opportunities for Work Program	110 (November 2017)	150	169	150
# of employers who hired a job seeker through the START program	578	200	588	600
# of Nova Scotia employers and employees participating in workforce development and training through the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive, and the Workplace Education Initiative	1700 employers 8000 employees (2014-15)	1700 employers 8000 employees	2053 employers 6907 employees	1700 employers 8000 employees
# of internship placements in Mitacs program	176 total (116+60 special placements)	161	Meeting with Mitacs in June	250
% of apprentices who represent diverse populations (not including women)	10.4%	10%	12.7%	11%
% of female apprentices	6%	N/A	6%	Increasing trend
# of students using the Loan Forgiveness Program	1,511 <sup>1</sup>	1,000 students annually	701 (as of June 2018) Final program use data available in Fall 2018	1,000 students annually

1. Note that Nova Scotia Student Assistance systems do not differentiate between the Loan Forgiveness Program and the Debt Cap Program, as a result, some students included are in receipt of Debt Cap support.

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA (2016-17) Unless otherwise indicated	2017-18 YEAR DATA		
		2017-18 Target	Status Update	2018-19 Target
\$ allocated to increasing weekly Student Assistance amounts	Weekly amount from 2013-14 to 2016-17 was \$180 max.	N/A	Weekly amount increased to \$200 max.	Estimated value of \$2.2M
# of organizations/employers participating in the Job Creation Partnership program	70	90	56	50
# of Skills Development participants who complete a training program	1,077	1,100	920	925
% of Skills Development participants reached for follow-up employed 24-weeks (6months) after completing the program	88%	85%	88%	88%
Pass rate for GED	78% (2016 NS Average) 74.1% (2016 National Average)	Meet or exceed national average	72% (2017 NS Average) 75% (2017 National Average)	Meet or exceed national average
# of learners that achieved their high school diploma through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning	541 (2014-15)	550	538	450
# of apprentices	6167	Target not set as numbers fluctuate based on labour market	6611	Increasing trend
# of new apprentices	1416	Target not set as numbers fluctuate based on labour market	1522	Increasing trend
# of employers who have hired an apprentice	2131	1900	2242	Increasing trend
# of new employers in the apprenticeship system	260	300	211 New employer engagement in apprenticeship may fluctuate but the overall trend indicates increasing involvement	Increasing trend
# of apprentices that attend technical training	2169	Based on budget availability	2418	11.5% increase

## 5. Supplemental Information and Appendices

### *Key/interesting facts about LAE*

- LAE's Safety Branch supported the development of amendments to the *Workers' Compensation Act* that will introduce a legal presumption benefitting front-line and emergency response workers who are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The amendments were passed in October 2017, with implementation deferred for one year. Supporting regulations will be developed before the amendments come into force on October 26, 2018.
- In another initiative focused on workplace mental health, the Department provided funding for *Strategic Resilience Training for First Responders*, delivered through Nova Scotia Community College. Participants graduated from the first offering of this course in November 2017. Funding has been extended to continue the program and expand the offerings to eventually include a 'train the trainer' component.
- Amendments made to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* came into force on June 12, 2017 to provide more powers when dealing with repeat violators. The new powers target those relatively few individuals that repeatedly ignore worker safety and put people at risk of serious injury.
- The Skills and Learning Branch and Universities and Colleges Division of the Higher Education Branch are working with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Nova Scotia Community College and the Private Career Colleges Division to support the training of Early Childhood Educators.
- Pathways to Shipbuilding for Aboriginals: 11 students prepared for graduation through a collaborative program with the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre, Irving, Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, and LAE. The Pathways program has expanded to include and African Nova Scotian cohort.
- The Department is an active participant in three intergovernmental forums that enable valuable pan-Canadian collaboration with our federal and provincial/territorial colleagues: 1) Forum of Labour Market Ministers; 2) Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation; and 3) Council of Ministers of Education Canada. The Department also supports regional cooperation on workforce development through its involvement in the Atlantic Workforce Partnership.

## 6. Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest of Wrongdoing Act* was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith. Section 18 of the Act states:

*Each deputy head shall prepare an annual report of disclosures, including any findings of wrongdoing, recommendations and actions taken and shall make this report available to the public.*

The following table is a summary of disclosures received by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education:

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2017-2018
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A