

March 24, 2021

Hon. Doug Ford,
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

As representatives of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in Canada (ACCUC) which represents twenty-one post-secondary institutions across Canada, many of which exist in federated or affiliated with Canada's public universities, we are writing to express our deep concern for the situation currently developing at Laurentian University and its potential implications for one of our member institutions, the Université de Sudbury/University of Sudbury.

Originally founded in 1913 as the Collège du Sacré-Cœur, the Université de Sudbury is the oldest postsecondary institution in Northern Ontario and one of only a very few bilingual universities in Ontario. It has also been a federated partner of Laurentian University since the latter's founding in 1960. The recent announcement on February 1 that Laurentian is insolvent and seeking creditor protection – an almost unprecedented development for a publicly-funded Canadian university – has us particularly concerned for the future implications for the Université de Sudbury. Despite conducting its financial operation responsibly, the Université de Sudbury is dependent on Laurentian for its financial support from the Government of Ontario.

As a Jesuit university that is open to a diverse array of students representing all backgrounds and traditions, the Université de Sudbury has a strong historical record of educating and forming leaders within the Franco-Ontarian community within the imperative of “forming women and men for others.”

As the heads of Catholic universities and colleges across Canada, we were particularly alarmed when Laurentian's president, Dr. Robert Haché, suggested in his publicly available affidavit that “termination” of its longstanding relationships with the Université de Sudbury and its other federated colleges was one of the possibilities facing the university in order to address its financial insolvency. At this time, we respectfully draw your attention to the following information:

- The Université de Sudbury provides post-secondary courses and programs in French and English to students in Northern Ontario and from around the world.
- The Université de Sudbury is where the Franco-Ontarian flag was first raised on September 25, 1975.
- The Université de Sudbury was one of the first in Canada to establish an Indigenous Studies program. This program has long served Indigenous communities and promoted understanding and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

As the presidents, principals, rectors and rectrices of the Catholic universities and colleges of Canada, we express to you our deep concern for the present vulnerability facing the Université de Sudbury as a result of the recent revelations from Laurentian University.

Yours Sincerely,

Peter Meehan, Ed.D.
Chair, ACCUC
President and Vice-Chancellor, St. Jerome's University, University of Waterloo

John Cappucci, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, ACCUC
Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Assumption University, University of Windsor

Christopher Adams, Ph.D.
Rector, St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba

Chantal Beauvais, Ph.D.
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Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishop Liaison to ACCUC

David Malloy, Ph.D.
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Dawn Russell, Q.C.
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cc. Hon. Ross Romano, Minister of Colleges and Universities
Paul Davidson, Universities Canada