

# NEWS RELEASE

## Spending in BC public schools increased over recent five-year period, primarily due to compensation

August 26, 2021  
For immediate release

**VANCOUVER**—Despite common misperceptions, education spending in public schools in British Columbia increased over the most recent five-year period of available data, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Contrary to the popular narrative that education spending in public schools has been cut in British Columbia, spending actually increased and exceeds what was required to account for enrolment changes and inflation in the province,” said Paige MacPherson, associate director of education policy at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Education Spending in Public Schools in Canada, Fall 2021*.

After accounting for enrolment and inflation, the study finds that from 2014/15 to 2018/19, per-student spending in BC public schools increased from \$12,203 to \$12,513—a 2.5 per cent increase.

Nova Scotia led the country in inflation-adjusted, per-student spending growth, while BC’s real per-student spending growth on public schools was sixth-highest in Canada.

Even after removing capital spending, such as the cost of building new schools, BC’s real per-student spending on public schools increased.

The study also finds compensation (salaries, wages, fringe benefits, and pensions) contributed the most to the total growth in spending nationally, including marked increases in BC over the same period.

“Compensation – including teacher salaries, pensions, benefits and other costs – explains the majority of the growth in BC public school spending,” MacPherson said.

“Before parents and taxpayers can begin to assess value for money in education, it’s crucial that they understand how much is being spent, and exactly where these dollars are going,” said MacPherson.

(30)

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Paige MacPherson, Associate Director, Education Policy Studies  
Fraser Institute

*To arrange media interviews or for more information, please contact:*

Drue MacPherson, 604-688-0221 ext. 721, [drue.macpherson@fraserinstitute.org](mailto:drue.macpherson@fraserinstitute.org)

Follow the Fraser Institute on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

The Fraser Institute is an independent Canadian public policy research and educational organization with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal and ties to a global network of think-tanks in 87 countries. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Canadians, their families and future generations by studying, measuring and broadly communicating the effects of government policies, entrepreneurship and choice on their well-being. To protect the

Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research.  
Visit [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org)