
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education
Office of the Premier

PROVINCE MAKES \$150-MILLION INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS

SURREY – Premier Gordon Campbell today announced the single largest increase in education funding for B.C.’s schools in a decade. Premier Campbell and Education Minister Tom Christensen said funding to schools will increase by \$150 million next year.

The 2005/06 funding will be more than \$4.025 billion – the highest ever – or an estimated \$7,079 per student. Since 2000/01, education funding is up \$863 per student, including the \$328 increase per student resulting from the new funding. At the same time, public school enrolment has declined by 29,300 students since 2000/01.

“We have listened to the parents and teachers alike who have said we should add resources to critical education services,” said Campbell. “With this additional funding, school boards have the money they need to plan for their student populations and enhance library services, music and arts programs, and special needs education.”

The government will require that school boards work with educators, parents and school planning councils to provide a plan detailing how this added funding will be allocated. Those plans must ensure that every student has access to:

- School libraries and quality learning resources;
- Music and arts programs, which are known to enhance learning; and,
- Improved services to support every special needs student.

“B.C. is home to the best schools, teachers and students anywhere, and they all contribute to one of the best education systems in the world,” said Campbell. “This is a direct investment in our students and, building on the additional funding of the last three years, will help ensure that we continue to give our children the best education possible.

“We made the commitment to school boards that they would know their funding allocations by February first of each year so they know where they stand, and we continue to meet that commitment,” said Campbell.

“We told British Columbians that when we got our fiscal house in order and when B.C.’s economy was back on track there would be more money for education – and we’re keeping that commitment,” said Tom Christensen. “We expect districts to spend this funding wisely to make the biggest improvements in student achievement.”

Since 2000/01, the Province has also provided districts with more than \$140 million in special, one-time funding, including \$10 million for textbooks, \$3 million for Ready, Set, Learn and \$1 million for Computers for Schools.

For information on AchieveBC, visit <http://www.achievebc.ca> online.
1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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