

Funding FAQ

Is the \$150-million increase enough to restore conditions for students and teachers to the 2001 level?

- Government is spending a record \$5.07 billion on Kindergarten to Grade 12 education – a 10.5 per cent increase from 2000/01.
- At the same time, there are 30,000 fewer students today than in 2000/01.
- That means we are spending more per student than ever before.
- This year's funding increase of \$150 million is the largest in more than a decade, and will help school districts continue to focus on improving student achievement.
- School boards have made good use of that \$150 million - hiring 1,600 additional teachers, education assistants and support staff.
- These 1,600 additional staff have been hired at the same time as there are an estimated 6,700 fewer students this year than last year.

Finance Minister Carole Taylor's September budget speech mentioned the word "education" only once. Is investing in education a top priority for this government?

- Since 2000-01, the Province has increased funding to B.C. public schools by nearly \$460 million: \$305 million in annual district operating grants and \$153 million in special, one-time grants.
- During the same period, enrolment has declined by 30,000 students and it is expected to continue to decline. In fact, over the next five years enrolment is expected to decline by an additional 30,000 students - dropping by about 6,000 students each year.
- Per pupil funding will go from \$6,752 per pupil in 2004-05 to \$7,097 in 2005-06, an increase of \$345 over last year, and \$881 per student since 2000/01.

Teachers claim students are using tattered and outdated textbooks. Why aren't you giving them the proper tools they need to learn?

- This government invested \$10 million in new textbooks last year to ensure students have the learning resources they need to bring out their best.
- Based on the cost of a typical Grade 4 math text this additional \$10 million means that school districts were able to buy more than 285,000 new textbooks.
- School districts matched the funding, providing up to an additional \$10 million for textbooks.
- In all, districts were able to buy 570,000 new textbooks.
- In addition, \$1 million was invested to put close to 12,000 additional computers in schools so that students can become more computer literate and provided districts with the latest anti-virus software.
- Internet access was also upgraded at almost 600 schools to improve computer literacy.

What are you doing to give teachers the support they need to help special needs students in the classroom?

- This year, the Province is providing more than \$279 million for special needs students – an increase of \$37 million over last year.
- Special education funding is given to public and funded independent schools to help special needs students identified as level 1, 2 or 3 receive an education.
- The funding helps pay for the extra costs of adapting programs and providing needed physical, health, intellectual and psychological service.
- Funding for special needs students has increased for all three of the classification levels.
- Level 1, 2 and 3 special needs students include those who are physically dependent, deaf, blind, autistic, have profound intellectual disabilities or chronic health impairments or have severe behaviour problems.