

## Better Results for Ontario's Students

*The last four years in Ontario's publicly funded education system have seen a significant improvement in student outcomes. The government's efforts to ensure peace and stability in the classroom and build a genuine partnership with school boards, teachers, principals, other education workers and parents have resulted in higher student achievement. By working to rebuild our province's education system, we're seeing greater student success and increased public confidence in the system.*

Together, we have placed a renewed focus on helping all students achieve their full potential. Our shared commitment to this singular goal is delivering results:

- Over the last four years, more students in Grades 3 and 6 are doing better at reading, writing and math — their results in provincial tests have improved by 10 percentage points. As well, more Grade 9 students are meeting the standard on the applied and academic math tests — up 14 and 5 percentage points, respectively. Furthermore, the number of Grade 10 students passing the literacy test is up 12 percentage points.

### Key Facts About Ontario's Publicly Funded Education System for 2007

- Annual investment of \$18.3 billion
- Almost 2 million students
- Nearly 5,000 schools in 72 district school boards and 33 school authorities
- About 200,000 people work in the public education sector
- There are almost 125,000 teachers and about 75,000 other non-teaching staff members — including principals, vice-principals, secretaries, custodians and others

- More students are graduating; over the past two years, the rate has increased from 68 to 73 per cent, meaning 12,000 more students now have a diploma and are better prepared for the future.
- Almost all students in junior kindergarten to Grade 3 are learning in smaller classes of 23 or fewer students — 65 percent are in classes of 20 or fewer. This means that these students are getting more individual attention.

These improved student outcomes are thanks to the government's strategy to improve the publicly funded education system.

### Our Approach to Student Success

We recognized that it was critical for Ontario's students to achieve better outcomes in the publicly funded education system so that they could reach their full potential in the future.

That's why we set goals for student achievement — both for our elementary and for our high school students.

These goals are that 75 per cent of our elementary students achieve the provincial standard in reading, writing and math, and that 85 per cent of our high school students graduate.

To achieve our goals for elementary students, we established the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, led by Chief Student Achievement Officer Dr. Avis Glaze. We ensured that there was funding for teacher training and funding for focused intervention in schools that were lagging behind. We used student achievement data to assign extra resources to “turnaround schools” — and we turned these schools around, with significant improvements in student achievement.

Research and international outreach complemented the experience of Ontario educators to ensure that our students benefited from a well-designed plan. Our students rose to the challenge, improving by 10 percentage points on tests of reading, writing and math.

To support the Student Success Strategy for Grades 7 to 12, we put in place Student Success teams and teachers in all secondary schools, supported professional development among those teams and teachers, and facilitated increased sharing between elementary and secondary educators. We also implemented a program to help with the transition from Grade 8 to 9.

For high school students, we introduced legislation to keep students learning until age 18 or graduation. And we have introduced new ways for students to earn their high school diploma by giving them more choices and support to customize their learning to their interests, and build on their strengths.

We have experienced two years of increased graduation rates and a preliminary look at the most recent figures indicate that this trend is continuing. Early indicators, such as a six

***In *Delivering Excellence for All Ontario Students 2004*, we said:***

“The government has decided that now is the time to invest, not just with dollars but also with commitment to students in publicly funded education. The price of further delay is simply too high, both for individual students who need help now and for Ontario society, while the benefits from moving ahead are considerable.”

percentage point increase in Grade 10 credit accumulation, suggest that more students are on track to meet the 85 per cent graduation target.

We know that students are more successful when they have well-trained teachers, effective school leadership, good learning environments and adequate resources to support their studies.

Today, Ontario's schools are enjoying a period of significant renewal that is bringing better outcomes for our students.

