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NAITSA EXTERNAL RELATIONS & ADVOCACY 2026-27



INTRODUCTION

Established in 2008, NAITSA's External Relations Department pursues issues that affect NAIT students and Alberta's post-secondary education system. NAITSA works with other students' associations and the Alberta Student Executive Council (ASEC) to achieve both short and longterm advocacy goals. Through a collaborative approach with NAIT and NAIT students, NAITSA builds and strengthens our relationships with NAIT administration, local municipalities, the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada. With strong relationships NAITSA can achieve more with an advocacy approach.

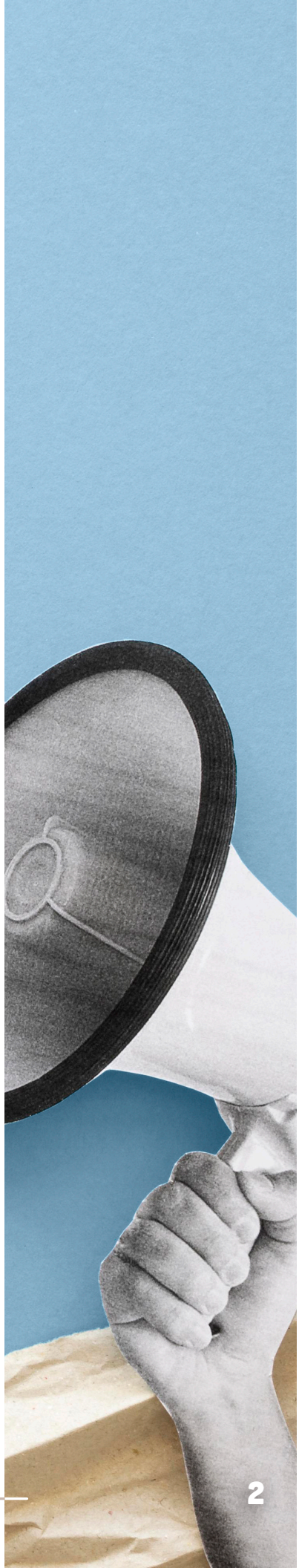
ISSUES FACING NAIT STUDENTS

MINTZ PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

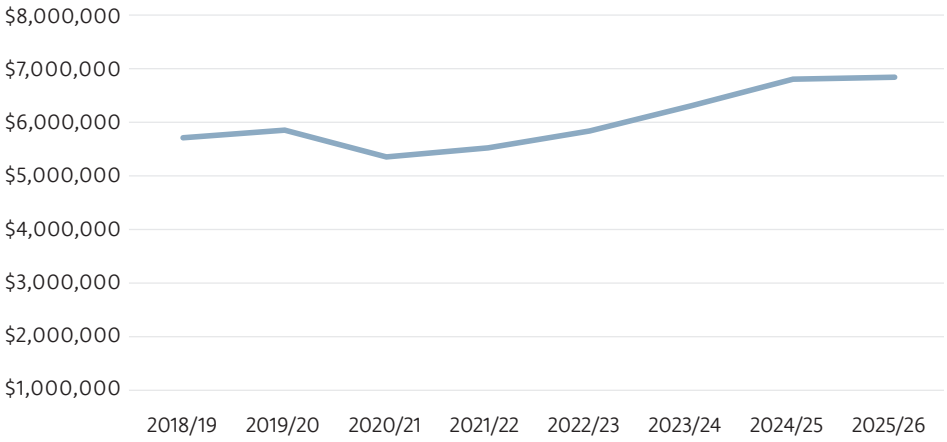
The Government of Alberta's "Expert Panel on Post-Secondary Institution Funding and Alberta's Competitiveness" has released its report with 11 recommendations that would change how institutions are funded and how tuition is determined. Alberta Advanced Education has stated that these recommendations will be implemented to some degree. Funding would be determined by three components: enrolment, performance, and base funding. The enrolment component would be based on market demand, delivery cost and government priorities. Those factors would determine which "cluster" a program is placed in and how much the program will be funded. Tuition would be determined by the cluster a program is in. NAITSA, along with our partners at ASEC, will be closely watching how this will be implemented and engaging with government accordingly.

