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Putting Kids & Learning First

Nova Scotians want the best for our children, including an education that is second to none.

For too long, teachers were left without the supports they needed to help their students succeed. And past governments ignored test results that were not good enough in critical subject areas, particularly math and reading.

Together with teachers, parents, school boards, communities, and children, the province is putting kids and learning first. Now in its second year, the Kids and Learning First plan is improving the future success of our young people through a greater focus on the early years, the basics, and safer, better schools. The plan means more teachers and support for special education, and smaller class sizes.

Helping Children in the Early Years

Budget 2013 will:

- establish children's centres so it is easier for families to access support services for their young kids and help them make a successful transition to elementary school—\$1.2 million
- expand the ability of teachers to assess the developmental health of their students in critical areas like physical well-being, emotional maturity, social skills, and language—\$70,000

Putting More Teachers and Special Education Support into Smaller Classes

Budget 2013 will:

- bring 170 new teachers into classrooms, and ensure that no permanent teachers will lose their jobs
- continue to cap class sizes for grades primary to three at 25 students, ensuring that average class sizes remain the smallest in a generation
- increase funding per student by 3 per cent to its highest level ever, \$10,762 per student
- enable school boards to hire 25 new program support staff, psychologists, and speechlanguage pathologists to help children with special needs, and increase the funding allocation for 15 teachers' assistants—\$3.7 million
- protect funding for regions of the province most affected by declining enrolment— \$13.5 million



Helping Students Succeed in School and Get Good Jobs

Budget 2013 will:

- help students succeed in math by giving them more time to focus on fewer topics in more depth through curriculum improvements in grades Primary to 3, and double the time grade 10 students are taught math—\$3 million
- double the number of schools offering skilled trades, and introduce a new course, Manufacturing Trades 11, that will help prepare students for upcoming shipbuilding jobs—\$250,000
- expand the successful Options and Opportunities initiative into grade 9 with the Discovering Opportunities program—\$180,000
- support students in small and rural communities by tripling the number of students who can participate in courses through online virtual classrooms—\$252,000
- expand the personal development credit that allows students to get credit for leadership, languages, and the arts while helping their communities

Creating Safer, Better Schools and Opening Their Doors to Communities

Budget 2013 will:

- build new schools in Amherst, New Glasgow, south Dartmouth, Bible Hill, Bedford, and Liverpool—\$28.1 million
- improve and modernize schools in dozens of communities across the province, from Clark's Harbour to Glace Bay, from Eastern Passage to Hantsport—\$56.2 million
- improve energy efficiency in Halifax Regional School Board schools, which will save money and reduce the Board's greenhouse gases by 20 per cent—\$4 million
- give children and their families more opportunities for after-school recreational, educational, and cultural programs through the Community Use of Schools Grant— \$660,000
- create a safer environment for students who are victims of bullying through Nova Scotia's first anti-bullying plan, Speak Up—\$400,000
- expand SchoolsPlus to four more schools, giving more families, students, and seniors the ability to use services and activities at central locations—\$500,000