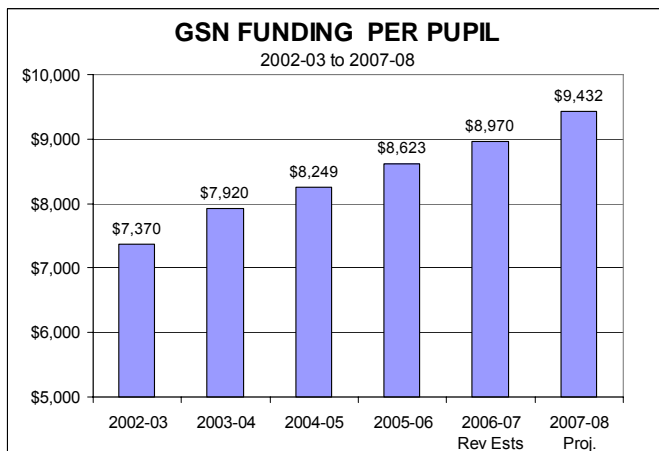
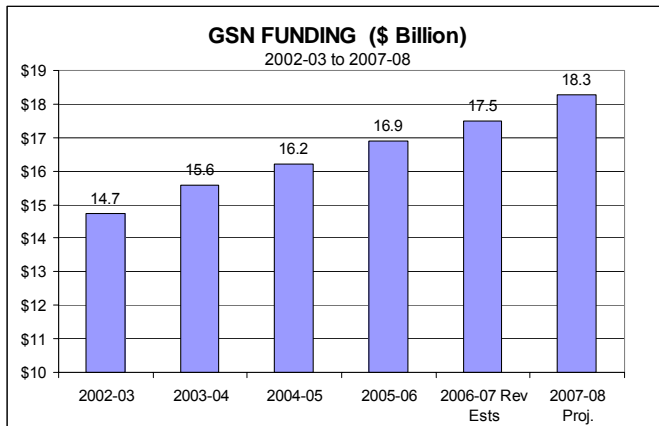
## Education Funding

The 2007-08 school year will see another extraordinary boost in annual funding to publicly funded education in Ontario. This year's investment will provide \$781 million in new funding.

Since coming to office, the government has made unprecedented investments in Ontario's education system:

- Funding to school boards has increased by \$3.5 billion — or 24 per cent — since the 2002-03 school year.
- The amount of funding has increased by more than \$2,000 per pupil — by 28 per cent — to more than \$9,400 per pupil.

These investments are well above the amount recommended by Dr. Rozanski in his 2002 report.



## The Education Funding Formula: Meeting Local Needs

Ontario's publicly funded education system is one of the largest in North America. The needs of students and schools are vast, varied and complex.

The ministry allocates funding to each of Ontario's 72 district school boards, based on student enrolment, the number of schools and their distribution and condition, and the needs of students in individual boards. Boards then make the local decisions needed to educate the students in their area by funding and staffing schools, designing programs to enhance student achievement, and undertaking renewal and building projects to ensure that students have good places to learn.

## Funding Formula

### Improvements: A Four-Year Record

Our goal is to make Ontario's education system the best in the world. We want to help all students reach their full potential. This means we must continually review the funding formula so it is as effective and responsive as possible to the emerging needs of students, teachers and school communities.

Improvements to our education funding formula are never "finished." Just as the needs of students and communities change, the funding formula is constantly refined to meet those needs.

Since taking office, the government has worked closely with the education sector to make meaningful changes to the funding formula that help improve student achievement and promote and maintain a stable learning environment.

We've improved the funding formula in 10 important ways, which include:

### **1. More teachers for smaller primary classes and more secondary courses**

We are creating smaller class sizes for our youngest students in junior kindergarten to Grade 3. Including the investment in 2007-08, we are funding 4,800 new teachers so our youngest students are in smaller classes and get more attention. We've also funded more specialist teachers for elementary schools, and 1,600 more high school teachers so high school students get more course offerings and more support.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

Funding for 1,200 new teachers to further reduce class sizes in the primary grades, 380 new elementary specialist teachers, and 320 new secondary teachers.

### **2. Peace and stability**

Thanks to a four-year provincial framework, teacher salaries were negotiated without any lost school days. We have fully funded four years of salary increases for teaching and non-teaching staff in school boards. We've introduced new supports for beginning teachers.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

A 3 per cent salary increase for teachers and non-teaching staff.

### **3. Responding to local needs**

We increased funding for rural, northern boards and French-language boards to recognize their higher costs. We've enhanced declining enrolment support because costs don't decline as quickly as enrolment.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

We created the Program Enhancement Grant to fund local programs like arts, music, physical education and outdoor activities that build on our curriculum to support well-rounded students.

We're also providing \$10 million for French-language school boards to address the needs of francophone students.