THE INCREASED BURDEN ON STUDENTS

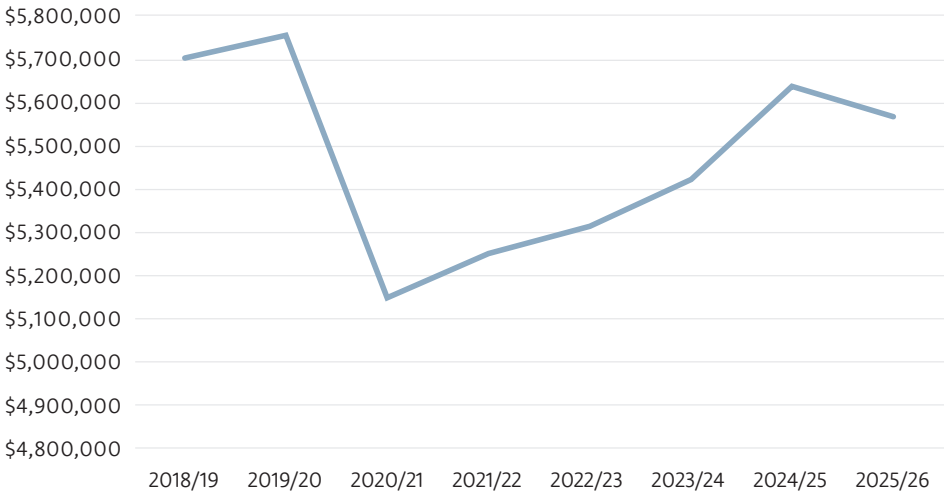
Between 2019 and 2022 NAIT saw its funding from the Government of Alberta cut by over 20%. Funding for post-secondary operations has been inconsistent and unpredictable in recent years.



