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# Education Funding in Alberta

Kindergarten to Grade 12  
2021/22 School Year



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## Alberta's Education System

This booklet is an overview of funding provided by the Government of Alberta for Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 education. Funding is provided for children as young as 2 years 8 months of age and students up to and including age 19.

For more information, please visit our website at <http://education.alberta.ca>.

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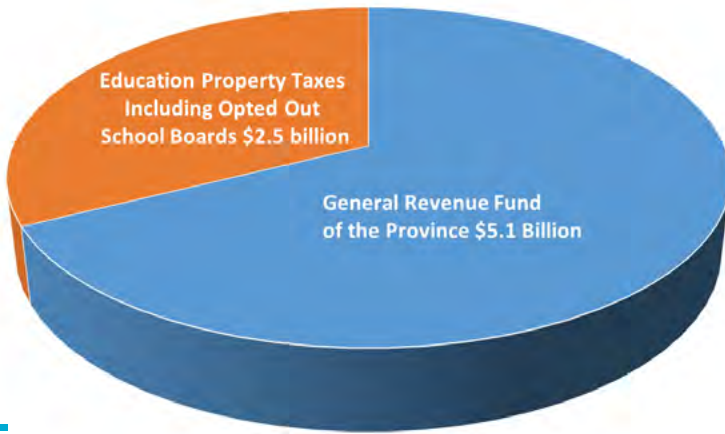
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## How does Alberta fund the education system?

Total operational funding for Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 (K-12) comes from two sources:

- General Revenue Fund – \$5.1 billion
- Education Property Taxes (including opted-out boards) – \$2.5 billion

### Budget 2021 Operating Support to School Boards \$7.6 Billion



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## Can I direct my education property taxes to a private school?

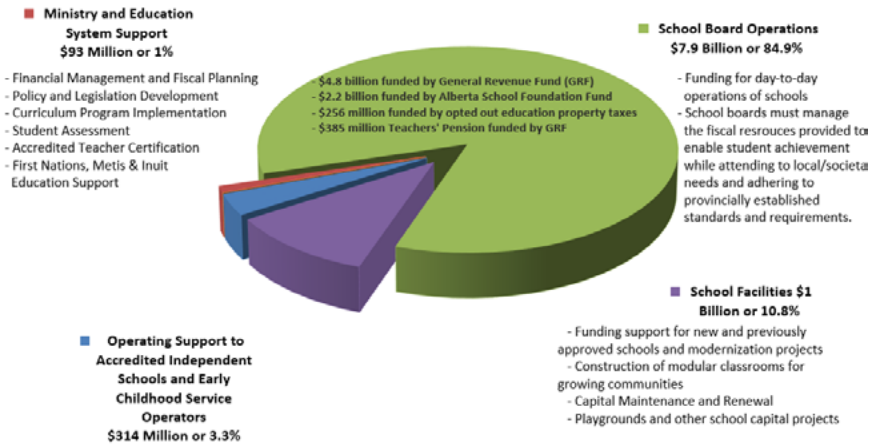
No. By Alberta law, money collected through education property taxes can only be used to fund the public education system, which includes public and separate schools. Independent school funding comes from three sources: provincial general revenues, tuition or instruction fees paid by parents, and private fundraising. Common questions and answers about education property taxes can be found on Alberta Education's website at:

<https://www.alberta.ca/education-property-tax.aspx>

## How much funding is available?

Budget 2021 maintains government's commitment to provide stable funding for K-12 education. Budget 2021 includes \$8.3 billion in consolidated operating expense and \$1 billion in consolidated capital investment. The education system will spend \$42 million in operational budget each day that students are in school.