### **4. Meeting student needs**

We increased funding for English-as-a-Second-Language and Perfectionnement-du-fraçais students, and extended funding support from three to four years to help with their transition to Ontario classrooms. We increased Learning Opportunities Grant funding to help boards deliver programs to meet the needs of at-risk students.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

We created the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement to provide enhanced and ongoing support for these students.

### **5. Reflecting real costs**

We increased funding for school busing, utilities and other costs to reflect the rising costs of school board operations.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

We are increasing funding again to recognize the rising costs of school busing and utilities.

### **6. School-based funding**

We introduced the School Foundation Grant to guarantee school-based funding for principals, vice-principals and secretaries.

#### **New in 2007/08:**

We created the Supported Schools Allocation to provide support for our small schools in rural and northern areas.

### **7. Renewing our schools**

We created the Good Places to Learn initiative to provide new and renewed schools across the province. Schools have benefited from \$4 billion in renewal and renovations; 1,900 new classrooms will be

built to support smaller primary class sizes; and up to 100 new schools will be built thanks to new capital programs.

**New in 2007/08:**

We provided new funding to support \$500 million worth of renewal projects under Good Places to Learn.

We provided funding to support \$55 million for French-language schools as part of our four-year commitment.

We expanded criteria to support more new Growth schools.

## **8. Reforming special education**

We have increased funding for special education and streamlined delivery so that special education resources are focused on students with special needs.

**New in 2007/08:**

We are increasing funding for the highest-needs students, as well as providing new funding for equipment and technology for special needs students. We are also protecting this funding from the impact of declining enrolment.

## **9. Improving transportation funding**

We have improved funding and introduced funding for school bus safety training. We have encouraged the establishment of transportation consortia across the province. We are reviewing these consortia and adjusting funding so that safe, efficient student transportation systems are supported.

**New in 2007/08:**

We are updating funding for four transportation consortia based on efficiency reviews completed in 2006-07. We will review and update funding for up to 10 additional transportation consortia in 2007-08.

## **10. Strengthening School-Community Partnerships**

To recognize the key role that schools play in healthy communities, we provide annual funding so boards can expand the community's use of school facilities. And respect for school and student trustees is reflected with additional funding to support increased remuneration. New funding has been provided for parent engagement in school communities, and parents and teachers have nominated more than 1,000 outstanding educators for the newly created Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence.

### **Ontario's schools continue to improve**

The past four years have produced a transformation in our schools. Students and staff enjoy an atmosphere of peace and stability that encourages learning, creativity and professional development.

In our elementary schools, there are smaller primary classes and more specialist teachers offering art, music and physical education courses. Teachers have better training and additional literacy and numeracy resources, and there are more books in our libraries. Students are participating in daily physical activity and have healthy choices in vending machines and cafeterias.

In our secondary schools, there are more teachers and more courses. There are more co-op and other innovative programs, and access to new options such as the high-skills major. There is more focused attention and support for students in transition to secondary school and for at-risk students. And school and board administrators have more resources for leadership development.

Our Special Needs students have access to more support due to additional staff,

assistive technology and the sharing of successful practices.

Our school buildings are being renewed and expanded. Schools have become hubs for community groups and parent engagement.

With all of these changes, it's no wonder our students are doing better every year and more students are graduating. While we still face challenges, the spirit of cooperation in our province's school system will support continued improvement in student achievement.

## Looking Forward

At a time when the government is investing more to rebuild Ontario's publicly funded education system, enrolment has declined — by more than 60,000 students from 2002-03 to 2007-08.

In the coming years, the decline in enrolment is expected to continue. At the same time, we expect Ontario's classrooms to become more and more diverse. This may mean that our students will also have more diverse needs and require different or additional resources in the future.

The government's record of investments means more teachers, more support staff and more resources to focus on each student. This is paying off in student results — but we want to go farther.

We will continue working with our education partners — teachers, principals, other education staff, school boards, parents and communities — to maintain our focus on student achievement during a time of demographic change. Our goal is for all students to achieve their potential.

Ontario cares about education. Educators, parents and students should take pride in what has been accomplished over these past four years.

Much has been done. And much remains to be done. Yet our recent accomplishments demonstrate that substantial change and improvement can and will happen when we work toward shared goals in a spirit of genuine partnership.

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**Your** feedback is welcome and solicited. It should be directed to:

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