



JOBS DISAPPEARING → Athabasca University’s Board of Governors and Executive have launched an ill-conceived “near-virtual” plan that will basically close the Athabasca campus. By 2022, almost all staff will permanently work from home and new staff will be hired from anywhere in Canada.

In 2017, more than 400 people were employed at the Athabasca campus. By 2022, less than 40 are expected to report there. Athabasca will eventually lose almost 400 good-paying jobs and about \$37 million in annual wages, resulting in \$100 million in economic loss to the region every year.

While AU registrations are growing, this experiment risks the survival of the university. As well, rapid depopulation of the region is expected, schools will shrink, businesses will close, housing prices will fall, and the property tax base will suffer big time. Perhaps more tragic is the loss of social capital in the area, as bright young families move away or are never recruited to work here.

HELP KEEP ATHABASCA IN AU → If you want to keep Athabasca’s place in Athabasca University operations, write to Premier Kenney to make him aware of what is going on in with Athabasca University and the risks to our community. Copy your MLA, the Minister of Advanced Education, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and any other minister who should have your interests at heart.

If you are in farming or forestry, for example, Devin Dreeshen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry would like to know what’s going on. Finance Minister Travis Toews should also know that the Board of Governors plans to abandon \$118 million in government-funded capital assets in Athabasca, with no plan for reuse. A list of ministers with their addresses is attached.

LETTERS NEEDED → A sample letter is attached you can refer to, but it’s far better to write your own. Background notes are included to help. If you start with the sample letter, it’s best to personalize it by adding your concerns and stories. How has AU affected you, your business and your family? Were you a student or employee? How has that affected your life? Hand-written (legible) letters carry a lot more weight than computer-typed letters. Letters are far better than emails, and emails also help.

We estimate 1,000 letters are needed to make a difference with the Alberta government. Please write as many letters as you can and forward this call to action to everyone you can through social media, email and word of mouth. We need to make this a huge issue for the government to reverse the short-sighted and disastrous scheme by Athabasca University’s Board of Governors.

“Keep Athabasca in Athabasca University” community group representatives

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