### Alberta Education Consolidated Budget 2021

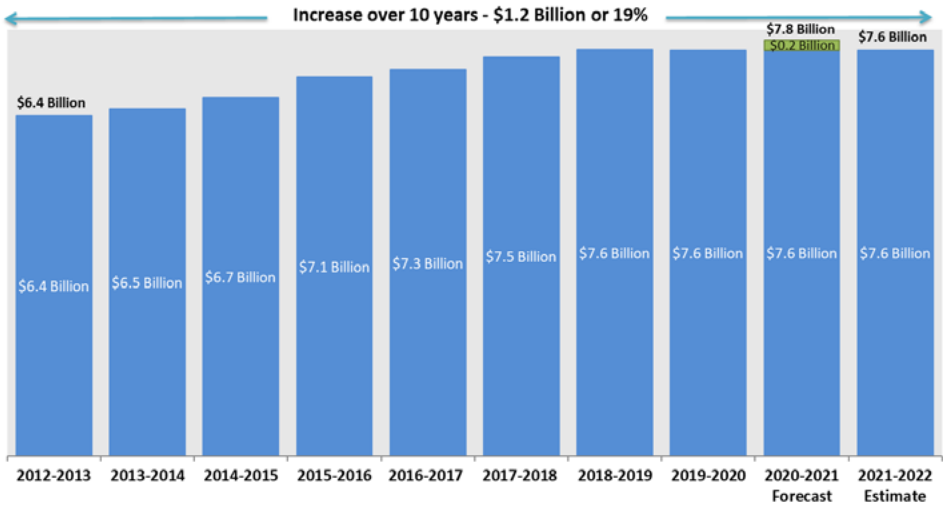


\* Does not include estimated amortization expenses, pension provision, and debt servicing costs.

## Increased investment in K-12 education

Since the 2012/2013 fiscal year, operational support for K-12 education has increased from \$6.4 billion to \$7.6 billion in 2021/22. This is an increase of 19 per cent.

### Operational Support to K-12 Education System



**Notes:**

1. Non-consolidated expenses do not include school board expenses and capital investment financed by other revenue sources. Operational funding is sourced from the General Revenue Fund and education property taxes.

2. Government adjustment as part of the response to COVID-19 in 2020-21 including temporary adjustment for cancellation of in-person class, Federal funding for Safety School re-entry, Critical Worker Benefit and additional Provincial support for PPE.

## Who receives support?

Alberta Education provides funding to school authorities. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public, separate, Francophone, charter, and independent schools. They can also access unique and innovative programs, including home education, online/virtual schools, outreach programs and alternative programs.

Estimates of Headcount as of February 2021

School Type	School Type 2020/21 Student Projection ECS - Grade 12	% of Student Population
Public School System (includes: Public, Separate, Francophone and Charter)	664,000	94%
Independent School System (Independent schools and independent early childhood service operators)	42,400	6%
Total Funded Students	706,400	100%

Through Budget 2021:

- Total operational support to the Public School System is estimated at \$6.9 billion in 2021-22 fiscal year.
- Independent schools and independent early childhood services (ECS) operators are allocated \$313.6 million.
- The government portion of the current services contributions to the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund is \$385.4 million for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Alberta Treasury Board and Finance will contribute \$487 million for the cost of Teachers' pre-1992 teachers' pension plan payments.

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## Alberta's Funding Framework for K-12 Education

The new approach to funding that was implemented in the 2020/21 school year to provide assurance within the education system is comprised of three primary elements:

### **A New Approach to Enrolment:**

The annual student count is the basis for nearly every major education system grant. Shifting to a Weighted Moving Average (WMA) that captures the number of students across three school years will:

- Enable school boards to plan and budget with confidence, rather than waiting for student counts to be established after the school year has already begun; and
- Maintain the overall funding levels established in Budget 2019 until 2023/24.

School authorities are provided with funding commitment letters and finalized funding profiles in spring 2021 for the upcoming school year.

### **Streamlining and Reducing Red Tape:**

The current model of funding has streamlined the previous 36 grants into 15 to reduce duplication, increase local flexibility, simplify planning/reporting and direct funding to the classroom. This model also provides the impetus to school boards for further collaboration and other shared services.

