

Education and Early Childhood Development Budget 2013-2014

2013-2014 Budget Highlights

- The total budget for 2013-2014 will increase by \$1.6 million to a total of \$230.9 million.
- Through the school board amalgamation process, approximately \$750,000 will be realized on an annual basis.
- An additional \$250,000 will be budgeted for the early learning centres for 2013-14.
- The Best Start program is being expanded to 36 months with additional funding of \$60,000 last year and a further \$60,000 this year.

Annual funding has increased by \$50 million or 28% since 2007.

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
\$180.9M	\$194.3M	\$206.9M	\$220.5M	\$227.3M	\$229.3M	\$230.9M

Government believes that the future of the province is fundamentally tied to literacy and learning. To this end, the foundation of the educational system has been re-built in the past five years, new facilities have been constructed, kindergarten has been introduced as a full day program and new pre-school initiatives have been undertaken. The 2013-2014 budget outlines a plan that will continue to strengthen the educational system and provide support to the major initiatives that have been implemented over the past six years.

While the role of the school boards and early learning centres is to deliver high quality programming, the department is responsible to:

- Ensure that early learning centres and schools have consistent, high quality, and up-to-date curriculum.
- Monitor and report on student achievement at key stages of learning.
- Work closely with partners to support student achievement and parent engagement.
- Ensure that learning environments are conducive to healthy, active living.
- Ensure that staff are certified and have opportunities to continue learning.
- Inspect and maintain schools to ensure that students and staff have a safe and healthy place to learn and work
- Maintain school bus driver certification standards, and ensure that school buses are maintained and replaced regularly.

Accomplishments and current initiatives

- A province-wide kindergarten program was established in 2010. A total of 1,485 young Islanders completed this program in 2012.
- An early learning program was introduced in 2010 to ensure that children have a high quality learning experience. To date, 46 centres have been converted to early learning centres, supported by an investment of close to \$12 million. This was the largest investment ever made in early childhood development. An additional \$250,000 will be budgeted for the early learning centres for 2013-14.
- The Best Start program provides assessment and support to parents of children from birth to 24 months. The program is being expanded to 36 months with additional funding of \$60,000 last year and a further \$ 60,000 this year.
- Major investments have been made to school facilities, through new construction and expansions.
- New technologies such as smart boards and LCD projectors have been installed to complement our 7,400 computers. Approximately \$18 million has been budgeted for school construction, computer and trade equipment, capital upgrades and school bus replacement in 2013-14.
- A comprehensive inspection of all schools in the province has determined that they are safe for teachers and students.
- The student-educator ratio has been relatively constant despite declining enrolment. The 2013-14 ratio is 12.49 which is among the best in Canada.
- A new literacy and math assessment for all Grade 12 students will be introduced.
- New school construction includes the K-12 school in Souris and the Spring Park School.

Quick facts

- There are 63 public schools in Prince Edward Island; six of those offer education in the French language.
- After the recent amalgamation process, we now have one single English Language School Board and one French Language School Board.
- Student enrollment in 2012-2013 was 18,943 Grade 1-12 plus 1,463 enrolled in Kindergarten.
- Student enrollment Grade 1-12 In 2001-02 was 23,449
- There were 1,634 full-time equivalent educators and 312 educational assistants.
- There are 115 licensed early childhood centres
- The value of school buildings is approximately \$521 million.
- Literacy scores have improved over the past three years; 87 percent of primary students have met or exceeded expectations in reading.