Post-Secondary Operations

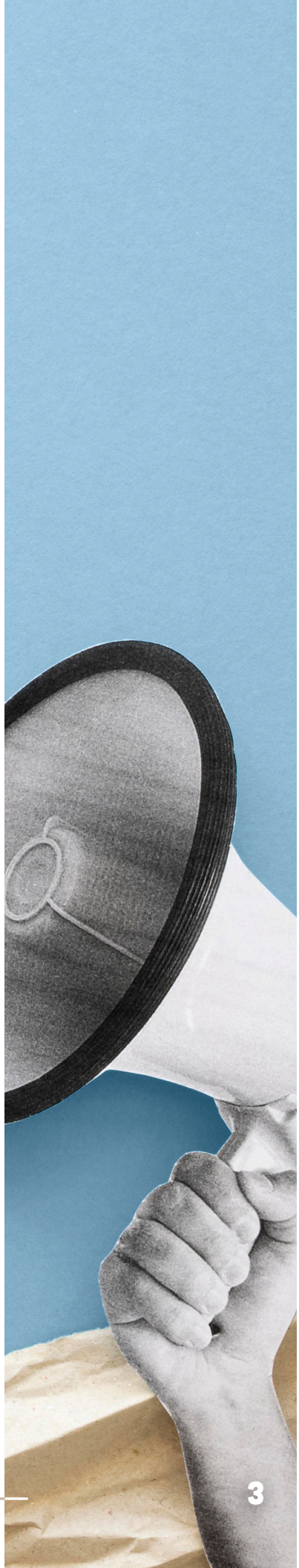


Post-Secondary Operations 2018 Chained Dollars

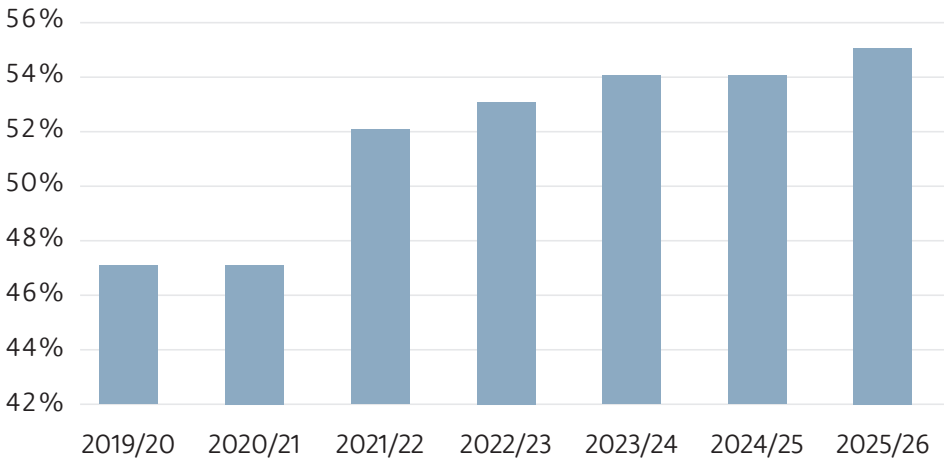


When inflation is considered, funding for post-secondary operations has fallen 14.3% since 2018-19. Total spending on Advanced Education is flat compared to 2018-19 and in real terms has fallen 11.4%.

The current government believes that post-secondary institutions should find the majority of their funding by themselves. NAITSA fundamentally disagrees with this position as it will negatively impact the quality of education. It is unsustainable for NAIT, a public post-secondary, to find more than half of their own revenue. The Alberta government's budget documents refer to post-secondary funding as a "burden" on the taxpayer rather than an investment in our province's prosperity. NAITSA believes that it is only logical that a public post-secondary institution receives the majority of its funding from the public. We will continue to press for this in the coming years.



