



# NEWS RELEASE

## Spending on public schools up across Canada while student enrolment falls

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For immediate release

**TORONTO**—Spending on public schools in Canada has increased dramatically over the past decade even as the number of students has declined, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“There’s a common misperception, perpetuated by teachers’ unions and activists, that spending on public schools has been declining, but that simply is not true,” said Deani Van Pelt, director of the Barbara Mitchell Centre for Improvement in Education at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Education Spending and Public School Enrolment in Canada, 2016 Edition*.

The study finds that spending on public schools in Canada increased more than 40 per cent, from \$44.3 billion in 2004/2005 to nearly \$62.6 billion in 2013/2014, the most recent year of available Statistics Canada data.

This increase in spending occurred over a decade that saw a 4.2 per cent decline in the number of students enrolled in public schools in Canada.

On a per-student basis, spending increased from \$9,876 to \$12,427 (after accounting for price changes), a dramatic 25.8 per cent increase between 2004/2005 and 2013/2014.

In fact, every province saw significant increases in per-student spending ranging from 18.3 per cent in B.C. to 39 per cent in Saskatchewan.

Put into context, in a period of constrained provincial government finances across the country, spending on public schools increased by 20.3 per cent – nearly \$13 billion – more than was necessary to account for enrolment and price changes.

“Contrary to what we hear from teachers, administrators and trustees, public school systems in Canada have received large increases in funding over the last decade. In policy discussions that affect our children’s education, it’s important to understand exactly what is happening to public education spending,” Van Pelt said.


(30)

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The Fraser Institute is an independent Canadian public policy research and educational organization with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal and ties to a global network of think-tanks in 87 countries. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Canadians, their families and future generations by studying, measuring and broadly communicating the effects of government policies, entrepreneurship and choice on their well-being. To protect the Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research. Visit [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org)

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