



NEWS RELEASE

Spending in public schools across Canada up 13% in recent years

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For immediate release

VANCOUVER—Despite common misperceptions, spending on public schools across Canada has increased in almost every province in recent years, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Contrary to what we often hear, spending is on the rise in public schools across Canada, and in most cases, it’s outpacing inflation and enrolment changes,” said Tegan Hill, an economist with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Education Spending in Public Schools in Canada, 2021 Edition*.

The study finds that spending in public schools in Canada increased from \$63.0 billion in 2013/14 to \$71.2 billion in 2017/18—a 13.0 per cent increase, or \$8.2 billion in nominal spending.

After adjusting for inflation and changes in enrolment over the same five-year period, per-student spending on public schools increased in eight out of 10 provinces. Nationally, inflation adjusted per student spending on public schools increased by 3.8 per cent.

Nova Scotia (15.2 per cent) and British Columbia (7.6 per cent) saw the largest increases per student, followed by Prince Edward Island (7.3 per cent) and Quebec (6.8 per cent).

Newfoundland & Labrador and Alberta were the only provinces to experience a decline in real per student spending on public schools, at -6.3 and -0.6 per cent respectively.

In 2017/18, Saskatchewan had the highest spending per student on public schools at \$16,038. Quebec had the lowest at \$12,430.

“In critical policy discussions, especially those that affect our children’s education, it’s important to understand exactly what’s happening with spending in public schools,” Hill said.

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