

**Ministry of Advanced  
Education and Skills  
Development**

Office of the Minister

Minister Responsible for  
Digital Government

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November 16, 2017

Dear Partners,

Ontario's apprenticeship system is essential to the economy, and to building the highly skilled workforce we need now and in the future.

This past summer, I had the opportunity to hear from people like you who bring the apprenticeship system to life. Through a series of engagement sessions, we heard your ideas and insights about how we can make the system even stronger.

I greatly appreciate the advice and feedback that was brought forward. The Ontario government is committed to continuing to work in partnership with all of the groups who play a role in the system to ensure that our efforts to modernize the apprenticeship system meet the needs of apprentices, employers, unions, trainers and educators.

Ontario has taken the first step in acting on your feedback by proposing a new grant for employers, to support the goal of improving apprenticeship completion rates and increasing the participation of traditionally underrepresented groups. As you may have seen in the Fall Economic Statement, the Ontario government is proposing to replace the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit with a new Graduated Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (GAGE). We are also introducing changes to the Employer Completion Bonus.

Effective November 15, 2017, employers registering a new apprentice will be automatically assessed for eligibility for the new grant. The grant amount increases over time for the eligible employer sponsor, as the apprentice moves through to completion.

GAGE will include a bonus for employers hiring and training apprentices from an underrepresented group including women, Indigenous peoples, Francophones, people with disabilities, newcomers, and visible minorities.. In addition, the government is developing a bonus for in-demand trades, to support training apprentices now to meet projected future labour market needs. There is also work underway to explore developing a grant program for new and existing group sponsors, with a focus on small business employers.

A questions and answers document is enclosed that will address many of your queries. If you have any further questions, please contact your Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development [local office](#) or the [Employment Ontario Contact Centre](#). We remain committed to sharing with you as much information as possible on these and other important initiatives.

The new Graduated Apprenticeship Grant for Employers is one key element of a comprehensive apprenticeship modernization strategy. Thank you for your ongoing engagement and support in making Ontario's apprenticeship system the best it can be. I look forward to communicating with you on other exciting apprenticeship modernization initiatives in the New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Matthews". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Matthews  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development  
Minister Responsible for Digital Government