

Student Success in Nova Scotia

Budget 2015–2016 directly supports Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education. Funding will help to ensure children have the support they need for a positive start to school, and that students benefit from a quality Primary-to-12 education, doing better in core areas like math and literacy.

Refocus the education system

Investing an additional \$20.4 million this year to renew, refocus and rebuild our education system.

- \$3.6-million increase for grades Primary to 2 class-size caps, total investment of \$10.8 million
- \$3.45 million for grades 3 and 4 class-size caps
- \$3-million increase for the math strategy
- \$4.4 million for early literacy, a \$973,000 increase
- \$6.5 million towards Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education

Support the Action Plan

- Create a streamlined, co-ordinated and innovative curriculum for grades Primary to 3
- Set up a centre of excellence dedicated to advancing student achievement, school research and high-quality teaching
- Offer early intervention in math for grades Primary to 3 students
- Improve student assessment evaluation
- Expand community-based learning programs for high school students
- Create and distribute a growth and development guide for four year olds

Focus on the early years

Providing our youngest with a strong foundation.

- \$1.3-million increase to reduce the wait lists for community-based Early Intervention
- \$700,000 increase for Early Learning Initiatives
- \$500,000 increase for four new SchoolsPlus sites

The additional \$20.4 million invested this year will bring the total amount reinvested in our education system to \$37.9 million. It's all part of the four-year commitment to reinvest \$65 million in education.

A greater focus on Primary to 12 means better-prepared graduates ready for the workforce or post-secondary education.

Budget 2015–2016 provides the funding universities need to protect quality over the long term. Budget decisions also are focused on keeping education accessible for Nova Scotia students studying at Nova Scotia universities.

Funding and flexibility for universities to protect quality

Universities are independent institutions, and must have flexibility to make decisions.

- \$3.2 million to increase university operating grants by one per cent
- Allow universities to make one-time market adjustments to tuition, to charge similar amounts for similar programs
- Maintain the three per cent cap on tuition increases for Nova Scotia undergrads once market adjustments are applied; remove the cap on tuition for out-of-province and graduate students

Focus on Nova Scotia students studying in Nova Scotia

Nova Scotians fund one of the best student assistance programs in the country.

- \$1.6 million in up-front grants to help more Nova Scotia students pay for school
- Forgive up to \$15,000 in provincial student loans for Nova Scotia students at Nova Scotia universities through the Nova Scotia Loan Forgiveness Program
- Going forward, students with permanent disabilities will have more time to graduate and get maximum benefit from the Nova Scotia Loan Forgiveness Program, which could completely forgive their provincial student loan
- \$24.8 million to maintain the Nova Scotia Bursary, which automatically takes \$1,283 off tuition for Nova Scotia students studying here at home
- \$3.8 million for the 0% Interest Program, to pay the interest on provincial student loans for Nova Scotia graduates
- \$925,000 to provide more graduate scholarships for innovation and research
- Eliminate the \$261 bursary for out-of-province students: \$3.2-million decrease

Accountability for taxpayers, students

New legislation will increase universities' financial accountability.

- Require more standard financial reporting, increased fiscal discipline
- Link funding to clear outcomes, hold universities accountable for results
- Authorize government to withhold grants in extreme circumstances