### **Assurance for Albertans:**

Assurance is a broad concept that encompasses accountability, engagement, transparency and reporting. It means demonstrating to Albertans that the education system is meeting student needs and that students are successful. A new assurance model implemented alongside funding changes will create new opportunities for parents to engage with education system governors and help shape local priorities and initiatives.



# Alberta's Assurance Framework for K-12 Education— Assurance Domains

The Assurance Framework was developed collaboratively with education partners. It outlines the key guiding principles, domains and processes for enhancing public trust and confidence that the education system is meeting the needs of students and students are successful. Student growth and achievement is the primary purpose of the education system and is the core outcome domain for the assurance framework .

Assurance in the education system happens when community members, system stakeholders and education partners engage across five domains:

- Student Growth and Achievement;
- Teaching and Leading;
- Learning Supports;
- Governance; and
- Local and Societal Context.



## How can funding be used?

The majority of funding provided has no restrictions on its use. While school authorities have the flexibility to use public funds to best meet the needs of their students, they must ensure that they:

- provide access to education programs for their students;
- follow Alberta Programs of Study (curriculum);
- employ certificated teachers;
- provide students with the required hours of instruction each school year;
- provide the Minister of Education with audited financial statements;
- provide transportation services for students; and
- adhere to the requirements in the *Education Act* and its regulations.

## How are funds distributed?

Funding for K-12 education in Alberta moved from a per-student basis to a three-year Weighted Moving Average (WMA) of student enrolments.

WMA enrolments are calculated using enrolment data from three different school years: actual enrolments from the previous and current school year, and a projected enrolment for the upcoming school year. These school year enrolments are assigned different weightings for each respective school year to acknowledge increased importance of current and future education service funding requirements.

The funding framework allocates funding to school authorities based on the demographic and geographic environment in which services are delivered to students.

- **Demographic** – the number and type of students served.
- **Geographic** – area of the province in which the students are being served.

## **How are funds distributed? -continued**

The funding framework provides five main categories of funding and capital funding:

- A. Base Instruction Grants
- B. Supports and Services Grants
- C. School-Based Grants
- D. Community-Based Grants
- E. Authority-Based Grants
- F. Capital funding (not provided to private or charter schools)

The complete grant rate list is outlined in the *2021/22 Funding Manual For School Authorities* on Education's website at

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/1485-5542>

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## A. Base Instruction Grants

Base funding represents the largest component of funding within the funding framework for instructional costs, such as teacher salaries and classroom materials. Funding provided through the base instruction component does not allocate funding for specific students or schools. Rather, WMA enrolment is used to allocate funding for instructional activities of the entire school jurisdiction.

### 1. ECS and Grades 1-9 Base instruction Grant

ECS to Grade 9 funding is allocated using the three-year Weighted Moving Average (WMA) enrolment of the school jurisdiction at their respective rates.

### 2. High School (Grades 10-12) Grant

High school is funded using the WMA of the school authority at a base rate that is 10 per cent higher than the grades 1-9 base rate.

### 3. Summer School Grant

The Summer School Grant supports school authorities offering summer school for **students** who require this form of educational choice.

### 4. Distance Education Grant

The Distance Education Grant supports equitable access to quality programming through multiple providers of distance education (online and print-based) programs across the province.

### 5. Outreach Program Grant

The Outreach Program Grant provides funding to assist school jurisdictions to support the success of **students** with educational supports and services in addition to the programs of study. Various approaches are used to meet the individual needs of **students** and help **students** complete their high school diploma.

## **6. Rural Small Schools Grant**

The Rural Small Schools Grant is designed to address challenges associated with operating small schools in rural Alberta. Rural small schools will be provided with a guaranteed block of funding to ensure that funding is predictable and sustainable.

