



STRENGTHENING ONTARIO'S ECONOMY BY INVESTING IN EDUCATION

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The province's continued prosperity in a competitive global economy depends on a well-educated and highly skilled workforce.

HIGHER LEVELS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Through substantial increases in funding and by partnering with elementary and secondary schools, the government has built a strong foundation for student achievement. The government is:

- Increasing Grants for Student Needs to \$18.8 billion in the 2008-09 school year, a 20.3 per cent increase since 2003-04
- Increasing average per-student funding to an estimated \$9,821 in 2008-09, up \$1,901 or 24 per cent since 2003-04.

Literacy and Numeracy

The government is committed to helping students improve their reading, writing and math skills so that 75 per cent of Grade 6 students are reaching the provincial standard on reading, writing and math assessments. The government is continuing to improve literacy and numeracy through an additional investment of \$8 million in 2008-09, bringing the total annual investment to \$65 million. The government is also boosting child literacy by investing \$10 million in the 2008-09 school year for approximately 160 additional library staff and resources.

Graduation Rates

A key measure of student achievement is the number of students who graduate. The government will provide more than \$16 million to expand the successful Pathways to Education program to increase the number of at-risk youth finishing high school. The government will invest over \$50 million more in 2008-09 for a variety of programs to help more students graduate.

REDUCED GAPS IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A core priority for the government is quality education for all publicly funded schools. To help every child succeed, the government is investing:

- \$10 million in English as a Second Language in the 2008-09 school year
- \$67 million in special needs funding in the 2008-09 school year

- \$32 million over three years in the Student Nutrition Program
- \$2 million in 2008-09 for Parenting and Family Literacy Centres.

INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN PUBLICLY FUNDED EDUCATION

Public confidence is key to creating communities that value learning and are committed to maintaining and improving publicly funded schools.

- \$750 million investment beginning in the 2008-09 school year, to build new schools and repair school facilities
- \$10 million through the new Program Enhancement Grant in the 2008-09 school year to help students receive a well-rounded education through arts, music programs, physical education and other outdoor education programs
- \$13 million in increased funding for the Community Use of Schools program in 2008-09. The government will double the existing \$20 million funding for this program to more than \$40 million in 2009-10
- \$57 million in the 2008-09 school year for programs to ensure students have a safe and positive learning environment, including \$10 million in new funding for high schools in urban communities.

THE ENVIRONMENT

- \$3 million in 2008-09 in a range of coordinated initiatives to ensure that environmental education is part of every child's learning and that schools incorporate environmental awareness in planning their resources, operations and facilities.

REACHING HIGHER

The government is implementing new initiatives in the 2008 Budget to increase the affordability of postsecondary education. The government will also expand the number of skilled workers in Ontario through more apprenticeships, and help unemployed workers train for new careers through:

- The new three-year \$1.5 billion Skills to Jobs Action Plan includes:
 - \$970 million to build places where students learn
 - \$355 million over three years for a Second Career Strategy to help 20,000 unemployed workers obtain long-term training for new careers
 - \$75 million over the next three years to further expand apprenticeship programs.
 - \$385 million over three years for an annual Textbook and Technology Grant, or \$300 per student annually when fully in place, benefiting every full-time university and college student
 - \$27 million over three years for a new Distance Grant to assist with travel costs for postsecondary students from remote and rural areas
 - More than \$7 million over three years for an International Ontario Strategy to attract postsecondary students from around the world

ACHIEVEMENTS

The government's targeted investments and strategies since 2003 have resulted in measurable success for Ontario students.

Elementary and secondary education:

- Students in junior kindergarten to Grade 3 are receiving more individual attention from their teachers – 99.7 per cent of primary classrooms have 23 or fewer students compared to 64 per cent in 2003-04, and 88.4 per cent have 20 or fewer students this year, up from 31 per cent in 2003-04
- In 2006-07, 65 per cent of Grade 3 students' test scores for reading, writing and math were at or above the provincial standard, up from 54 per cent in 2002-03. Sixty-one per cent of Grade 6 students are at or above the provincial standard, up from 54 per cent in 2002-03
- High school graduation is up to 75 per cent in 2006-07 from 68 per cent in 2003-04, resulting in 10,500 more graduates every single year.

Postsecondary education:

- Under the Reaching Higher Plan, the Ontario government is investing more than \$6.2 billion in postsecondary education by 2009-10, improving quality, access and accountability
- Grants for university and college operating costs increased by over 40 per cent between 2003-04 and 2007-08, supporting the hiring of new faculty, increasing student-faculty interaction, and improving student services and libraries
- Since 2002-03, 93,000 more students are attending Ontario colleges and universities
- Providing more than \$580 million in student financial aid through the Ontario Student Assistance Program in 2007-08.

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