



October 29, 2024

The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
3175 Saint-Jacques Street
Montréal, Quebec
H4C 1G7

Email: Marc.Miller@parl.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Miller:

Re: Policy Changes to International Student Study Permits & Post-Graduate Work Permits

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding recent policy changes affecting international student study permits and post-graduate work permits. These drastic reductions in approved permits, a decrease of approximately 45% from 2023 approvals, have already negatively impacted Northern Lights College (NLC), our region's post-secondary education provider, and the entire northeast region of British Columbia.

Our region is deeply affected by the challenges of attracting and retaining skilled workers to industries and professions critical to the local economy and the well-being of our community. NLC has worked diligently to ensure its programming aligns with regional labour market needs, including in-demand jobs such as healthcare workers, childcare workers, and skilled tradespeople. While these federal policy changes focus on national labour market targets, they must adequately consider the unique regional needs of remote, rural areas like ours.

The impact on the local economy cannot be overstated. NLC contributes more than **\$289 million** to the local economy, and at least one of every 15 local jobs is supported by NLC activities and students. An estimated 59% of NLC's international student graduates stay in the region, becoming a crucial part of the local labour force. They start businesses and families and make the region home.

I urge you to reconsider these changes and collaborate with the provincial government and educational leaders to mitigate the adverse effects experienced by colleges and communities. Re-examining the actions taken is crucial for communities like Dawson Creek to ensure our local college can continue to provide the skilled labour necessary to meet the region's urgent demand.

Sincerely,

Darcy Dober
Mayor, City of Dawson Creek

/ct

City of Dawson Creek

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Danielle Veach, Mayor, Village of Pouce Coupe
Brad Sperling, Chair, Peace River Regional District
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