

Update from our president: Campus consolidation

This message is sent to all employees on Sept. 26, 2025, on behalf of Kevin Weaver, President and CEO.

Dear colleagues,

The news I'm sharing with you today is likely unexpected and will take time to process. You're going to wonder why I'm communicating it on a Friday and during a labour disruption. The truth is I wanted you to hear it from me as soon as possible and with full transparency after approval from our Board of Governors last night – and with the reassurance there's no immediate impact on staffing.

As you know, Georgian is not alone in the sector in the tough decisions we're having to make. The time to act is now to protect our college and ensure a sustainable future.

Orillia and Muskoka programs relocating

Georgian continues to work through a series of recommendations as part of our efficiencies review. After careful evaluation and as we continue our collaborative efforts to ensure our long-term success, we've made the difficult but necessary decision to consolidate the Orillia and Muskoka campuses with the Barrie Campus, with all programs and apprenticeship offerings planned to transition to Barrie by fall 2026. This is a permanent consolidation with both campuses, including the Orillia residence, to be sold:

- The Orillia Campus will close in summer 2026, with programs transitioning to Barrie starting in May.
- The Muskoka Campus will close in August 2026. Most current students will have completed their program of study by this time; however, students who need courses to complete their program will be supported with options.

Ultimately, this decision helps us to expand enrolment, protect jobs and effectively manage our operating budget and cash flow.

First and foremost, our priority is our students' experience and success. By consolidating operations in Barrie, we can focus resources where they have the greatest potential for impact with learners – offering improved access to services, more programs in one place, and a vibrant

campus life that would be otherwise difficult to sustain in Orillia and Muskoka. We'll take some money from these sales to support the move and ensure students have access to new learning spaces, and the remainder will help protect our financial future.

Why now?

This was a big decision, and we need to move forward to ensure our students are accommodated with the high-quality standards Georgian is known for. We want to give you and our students as much time as possible to prepare for the transition and be ready to support and welcome them to a new campus. We also need to put things into motion to be ready for the upcoming recruitment cycle and Open House this fall.

As previously shared, we approved a \$13-million deficit this year and anticipate a significant deficit budget again in the next few fiscal years. Unmitigated, we'd run into serious cash flow challenges by 2027-28. These bold and decisive actions will ensure Georgian is able to serve our region for years to come.

Honouring our roots and legacy

The Orillia and Muskoka campuses have been an important part of Georgian's story – places where students prepared for rewarding careers, lasting friendships formed, and ties with our communities have grown. Many of you have played an integral role in building and strengthening our presence in these locations. Your contributions have been invaluable and in no way does this decision reflect your commitment or outstanding efforts. We understand how meaningful these campuses are and will honour and celebrate their legacy.

We have deep roots in these communities, and I want to be clear: We remain fully committed to these regions. While our physical campuses will close, Georgian will continue serving local students and partners in Orillia and Muskoka through partnerships and community initiatives, work-integrated learning opportunities, and as a regional hub for education.

Additionally, Georgian remains committed to ensuring the next chapter for these sites aligns with community priorities and supports regional social and economic development. We're currently exploring ways the facilities might continue to benefit the community under new stewards, building on our longstanding partnerships. In Orillia, we're working alongside Indigenous community leaders on the future of the *Debwewin miinwaa Naaskodaadiwin Miikaans* Truth and Reconciliation Trail and will also collaborate with new site owners on a path forward for the cenotaph. I'll provide an update on this when I can.

At the same time, we remain committed to optimizing our broader campus network. We continue our work to evaluate potential opportunities for our John Di Poce South Georgian Bay Campus, and to build on the positive contributions of our Midland, Orangeville and Owen

Sound campuses. These locations remain vital to our regional presence and our ability to serve diverse communities.

Key factors leading to consolidation

The decision to consolidate the Orillia and Muskoka campuses with Barrie wasn't made lightly. Georgian has undertaken a thorough review of student needs and enrolment trends, labour-market forecasts, community impact and our financial realities. We analyzed student demand, program viability and growth opportunities, considered operational costs and, of course, the student experience.

Our goal is to ensure students continue to have access to high-quality programs and services, while safeguarding the college. Throughout the assessment and the decision-making process, we worked to balance the needs of students, employees and the wider community with the need to secure the future of the college so we can continue to deliver on our mandate and mission.

