



# NEWS RELEASE

## Per-student spending on public schools increased by 21.6% in P.E.I., 12.3% in Nova Scotia, 1.5% in New Brunswick

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For immediate release

**HALIFAX**—Per-student spending on public schools increased in every Maritime province over a 10-year period while it decreased in Newfoundland and Labrador (after adjusting for inflation), finds a new study published by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Despite any claims to the contrary, spending on public schools has increased—in some cases, substantially—in every Maritime province,” said Michael Zwaagstra, senior fellow at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Education Spending in Public Schools in Canada, 2024 Edition*.

As a result, among all provinces (after adjusting for inflation) New Brunswick is now the second-highest per-student spender on public schools in Canada followed by Prince Edward Island (third highest) and Nova Scotia (fifth highest).

More specifically, from 2012-13 to 2021-22 (the latest year of available data), after adjusting for inflation and enrolment changes, per-student spending increased in:

- P.E.I. from \$13,812 to \$16,800 or 21.6 per cent, the largest increase in the country (outside Quebec)
- Nova Scotia from \$14,292 to \$16,045 or 12.3 per cent, the second-largest increase in Canada (outside Quebec)
- New Brunswick from \$16,917 to \$17,172 or 1.5 per cent, the second-smallest increase in Canada

During the same 10-year period, per-student spending in Newfoundland and Labrador decreased from \$15,856 to \$14,307 or by 9.8 per cent.

In every province, compensation (salaries, wages, fringe benefits and pensions) comprised most of the spending growth.

The available data from Statistics Canada does not differentiate between permanent ongoing spending and temporary COVID-related spending in 2020 and 2021, which may affect spending levels and growth in both of those years.

“It’s important for parents and policymakers to have accurate information about spending on public schools where the majority of kids are educated,” said Alex Whalen, director of the Fraser Institute’s Atlantic Canada Prosperity initiative.

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