



16 First Nation Trustees: Leading in Two Worlds

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ontario Education Funding

The current Ontario education funding model has been in place since 1998 and has been refined in a number of ways since it was first introduced. The 2014-2015 provincial education budget was set at \$22.5 billion. The most significant portion of the budget is the amount found in the *Grants for Student Needs (GSN)*. Annual funding is also provided outside the GSN, designated for *Education Programs Other (EPO)* to support the implementation of the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*.

GSN COMPONENTS

Pupil Foundation Grant	A per-pupil allocation that supports elements of classroom education common to all students: teachers, educational assistants, library services, staff development, textbooks, classroom computers
School Foundation Grant	Supports costs of in-school administration and leadership (salaries and benefits for principals, vice-principals and office support staff) as well as supplies for school administration
Special Education Grant	<p>Provides additional funding for students who need special education programs, services and/or equipment. This funding can only be spent on Special Education. There are four components to the allocation:</p> <p>Special Education Per-Pupil Amount – recognizes the cost of providing additional assistance to the majority of students with special education needs.</p> <p>High Needs Amount (HNA) – addresses the cost of providing intensive staff support required by a small number of students with high needs.</p> <p>Special Equipment Amount (SEA) – a board-specific per-pupil amount allocated for the purchase of all computers, software, computing-related devices and supporting furniture as identified by SEA funding guidelines (e.g. it requires an IEP) for use by students with special needs. (This is separate from SEA amounts that are claims-based for individual students.)</p> <p>Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA) – allocated for hiring additional board level Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) expertise to support principals, teachers and multidisciplinary teams.</p> <p><i>Note: Funds can be allocated for individual students based on SEA and SIP claims. First Nation students who pay tuition fees are not eligible for this additional funding. The school board should discuss and reach agreement on the additional costs with the First Nation in cases where tuition-paying students meet the criteria for SEA or SIP support.</i></p>

GSN COMPONENTS continued

Language Grants (English/FSL)	Covers the costs of language instruction – French as a Second Language for English Boards and English as a Second Language for French Boards.
First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement	<p>The First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement supports programs designed for Aboriginal students as outlined in the <i>Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework</i>. The supplement has three allocations:</p> <p>Native Languages – this allocation supports the elementary and secondary Native Languages programs. Funding is based on the number of pupils enrolled and the average daily length of the program.</p> <p>Native Studies – this funding is for Native studies courses for secondary students and is based on an allocation per-pupil credit. To allow boards to offer these programs despite limited enrolment, the funding benchmarks for Native Studies and Native Languages recognize an average class size of 12.</p> <p>Per-Pupil Amount – the formula for this allocation uses an estimated percentage based on a weighting factor that directs more funding to boards with a higher estimated proportion of First Nation, Métis and Inuit populations, based on the 2006 Census data. The estimated percentage of First Nation, Métis and Inuit population for each board is listed in the <i>Grants for Student Needs – Legislative Grants for the 2015-2016 School Board Fiscal Year regulation</i>.</p>
Geographic Circumstances Grant	Provides funding to cover the higher cost of purchasing goods and services for small school boards, for boards distant from urban centres, and for boards where schools are distant from each other.
Learning Opportunities Grant	Supports boards in offering a wide range of locally determined programs for students with a higher risk of academic difficulty e.g., based on demographic social and economic indicators. Includes Student Success, Literacy and Math outside school day, additional tutoring, specialist high skills major programs.
Safe Schools supplement	Supports the government’s comprehensive safe schools strategy as well as selected secondary schools in priority urban neighbourhoods
Continuing Education/Other Programs	Supports adult day school programs, continuing education programs, summer school courses, and other similar programs.
Teacher Qualifications Grant	Covers the costs of salaries for teachers with qualifications and experience above benchmark levels
Student Transportation Grant	Provides school boards with funding to transport students to and from home and school, including transporting students with special needs. (This is not part of the basic fee in tuition agreements)
Declining Enrolment Grant	Supports boards experiencing declining enrolment for costs that cannot be readily adjusted – a board’s costs do not decline at the same rate as enrolment
School Board Administration and Governance	Supports cost of operating board offices and central facilities, as well as central board-based staff and trustees. This grant is capped and boards cannot spend over the allocation.
School Operations	Addresses the cost of operating schools (e.g., heating, lighting, cleaning)
Capital Debt and Interest	Provides debt support for existing capital debt relating to eligible expenditures (Not part of basic tuition agreement fee)

EDUCATION PROGRAM - OTHER

Annual funding is provided outside the GSN to support the implementation of the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*. Examples of programs funded outside of the GSN include:

- increasing the analysis, use, and sharing of self-identification data to track First Nation, Métis and Inuit student achievement
- developing strategies that build on successes achieved
- identifying promising practices to reduce achievement gaps
- aligning board and regional resources
- increasing community engagement activities and partnerships
- increasing access to Native Languages and/or Native studies programming and professional development.

In 2014-2015, the ministry allocated funding to boards to support the development of *Board Action Plans on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education*. This investment supports boards in implementing strategies and actions identified for school boards in the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan*. Funding to boards in 2014-15 was allocated based on total board population and self-identified Aboriginal student population. Allocating funding based on the self-identified Aboriginal student population enables the ministry and boards to target resources to directly impact and improve First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student achievement and well-being and close achievement gaps.

Federal Education Funding – First Nation Tuition Agreements

In order for First Nations to receive education funding from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) for students who access instructional services in a provincial school, a tuition agreement must be in place. First Nations are federally funded for their students attending provincially-funded schools as follows.

<p>Basic Funding</p>	<p>Where the First Nation has an annual transfer payment agreement with AANDC, the Ontario Region of AANDC transfers the per-pupil amount to the First Nation based on specific board information and specific First Nation nominal roll information. If the transfer payment agreement with AANDC is multi-year, the education per-pupil amount is determined at the outset of the agreement and fixed as a core budget.</p> <p>For students who live in the First Nation community and attend a provincial school, funding is provided in accordance with the per-pupil amount charged by the school district as prescribed by provincial legislation.</p>
<p>Targeted Funding: Special Education Program</p>	<p>AANDC Ontario transfers Special Education Program (SEP) funding to First Nations based on Nominal Roll information and a formula calculation. The SEP is guided by the National Program Guideline and by local First Nation policy. It is managed locally by the First Nation.</p> <p>First Nations may receive funding under SEP for students who are on the Nominal Roll and whose special education needs cannot be met within the resources intended for the general student population.</p> <p>When First Nations are directly funding provincial schools for services provided through SEP, over and above the tuition per-pupil amount, they must ensure that provincial schools are accountable for the services they are to provide to students and that the First Nations Special Education Program Annual Report for Schools is submitted to the respective First Nation.</p>
<p>Nominal Roll</p>	<p>The Nominal Roll is an information database that reflects an annual census of eligible students living on reserve. First Nations provide a list of students registered in schools on September 30 so that education funding requirements can be determined.</p>
<p>Residency</p>	<p>Ordinarily resident on reserve means that the student usually lives at a civic address on reserve or is a child in joint custody who lives on reserve most of the time. Students continue to be considered ordinarily resident on reserve if they return to live on reserve with their parents, guardians or caregivers, even if they live elsewhere while attending school or working at a summer job.</p>