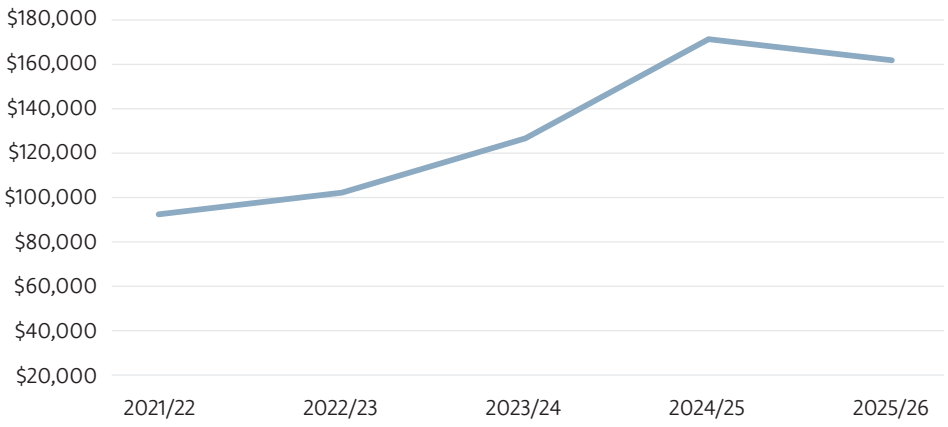
Post-Secondary Own-Source Funding

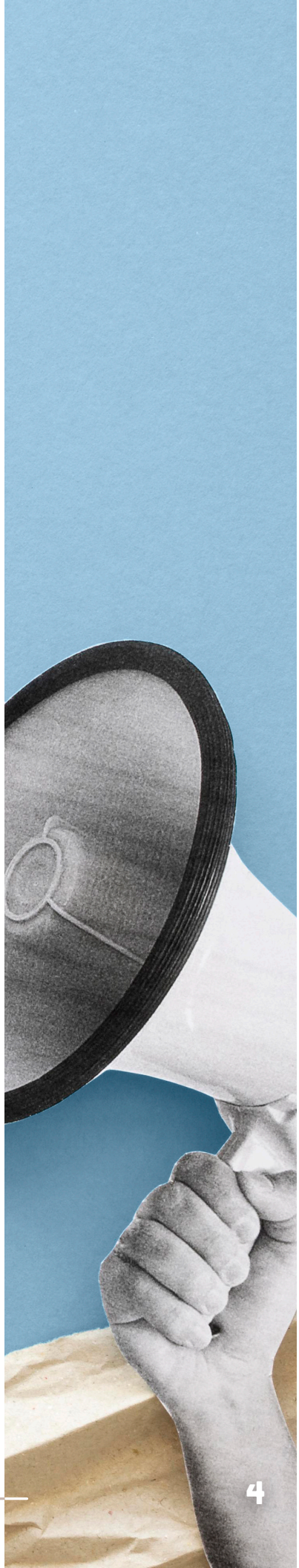


NAIT'S OVER-RELIANCE ON STUDENT REVENUE

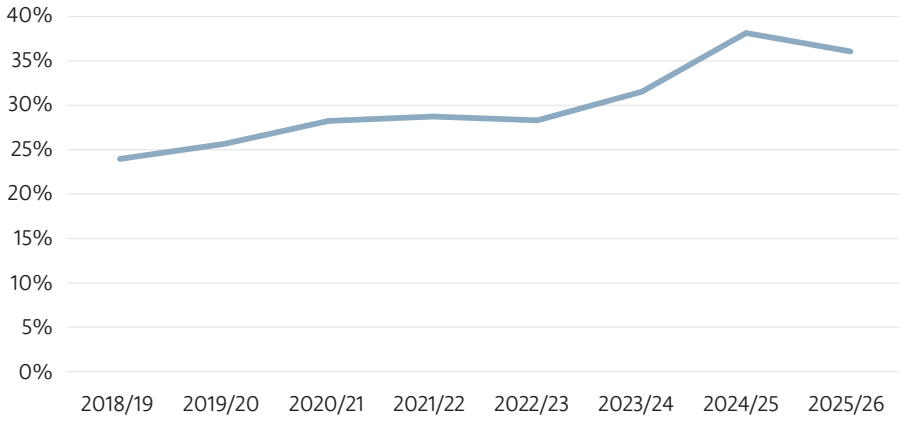
Provincial grants to NAIT have risen by 14% over the past 5 years, a figure that drops to -5.5% when adjusted for inflation. At the same time, NAIT's revenue from student tuition and fees has risen 74%. Over the past 5 years the percentage of NAIT's total revenue that is generated from student tuition and fees has skyrocketed. NAIT students now pay for 36% of all revenues. Support from government has steadily eroded since 2018-19, but students have more than made up their fair share of that loss. If NAIT needs money, it shouldn't be looking at students to get it.

Student Tuition and Fees





Student Tuition and Fees as a Percentage of NAIT's Revenue



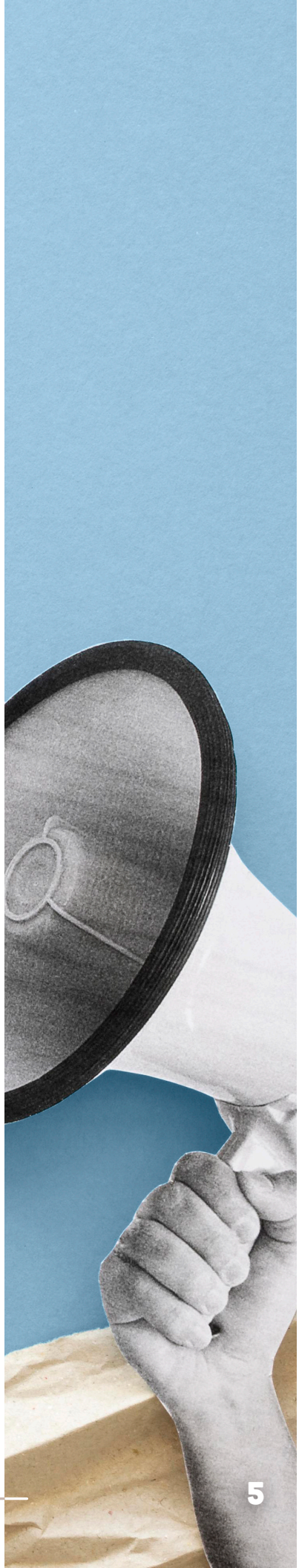
Over the past 4 years the amount that students are paying in mandatory non-instructional fees has risen 122% and is scheduled to climb even higher. NAITSA will continue to fight against these unreasonable increases to student costs.

