

2024-2025 Ontario Budget

OPSBA Overview

March 26, 2024

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

Today, Finance Minister Peter Bethlenfalvy delivered the 2024-25 Ontario Budget: [Building a Better Ontario](#).

Total government expenses for 2024-25 are projected to be \$214.5 billion – up from \$207.3 billion in 2023-24. Education sector funding represents 17.5% of the provincial budget and is projected to be \$37.6 billion, up from the projected \$36.6 billion announced last year. This funding will largely flow through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), which are yet to be announced, but expected in April. By 2026-27, education sector expenses are projected to increase to \$39.4 billion.

The Budget projects a deficit of \$9.8 billion for 2024-25 – which is higher than the \$200 million surplus projected in last year's Budget. It is expected that the province will be in the black as of the 2026-27 fiscal year, with an anticipated \$500 million surplus.

OPSBA is pleased to see investments in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and continued investments in the skilled trades. We were hoping to have seen additional investments in student nutrition programs, however at this time, there does not appear to be dedicated funding for this. Demand for these programs continues to vastly exceed supply throughout our member boards, and OPSBA will follow up on this issue with the Ministry of Education, while looking ahead to the federal budget.

On capital funding, we are hoping for more detail with respect to funding for schools versus child care programs, and will look to see [more of our priorities](#) reflected in the coming weeks when the government releases the details of the Education-specific funding (GSNs).

OPSBA will continue to review the budget for education impacts and the Ministry of Finance's accompanying implementation legislation. Below is a list of some highlights from the budget following our preliminary analysis.

Budget Highlights

Education

- Elementary and Secondary student enrolment is projected to be 2.066 million in 2024-25, up from a projected 2.037 million in the previous Budget release.
- \$23 billion over 10 years, including \$16 billion in capital grants, to build, expand, and renew schools and child care spaces. This includes \$1.4 billion for the current school year to support the repair and renewal of schools.
- \$15 million in digital math tools, \$65 million for reading supports that will support educators working with small groups of students in Kindergarten to Grade 3,
- \$18 million in the 2024-25 school year to improve special education. This includes \$8 million to introduce dedicated resources to help students with special education needs

navigate the school system and beyond, as well as \$10 million for increased in-class supports for students with the highest level of need.

- \$30 million for increased school facility security, dedicated to security cameras, lighting, and vape detectors.

Infrastructure

- More than \$190 billion over the next ten years, including investments in highways, transit, high-speed internet, housing-enabling and other infrastructure.
- \$200 million over three years in the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund to support new and revitalized sport, recreation, and community facilities.
- Nearly \$4 billion to provide access to high-speed internet to every community across the province by the end of 2025.

Indigenous and Northern Community Supports

- \$60 million over three years to maintain mental health and addictions services, including clinical supports, community mental health and well-being initiatives, and opioid programming.
- \$15 million over three years to support the ongoing delivery of Indigenous public health programs.
- \$11 million over three years to enhance early detection and management of foot complications arising from diabetes for Indigenous communities.
- \$8 million over three years to strengthen prevention initiatives in Indigenous communities, targeting diabetes, smoking and chronic diseases.
- \$24 million over three years to enhance access to the Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program across 160 Indigenous delivery sites. The Indigenous Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program is a community-based initiative aimed at helping Indigenous families and children have a healthy start to life and laying a solid foundation for their future health, well-being and success.

Child Care

- Continued implementation of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement to increase access to high-quality affordable child care while reducing average out-of-pocket child care fees

Children and Youth Health Care

- Further \$20 million in the Ontario Autism Program in 2024-25 to support enrolment of 20,000 children and youth in core clinical services.
- Additional \$50 million over three years to support culturally responsive and safe care for women and children in Indigenous and Northern communities.
- \$2.5 million over three years in additional funding to increase outreach to children and youth with involvement in the child welfare system and link them with resource and educational supports.

Post-Secondary Education

- \$903 million over three years to create a Postsecondary Education Sustainability Fund, which will increase operating grants to support financial stability, however the Ministry of Colleges and Universities will see an overall cut of \$400 million from its total budget.
- Additional \$10 million in 2024-25 to support small, Northern and rural colleges and universities.
- Extending the tuition freeze for Ontario students in publicly assisted colleges and universities for at least three more years.

Skills Training

- An additional \$100 million in the Skills Development Fund Training Stream to address challenges in hiring, training, and retaining workers. This brings the total investment to \$960 million.
- Additional \$16.5 million annually over three years as part of the Skilled Trades Strategy, to attract more young people into the skilled trades, simplify the system, and encourage employer participation in apprenticeships.
- \$62.9 million to expand the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and launch pre-apprenticeship training projects. This includes:
 - \$21.1 million to expand the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)
 - \$41.8 million to launch approximately 100 pre-apprenticeship training projects around the province to help young people get firsthand experience working in trades, including a paid work placement with a local employer.

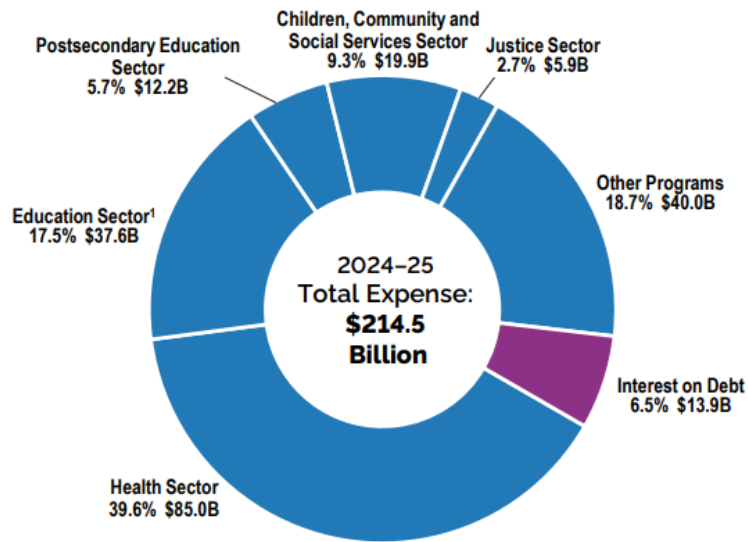
Additional Information

[OPSBA's Submission to the 2024 Pre-Budget Consultations](#)

A full copy of the budget can be found at <https://budget.ontario.ca/>.

Official Budget News Release: [Building a Better Ontario](#)

Chart 3.5
Composition of Total Expense, 2024–25



¹ Excludes Teachers' Pension Plan. Teachers' Pension Plan expense is included in Other Programs.

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Sources: Ontario Treasury Board Secretariat and Ontario Ministry of Finance.

[From page 170 of the Budget document](#)