While this news is hard to share, it's grounded in careful analysis and a commitment to strengthening the college as a whole:

- **Ensuring responsible financial stewardship.** Maintaining the Orillia and Muskoka campuses would become increasingly difficult. Despite the deep connections we have to these communities, both campuses carry significantly higher per-student operating costs compared to the college's overall averages. After thorough evaluation, it became clear that continuing to operate these sites in their current form would place additional strain on our resources. The consolidation is expected to save the college approximately \$23.5 million over the next five years. The sale of these assets will also provide a cash injection that will protect our cash flow and ensure we're able to make payroll and continue to serve our students well in the years ahead. While it doesn't solve all our financial challenges, it places us on a stronger path toward long-term sustainability.
- **Enhancements to the overall experience.** Moving programs to Barrie will provide students with access to a wider range of services, facilities, a broader employer network, and a diverse, vibrant campus community. Other benefits include enhanced interdisciplinary learning and more opportunities for innovation in teaching and research.
- **Ability to accommodate programs.** With the expansion of our downtown presence and our expanded Centre for Skilled Trades, we have the additional classrooms, labs and office space required to successfully accommodate Orillia and Muskoka programming, students and employees at our two Barrie locations.

- **Evolving student enrolment.** More than 50% of Orillia Campus students live in Barrie or closer to Barrie than Orillia, and Orillia domestic enrolment remains below pre-pandemic levels. Our Muskoka enrolment has been limited – with little opportunity for growth. In an environment where we must demonstrate efficiency and financial prudence while continuing to provide access to postsecondary options within reasonable regional proximity, it’s difficult to justify sustaining the operating costs of campuses with limited or diminished enrolment.
- **Driving growth in areas of opportunity while responding to forecasts for regional labour-market demand.** Our analysis of student and labour-market demand indicates we have a better chance of increasing enrolment in programs once they’ve transitioned to Barrie. Our data also reinforces that applicants from within our catchment that we’ve historically lost to other institutions would likely benefit if programs were in closer proximity to Barrie. Graduate employment outcomes and experiential learning opportunities may expand as well.
- **Optimal use of resources.** Streamlining and centralizing our resources will reduce duplication and improve efficiency.

Supporting our students, employees and communities

We have thoughtful support and care plans in place to guide you, our students and communities through and beyond the transition – [grounded in our value of care](#). For those directly impacted, you’ll hear more about how this affects you in the coming weeks and into the new year. I know how unsettling it is to wait to hear more but I wanted to share this decision with you as quickly as possible.

I also recognize you’re going to have lots of questions. We’re developing an extensive FAQ that will address many of them and we’ll post it on MyGCLife early next week. Others will be answered as further decisions are made. Similarly, we’re developing FAQ for our students and additional constituents.

Other communications we’re working on include a care coordination page for students, program completion pathways document, and updates on GeorgianCollege.ca. Our goal is to provide as much clarity as possible throughout the transition.

Strengthening our future

Many of you may wonder, given the provincial government’s commitments to reviewing the Ontario colleges funding model, if this decision is premature. Georgian is actively participating in those consultations and will continue to advocate for meaningful change. However, government action alone won’t resolve our financial challenges.

By uniting our campuses and making this hard decision now, we're positioning Georgian to thrive in the years ahead. While our physical footprint will be smaller, our impact will be greater – on student outcomes and experience, our reputation for program excellence, and our capacity to collaborate and innovate. We're not simply consolidating campuses; we're bringing Team Georgian closer together, with a clear vision for a more sustainable college that will continue to transform lives and communities for generations to come.

I know change of this scale isn't easy. In the days ahead, I ask that teams come together to reflect on this news and support one another as we prepare for the transition. I remain dedicated to keeping you informed as we move forward.

If full-time support staff have any questions during the labour disruption, they can inform the President of their Local who's in constant communication with People and Culture, or they can connect directly with their People and Culture representative. [They – and you – also have continued access to our Employee and Family Assistance Program](#). We're also looking into other opportunities for on-site support services.

This exploration has been underway for some time, and I felt it was important, despite the ongoing labour disruption, to advise our community of the decision and uphold my commitment to transparency and timely communication. I know the timing is not ideal and I'll host a town hall and share further updates we're all back together as one Team Georgian.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the college and our students. Chi-Miigwech.

Kind regards,

Kevin