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## **B. Supports And Services Grants**

Grants in the Supports and Services category are intended to support specialized learning needs or groups of students who may require additional supports from school authorities. Grants within this category have been streamlined significantly to provide school authorities with the flexibility to align these supports with local needs and contexts.

### **1. Specialized Learning Support Grant**

The Specialized Learning Support Grant for Kindergarten to Grade12 recognizes that every child and student is unique and develops the foundational competencies differently. This grant supports school boards in the provision of a continuum of supports and services to meet the learning needs of children and students within an inclusive learning environment.

### **2. Program Unit Funding (PUF) Grant**

PUF is allocated to support pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) children with severe disabilities and severe language delay.

### **3. English as a Second Language (ESL) Grant**

English language learners are children/students who are acquiring English as a second or additional language. These children/students come from homes where the primary spoken language is not English. Funding is provided to support program planning and instructional supports for English language learners to achieve grade level learning expectations and their academic learning potential.

## **4. Francisation Grant**

Francisation funding is provided to Francophone Regional Authorities and provides targeted instructional support for eligible children/students to assist them in developing French language competencies that will allow them to fully integrate socially, academically and culturally into the community and into Canadian society as a Francophone.

## **5. Refugee Student Grant**

The Refugee Student Grant is allocated to school authorities to provide additional language, social and educational supports to refugee students.

## **6. First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Grant**

Funding is allocated as a part of the model to assist school authorities in providing system, program and instructional supports that improve education outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

There are three components to this grant:

- i. A proportional allocation, based on overall student population, to acknowledge recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to support related activities,
- ii. A component based on self-identified student enrollment to address student needs through program and instructional supports,
- iii. And, a component based on both census and self-identification data to address the systemic education gap.

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## C. School-Based Grants

These grants address system needs at the school-level.

### 1. Operations and Maintenance Grant

The Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Grant is provided to school authorities to address the jurisdiction's responsibility for the operation, maintenance, safety and security of all school buildings, including costs relating to the supervision of this program.

### 2. Transportation Grant

This funding helps to address the costs of providing transportation services throughout the province. Formulas used to determine this funding are based on the area of the province in which students are being served. Funding in 2021/22 will be held constant based on allocations provided under the 2019/20 model, with two years of supplemental funding being allocated to school authorities' proportional to their Transportation Allocation for 2019/20, in recognition of additional cost increases that may occur while a new model is developed and implemented.

### 3. SuperNet Service Grant

This funding assists school authorities with the basic connectivity costs to access internet in schools.

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## **D. Community-Based Grants**

These grants are designed to address socio-economic contexts and geographic locations which pose unique challenges to the operation of schools and delivery of educational services.

### **1. Socioeconomic Status Grant**

The funding for this grant is based on a Statistics Canada index to identify the proportion of a school jurisdiction's student population considered to be disadvantaged.

This grant will be allocated based on the following factors in each school authority: mother's education, lone parent households, home ownership, average income and parents' post-secondary education.

### **2. Geographic Grant**

The Geographic Grant provides additional funding to school jurisdictions to address their unique geographic challenges including rurality, sparsity, distance, area and location; and enhance equity and fairness of educational opportunities for children/students.

### **3. School Nutrition Grant**

The School Nutrition Grant is to provide children/students in school jurisdictions across Alberta with a daily nutritious meal that adheres to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth.



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## **E. Authority-Based Grants**

### **1. System Administration Grant**

The System Administration Grant is targeted funding to cover governance (board of trustees) and school authority central administration costs .

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## **F. Capital Funding**

### **1. Major Capital Projects**

School jurisdictions may receive capital funding for projects approved by Alberta Education for new schools, additions and modernizations to existing schools and the replacement of existing schools.

### **2. Modular Classroom Program**

The Modular Classroom Program (MCP) provides school jurisdictions with modular classrooms, modular/portable unit relocations and demolitions in order to assist jurisdictions with the accommodation of students on an emergent basis.

