



2021-22 Provincial Budget

To: All Trustees, Directors of Education, Senior HR and Finance Officials and Communications Officers

Today, Finance Minister and President of the Treasury Board Peter Bethlenfalvy delivered the **2021-22 Ontario Budget: [Protecting People's Health and Our Economy](#)**.

Total government spending for 2021-22 is projected to be \$173.0 billion – down from \$190.3 billion in 2020-21. The reason for this decrease in funding is primarily due to additional COVID-19 expenditures for 2020-21. The Budget projects Ontario's 2021 deficit will fall more than \$5 billion to \$33.1 billion, with an unbalanced budget until 2029.

Education sector funding for 2021-22 is projected to be \$31.3 billion, up \$700 million or 2.3% from the originally planned \$30.6 billion in 2020-21. With COVID-19 spending, the overall spending for 2020-21 was actually \$33.7 billion. This funding will largely flow through the Grants for Student Needs, which are expected to be announced in April along with Priorities and Partnerships Funding. Small increases of 0.3% each year are projected for 2022-23 (\$31.4 billion) and 2023-24 (\$31.5 billion) are also expected. Key cost drivers will be the number of school-aged children and inflation.

Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined in Ontario by 5.7% in 2020, and the province's planning projection is 4.0% growth for 2021 and 4.3% in 2022, slightly below the average of private sector forecasts.

Below is a list of some highlights from the budget following our preliminary analysis.

Budget Highlights

Education and Child Care

- The Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) child care tax credit will be temporarily enhanced by 20% for 2021, with a total cost of \$75 million.
- School repair and renewal capital commitment enhanced to \$14 billion over 10 years, from \$12 billion. The 2021-22 investment will be the same as 2020-21 at \$1.4 billion.
- A third round of the COVID-19 Child Benefit of \$980 million will be provided to parents, doubling the payment to \$400/child or \$500/child with special needs. This is at a cost of \$1.8 billion since March 2020.
- Funding for the Specialist High Skills Major program will be increased to \$39.6 million over three years. Building off an investment of \$42.4 million in 2020–21, this will result in approximately 75 new programs.
- The government will also fund \$3 million for a new pilot bursary program for 1,000 students with financial and other barriers to obtain their Ontario Secondary School

Diploma. This program includes participation in a cooperative education course focused on the skilled trades.

- An investment of \$40 million over two years for remote learning technology for students and teachers.
- Funding for 30,000 new child care spaces.
- \$21.4 million over two years to enhance Virtual Learning Strategy for postsecondary institutions.
- Expanding the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) to include a Grade 10 summer learning opportunity, starting in 2021. OYAP allows students in Grades 11 and 12 to gain exposure to a variety of jobs in the skilled trades through cooperative education placements, while earning credits towards their high school diploma.

Equity and Anti-Racism

- \$1.6 million over two years to support the Anti-Racism and Anti-Hate Grant Program.
- \$18.2 million to address violence against First Nations, Inuit and Métis women and girls.
- \$6 million annually to the Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program, doubling the previous investment.

Broadband

- \$2.8 billion for broadband infrastructure, for a total of \$4 billion over six years.

Health Care – COVID-19 Response

- In total, Ontario's COVID-19 health response is now a projected \$51 billion over four years, (\$5.1 billion in dedicated health response funding in 2021-22) with \$16.3 billion for spending "on protecting people's health", which includes vaccine distribution, PPE, 3,100 additional hospital beds, addressing surgical backlogs, and support for racially diverse, newcomer and low-income communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- \$650 million for long-term care (LTC), in addition to the \$1.4 billion already invested.
- The construction of four new LTC homes.
- \$4.9 billion over four years to increase average daily direct care per LTC resident to four hours.
- More than \$121 million to support training of almost 9,000 Personal Support Workers.
- \$3 billion since the release of the 2020 Budget to support new investments in major hospital projects, with capital grants of \$21 billion over 10 years.
- More funding to build new children's treatment centres in Ottawa and Chatham-Kent.
- \$175 million for mental health and addictions support, part of an investment of \$3.8 billion over 10 years.

Additional Information

A full copy of the Budget can be found at www.ontario.ca/budget.

The news release can be [found here](#).

- [OPSBA's Submission Regarding the 2021-2022 Grants for Student Needs](#)
- [OPSBA Submission to the 2021 Ontario Budget Consultation](#)

Note: OPSBA responded to earlier Ministry of Education funding announcements through media statements and news releases:

- [Flexible and responsive education funding needed for Ontario school boards](#)
- [Backgrounder: OPSBA Submission to the 2021-22 Grants for Student Needs Consultation](#)
- [OPSBA statement regarding today's COVID-19 support announcements](#)
- [OPSBA statement regarding Ontario providing additional support to help Indigenous students succeed](#)
- [OPSBA statement in response to the launch of the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream](#)
- [OPSBA statement regarding the use of reserve funds](#)