

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2009-10 GRANTS FOR STUDENT NEEDS

March 26, 2009

Strong publicly funded schools are at the core of a competitive economy. That's why Ontario is increasing education funding through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) for the seventh consecutive school year.

Despite declining enrolment and a challenging economic environment, Ontario continues to invest in education, and has increased its annual investment by more than \$5 billion to 34 per cent since coming to office.

### KEY FACTS

- The GSN is the annual funding provided by the Ministry of Education to school boards to support educational program and services, staffing and school facilities.
- The 2009-10 GSN is increasing to \$19.8 billion — up almost \$600 million over last year, or more than 3 per cent.
- Funding per student in 2009-10 is projected to rise to \$10,450. That means \$414 more per student – more than four per cent — compared to last year. This represents an increase of more than \$3,000 per student since 2002-03 — up 42 per cent.

### FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

- **Funding More Staff In Schools**
  - 555 more elementary specialist teachers — in areas such as arts — to support 10 additional minutes of preparation time per week
  - 126 more Grade 4-8 teachers to reduce class sizes
  - 211 more elementary school office staff for an increased adult presence in schools
  - 593 more custodians to provide cleaner, safer schools
  - 400 more professional and para-professional staff to help at-risk students and those with special needs
  - 129 more secondary teachers to support locally-developed programs
- **Supporting Peace And Stability**
  - Improved salaries and benefits for all staff will be funded based on the recently reached four-year provincial framework agreements.
- **Keeping Up With Increased Costs and Inflation**
  - The Community Use of Schools program will receive almost two per cent in additional funding to ensure that school space for after-school activities continues to be affordable for all Ontario families.
  - Electricity, natural gas, insurance and other essentials needed to operate schools will be supported with a two per cent funding increase.
  - Student transportation costs — including fuel and maintenance — will receive a two per cent funding increase.

## **PROCESS IMPROVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Operational reviews of school boards will identify best business practices and help boards better manage school maintenance, human resources and other non-academic planning.
- Support will continue to be offered to school boards to improve student transportation management capacity.
- An Expert Panel on Capital Standards has been established. The panel is working on a manual of leading practices in school design and construction and is advising on a number of green initiatives.
- Support will be provided to school boards to improve their internal audit processes and establish audit committees with external representation to ensure funds are better managed.
- Cost saving measures will be implemented to address several areas including textbook and computer purchases, staff development, and declining enrolment.

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Michelle Despault, Minister's Office, 416-212-3747  
Patricia MacNeil, Communications Branch, 416-325-2676  
Public Inquiries, 416-325-2929 or 1-800-387-5514

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