

NEWS RELEASE

Public school spending in Alberta up 8.3% per student over past decade

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For immediate release

CALGARY—Spending on public schools in Alberta has increased 8.3 per cent, on a per-student basis, over the past decade, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Contrary to what we often hear, education spending on public schools in Alberta has increased substantially,” said Angela MacLeod, a senior policy analyst with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Education Spending and Public School Enrolment in Canada, 2019*.

The study finds that per-student spending, after adjusting for inflation, increased in Alberta from \$12,663 in 2006/07 to \$13,430 in 2016/17, the most recent year of available Statistics Canada data.

Over the same 10-year period, nominal spending on the province’s public schools increased nearly 40 per cent, from \$6.2 billion to \$8.6 billion.

Crucially, teacher and staff compensation (salaries, pensions and benefits) accounted for the vast majority of the increased education spending, rising from \$4 billion in 2006/07 to \$6.4 billion in 2015/16—a 61 per cent increase.

“In critical policy discussions, especially those that affect our children’s education, it’s important to understand exactly what’s happening with public education spending—how much money is being spent and where it’s going,” MacLeod said.

“In Alberta, the evidence is clear—education spending has increased substantially over the past 10 years.”

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