EDMONTON TRANSIT BUS REPLACEMENT

On May 12, 2026, City of Edmonton administration presented the report "Edmonton Transit Service Conventional Bus Renewal Needs" to Edmonton City Council's Urban Planning Committee that outlined the issue of ETS' ageing bus fleet. They key points in the report were:

- ETS has replaced an average of 48 buses per year for the past 15 years.
- The North American average for retiring 40-foot buses is 15.1 years.
- Currently Edmonton is retiring 40-foot buses at 24 years.
- Due to unavailability of parts, the 30-foot bus fleet procured in 2017 will need to be retired and replaced by 2030.
- Even with a moderate level of replacement, more than half of ETS' conventional fleet will exceed 20 years of age in the 2027-30 budget cycle.
- Currently the City has close to 1000 buses, including 879 40-foot, 49 30-foot and 55 60-foot.
- In the 2027-30 budget cycle there will be 818 40-foot buses with 496 of them being 20 years old or older. That is more than 60%.

The report presented three scenarios. Scenario 1 was no extra replacement. Scenario 2 was minimal renewal and scenario 3 was targeted renewal. The Committee selected scenario 3. This scenario represents a plan to address bus renewal in the upcoming budget cycle. The plan would have 75 buses replaced annually, or 300 over



a 4-year cycle. At the start of the following 2031-34 budget cycle there would be 191 buses over 20 years old. If in that cycle 50 buses are replaced annually, they could achieve an 18-year retirement age by 2036. The advocacy group Edmonton Transit Riders has cited a report that is now unavailable that states that if targeted renewal is not undertaken that ETS could lose more than 13% of its service capability.

What report does not address is the fact that their fleet of 60 electric buses, acquired in 2020 at a cost of $1 million each, have been plagued with problems. Most are now off the road.

This situation presents a very real threat to the quality and frequency of transit service for our students, many of whom are paying mandatory U-Pass fees. NAITSA will be working to ensure that City Council chooses to fund scenario 3.

TRANSIT SAFETY

NAITSA continues to work with our transit partners on safety, cleanliness and service quality. According to NAITSA's annual survey of students over 30% of NAIT students are unsatisfied with safety on LRT and 38% are unsatisfied with transit cleanliness. 38% of students say that they have witnessed a crime on public transit. NAITSA will continue to work with our transit partners to address these important issues.

HOUSING

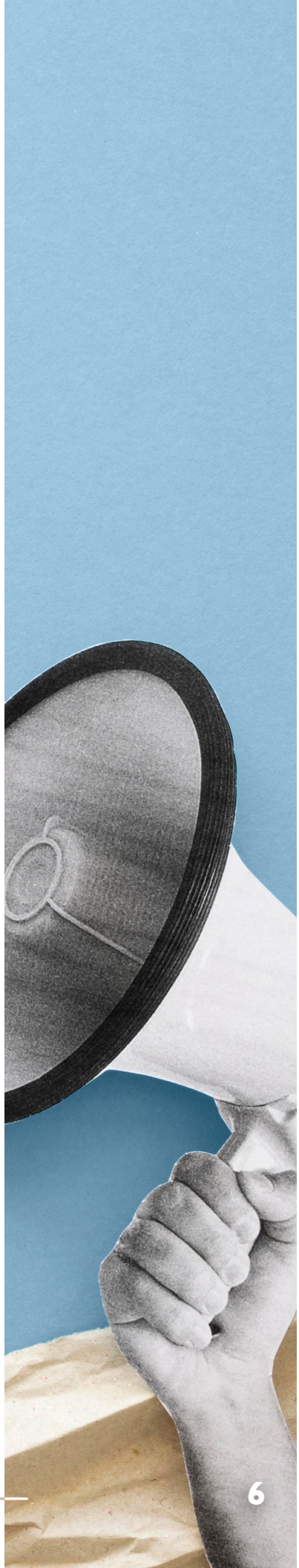
NAITSA has been working with NAIT for several years on concepts for an on-campus residence. NAIT is the only post-secondary of its size in Alberta that does not have student housing. NAIT is pursuing an on-campus residence, but without student input. NAITSA has met with the government regarding this issue and will continue to champion this goal in the future.

APPRENTICESHIP AND INDUSTRY TRAINING

NAITSA works to ensure that apprenticeship students have their voice heard and the services they deserve. NAITSA will be engaging government in an effort to have AIT update outdated exams and courses and fix inaccuracies in course materials and exams.

