

New Brunswick government unveils increased education spending in 2017 budget ^[1]

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The provincial government is investing an additional \$56 million in early childhood and education initiatives as part of the 2017-18 budget, bringing the total budget for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to \$1.2 billion.

Premier Brian Gallant made the announcement Tuesday.

"Education is crucial to our economy and to the health of our families," said Gallant. "That is why your government has invested the most in education in the history of our province. We are making strategic investments and hiring teachers so we can improve educational outcomes for students, which, in turn, will strengthen our economy."

Investments this fiscal year include initiatives such as:

- \$8.3 million to support classroom composition, including the addition of 250 school-based teachers over the next two years as part of the recent collective agreement reached with the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation. These teachers will be working in the areas of methods and resource, guidance, literacy, numeracy, positive mental health support, and assisting with gifted and talented students.
- \$33 million for pay equity, economic increases and related benefits for a number of workers, including educational support staff.
- \$6.25 million for continued implementation of the 10-year education plans, bringing the annual investment in this initiative to \$15 million. This supports priority areas such as literacy, numeracy, career and life readiness, early childhood education, coding, trades, arts and physical education.
- Up to \$2.4 million, potentially in partnership with the federal government, to expand Integrated Service Delivery offerings provincewide by 2018.
- To make daycare more affordable for families, the government remains committed to doubling the budget of the Daycare Assistance Program by 2018. To that end, an additional \$3.8 million will be invested in the program this year, bringing the total budget for the program to nearly \$20 million.
- \$2.7 million for enhancements to the Preschool Autism Intervention Program and an increase in per-child funding, from \$27,500 to almost \$33,000.

The government's 10-year education plans aim to improve educational outcomes and better prepare young people for the future. They set objectives in priority areas to create lifelong learners, support educational leaders and bring stability to the system.

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