

Alberta Education Budget – 2011/2012
\$107 million
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
October 13, 2011

On October 12, Premier Alison Redford and Education Minister Thomas A. Lukaszuk announced the Government of Alberta's commitment to provide \$107 million to the Budget 2011/2012 Education budget.

Which grants will be provided with funding?

\$80 million in funding will be provided to address the following grants under Budget 2011:

- Relative Cost of Purchasing Goods and Services (RCPA) – This funding recognizes the varying local costs of purchasing goods and services in different areas of the province.
- Stabilization – Funding introduced with the implementation of the Funding Framework to ensure that no board lost funding as a result of the new framework, particularly rural jurisdictions.
- Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) – Targeted funding for local initiatives that improve student learning and performance.
- Small Class Size – Grades 4 to 6 – Funding to support the hiring of new teachers to reduce class sizes.
- Enrolment Growth and Decline – Funding to address the costs associated with transitioning to increasing or declining year over year enrolments.
- Enhanced English as a Second Language (ESL) – In addition to ESL funding, this grant is provided to address the costs associated with providing education programs for immigrant students, particularly those who have little or no formal schooling.
- Intra-jurisdiction Distance – Funding to recognize the increased costs associated with operating schools and educating students in more than one community and over significant distances.

How will the funding be provided?

\$80 million will be provided to address specific grants under Budget 2011. An additional \$27 million will be provided for classroom supports and community engagement. Supporting community and parent engagement and providing relevant learning resources for students are key components for success in our schools.

How will the \$27 million for classroom/community supports be allocated?

Funding will be provided at the rate of \$60,000 per school jurisdiction and charter school authority and an additional \$43.12 per student will be allocated based on each school authority's 2010/2011 frozen funded student enrolment.

When will school authorities receive their funding?

Funding to address the program grants will be released incrementally during the 2011/2012 fiscal year (ending March 31, 2012) for the purpose of implementing programs through the 2011/2012 school year. School jurisdictions and charter schools will receive a lump sum Classroom/Community Supports payment on November 15, 2011 for the 2011/2012 school year.

How are school jurisdictions expected to spend their classroom/community supports funding?

The education sector, along with community stakeholders, has made strides in working together to transform the system and we need to build on these efforts. A critical component of this work is supporting community and parent engagement and providing relevant learning resources for students, which are valuable contributors to student success. This funding will assist school authorities in building capacity at the local community level, recognizing the importance of collaboration at each and every school as we move to an inclusive education system and improving student outcomes.

Do school authorities have to hire teachers in Grades 4-6 with the Class Size funding?

With the additional class size funding for Grades 4 to 6, it is expected that guidelines will be achieved in all grade groupings.

Do I need to resubmit a project plan to receive the AISI dollars?

AISI is a targeted initiative and, therefore, your plans may need to be updated to reflect the additional AISI dollars you receive.

Will Private Schools and Private ECS Operators receive funding?

Yes, funding for those grants applicable to accredited funded private schools and private ECS operators – RCPA, AISI and Enhanced ESL – will be provided.

Are there any accountability requirements related to this funding?

As part of regular communications with your communities, efforts need to be made to ensure that parents, school board staff and other stakeholders are aware of how children and students will benefit, directly or indirectly. It is important to recognize that there are expectations from the community that class sizes will be reduced and other student supports in place as a result. As part of your November 30 Fall Budget Update submission to the department, we will expect a summary of how these funds were used. For example, how many teachers were hired or what supports were provided for students in the classroom.