NAIT ADVANCED SKILL CENTRE

As part of a multi-year project to consolidate and modernize NAIT's campuses, Advanced Education has started funding planning for a new Advanced Skills Centre at NAIT's main campus. NAITSA wants to ensure that NAIT builds this essential training centre with future students in mind and adequate study spaces are available for students who attend classes there.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

NAITSA is concerned about the effects of A.I. on both academic integrity and the future job market for NAIT graduates. The NAITSA Executive team is working to ensure A.I. is properly managed and regulated at NAIT.

U-PASS CHANGES

NAIT has advised NAITSA that in the future they will be moving to a mobile version of the campus ID card, the One at NAIT card. Currently the U-Pass is linked with the One at NAIT card. However, the City of Edmonton and other transit partners do not have a mobile version of transit fares. Therefore, NAIT's U-Pass will be de-linked from the One at NAIT card and students will need to use an ARC card instead. NAITSA anticipates this change as soon as September, 2027. NAITSA is working with NAIT to ensure a smooth transition.

METHODS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH ADVOCACY, NOT ACTIVISM

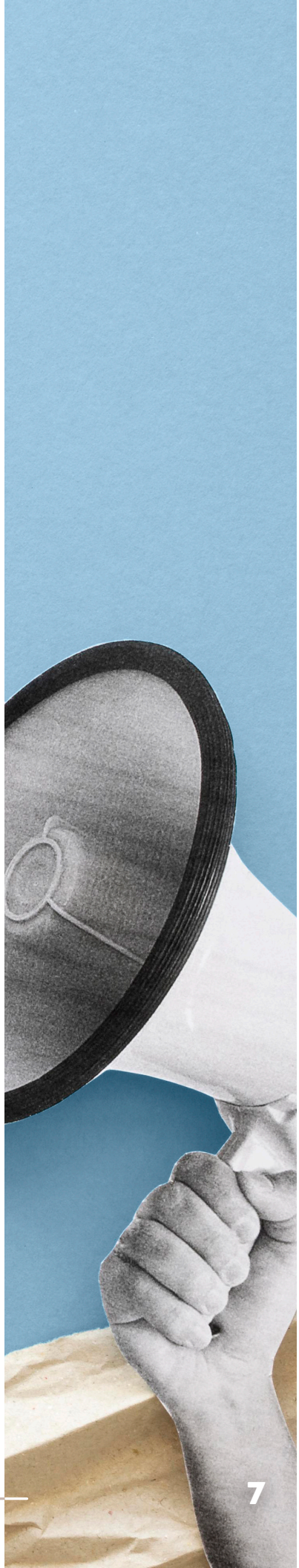
NAITSA's default advocacy method is to build relationships rather than be adversarial. While NAITSA may not always agree with the government's actions and policies, it is far more effective to discuss our issues with them in person rather than organize demonstrations that distance ourselves from them and create animosity. If the default position is to protest, then it can create activist fatigue. There is a place for demonstrations in the advocacy toolbox, but it is not the tool we use unless absolutely necessary.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important to inform students and the public about our advocacy efforts and the facts surrounding issues that are important to students. One of the ways that NAITSA communicates with students is through our various social media platforms.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Occasionally NAITSA will need to get messages out to the public at large through press releases and press conferences. While NAITSA serves NAIT students, it is important for us to keep taxpayers and the community at large informed of important post-secondary issues.



PARTNERSHIPS

ASEC

The Alberta Students' Executive Council is a student-led advocacy organization that includes sixteen student associations from across Alberta, collectively representing over 130,000 post-secondary students. By pooling our resources and coordinating our efforts, we amplify students' voices and more effectively engage with the government on their behalf.

U-PASS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NAITSA, along with our colleagues from Macewan University, the University of Alberta and NorQuest College have a strong partnership with Edmonton Transit Service and the transit providers of Strathcona County, Fort Saskatchewan, St. Albert, Leduc, Beaumont, and Spruce Grove. Together we discuss and work on transit issues that affect students.

EDMONTON STUDENT ALLIANCE

The students' associations and unions of Edmonton's public post-secondaries have formed the Edmonton Student Alliance to coordinate research and lobbying efforts with respect to municipal issues. These issues include transit, housing, youth employment, and sustainability.