### **3. Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal**

This funding is provided to maintain safe and healthy school facilities. It is intended to improve and prolong the life of school buildings and to upgrade school facilities in general, including the replacement of roofs; boilers and mechanical systems; water and sewer lines; and windows and doors. It may also be used to improve the energy efficiency of schools. Over \$190 million is provided in Budget 2021 for this program.

# Funding Rates for the 2021/22 School Year

Funding Rates for School Jurisdictions		2021/22 School Year
<p><b>Note:</b> The funding model does not allocate funding for specific students or schools. Rather, WMA enrolment (wherever applicable) is used to allocate funding for the Early Childhood Services (ECS) to Grade 12 children/students educational activities of the entire school jurisdiction.            The complete grant rate list is outlined in <b>Section H</b> of the <i>2021/22 Funding Manual For School Authorities</i> on Education's website at <a href="https://open.alberta.ca/publications/1485-5542">https://open.alberta.ca/publications/1485-5542</a></p>		
<b>Base Instruction Grants</b>		
ECS Base Instruction		<b>\$3,032</b>
Grades 1 to 9 Base Instruction		<b>\$6,064</b>
Grades 10 to 12 (Year 1 - 3)		<b>\$6,670</b>
Grades 10 to 12 (Year 4)		<b>\$3,335</b>
Grades 10 to 12 (Year 5 and above)		<b>\$1,667</b>
Summer School (per completed credit, maximum 10)		<b>\$143</b>
<b>Distance Education (see FM Section C1.5)</b>		
Grade 1 to 9 (Full Program)		<b>\$6,064</b>
Grade 10 to 12 (Year 1 – 3, > = 35 Credits Completed)		<b>\$6,670</b>
Outreach (per School Jurisdiction)		<b>\$150,000</b>
Rural Small Schools Grant (See FM Section C1.8)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>
<b>Program Supports and Services Grants</b>		
Specialized Learning Support (see Section C2.1)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>
<b>ECS Program Unit Funding (PUF)</b>		
Code (41 to 46) half/full day		<b>\$15,000/\$25,000</b>
Code 47 half/full day		<b>\$10,000/\$17,000</b>
English as a Second Language/Francisation (WMA FTE Rate)		<b>\$1,200</b>
Refugee Student Grant (WMA FTE Rate)		<b>\$5,500</b>
First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education		<b>\$1,200</b>
<b>School-Based Grants</b>		
<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance Grant</b>		
Student Allocation (WMA FTE Rate)		<b>\$213</b>
Utilized Area/Underutilized Area (per square meter)		<b>\$62/\$42</b>
Transportation Grant		<b>2019/20 SY Allocation × 1.05</b>
SuperNet Services (max. per month per approved site)		<b>\$800</b>
<b>Community-Based Grants</b>		
Socio- Economic Status Grant (See Section C4.1)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>
Geographic Grant (See Section C4.2)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>
School Nutrition Grant (See Section C4.3)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>
<b>Jurisdiction-Based Grants</b>		
System Administration (See Section C5)		<b>per formula, see section H1.1</b>

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## Online Resources

### **Alberta Education Website**

<https://www.alberta.ca/education.aspx>

### **2021/22 Funding Manual for School Authorities**

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/1485-5542>

### **Alberta Education Business Plan**

<https://www.alberta.ca/government-and-ministry-business-plans.aspx>

### **The Guide to Education**

<https://www.alberta.ca/guide-to-education.aspx>

### **Resources for Parents**

<http://www.learnalberta.ca/>

### **Resources for Students**

- **Learning Resource for Students**  
<http://www.learnalberta.ca/>
- **Student Engagement**  
<https://www.alberta.ca/student-engagement.aspx>
- **Alberta Learning Information Service**  
<https://alis.alberta.ca/>

**For more information  
call Alberta Education at  
780-427-2055  
(toll free at 310-0000)  
or visit [www.education.alberta.ca](http://www.education.alberta.ca)**