

To: Elections Ontario and Mr. Greg Essensa, Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer,

Re: On-campus polling stations

May 26, 2022

We write as representatives of the Ontario Universities and Colleges Coalition (OUCC)—which represents over 435,000 faculty, staff, and students from every public postsecondary institution in Ontario. With the Ontario election fast approaching on June 2, 2022, students and campus workers want to highlight the need for on-campus polling stations. There are major documented successes with on-campus polling stations in both the 2015 and 2019 Federal elections cycles, with a 60% increase in voter turnout attributed to the on-campus polling stations between the two elections. It is no secret that students and campus workers are active voters and access to on-campus voting provides for higher participation among these groups.

On-campus polling stations not only benefit students, but also campus workers such as faculty, support workers and other staff members to have access to voting in the election at a time and location that benefits them. Many workers live in different regions and areas than their campus workplace and despite being given time off to vote, have difficulty accessing their polling station in time. Students have a similar situation as many students work several part-time jobs while also taking courses and constantly traveling back and forth among their responsibilities. With advanced polling stations and election day polling stations on campus, students and workers are better accommodated.

On-campus polling stations also benefit the community at large. Campuses are community hubs, often with bus and transit access and access to buildings to accommodate different access needs and the space required to have a polling station. During the 2019 Federal Election since the advance polls on campus were special ballots, many community members benefitted from access voting on campus and were more likely to cast their ballot.

Although the election is fast approaching, any number of on-campus polling stations would be impactful and a commitment to hosting polling stations on campuses in future elections is a step that students and workers will support.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

The Ontario Universities and Colleges Coalition

- Mitra Yakubi, Chairperson - Canadian Federation of Students Ontario (CFS-O)

- Susan Wurtele, President - Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA)
- Janice Folk-Dawson, Executive Vice President - Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)
- JP Hornick, President - Ontario Public Service Employees Union/ Syndicat des employés de la fonction publique de l'Ontario
- David Simao, Chair - CUPE Ontario University Sector
- Karen Littlewood, President - OSSTF/FEESO
- Christine Kelsey, Chair - OPSEU/SEFPO Ontario College Full-time Support Staff
- Pearline Lung, Chair - OPSEU/SEFPO College Faculty Division
- Craig Reynolds, Regional Executive Vice-President for the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) - Ontario Region
- Dale Gartshore, Chair - OPSEU/SEFPO Ontario College Part-Time Support Staff
- Kella Loschiavo, Chair - Universities Sector OPSEU