

Driving Student Success With More Supportive Classrooms

Ontario Expanding Special Education and Putting More Educators in Schools

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Ontario is making a significant investment to improve special education programs, put more teachers and support staff in classrooms, and help better prepare kids for their future.

Premier Kathleen Wynne was with Indira Naidoo-Harris, Minister of Education, and Arthur Potts, MPP Beaches-East York, at Kimberley Junior Public School in Toronto today to announce an investment of more than \$300 million over three years that will help children with special education needs succeed.

This major funding increase will add more education workers and specialized support staff to classrooms, and eliminate the wait list to have a child's special education needs assessed. In total, Ontario will add about 2,000 new teachers and education workers, including:

- Educational assistants (EAs) to support students with exceptionally high needs
- Specialists, including social workers, psychologists, behavioural specialists and speech language pathologists to support boards in expanding special education programs and services -- ultimately benefitting all students
- Increasing the number of guidance and other teachers in elementary schools to better prepare students for a successful transition to high school, and to help Grade 7 and 8 students take their first steps in career planning
- About 400 new mental health workers over the next two years, to ensure every high school student will have access to mental health supports at school.

Taken together, these actions will help to address concerns around challenges and disruptions for students in the classroom, providing educators with the resources to maintain healthy, safe, structured schools and creating an environment that promotes a life-long love of learning for all children.

Putting more education workers and supports in our schools is part of the government's plan to support care, create opportunity and make life more affordable during this period of rapid economic change. The plan includes free prescription drugs for everyone under 25, and 65 or over, through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, a higher minimum wage and better working conditions and easier access to affordable child care.

QUOTES

" Every day, parents across Ontario put their trust in our teachers and in our schools. And every day, our educators step up to deliver. But we know that there are gaps — gaps that are widening. Parents are telling us how frustrating it is to wait to have their child's special education needs assessed. Teachers and educators are urging us to take action to make classrooms better and safer. To each and every person who has spoken out, I want you to know that we are listening. And that's why we are doing even more. More to give our educators the tools to boost success in their classrooms. More to give every child the support they need to succeed in school and get onto a path to a happy and healthy life."

- Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

" This major investment in our publicly funded education system ensures that every student in Ontario has the support they need to succeed in the classroom and in the world. These funds will help to build an education system that is inclusive, fair and promotes well-being. These investments will support vital programs and services for students so that they can reach their full potential."

- Indira Naidoo-Harris
Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario will provide permanent additional funding of more than \$300 million over three years for special education to expand programs and services, including funding for school boards to hire additional staff, including multidisciplinary teams, and clear wait lists for special education needs assessments.
- Through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), the government supports funding for classrooms, school leadership and operations, specific student-related priorities and local management by school boards. Per-pupil funding is projected to rise to \$12,300 in 2018–19, up by 9.4 per cent since 2012–13.
- Ontario will provide more than \$140 million over three school years so school boards can hire 450 more guidance and other teachers to help Grades 7 and 8 students start career and pathways planning and transition successfully to high school.
- As part of a [historic investment in mental health care](#), Ontario will provide almost \$200 million over four years to expand mental health awareness and education, early identification and assessment — and ensure timely referrals for students to community health services. This will fund 180 more mental health workers in secondary schools, increasing to 400 in 2019–20.

LEARN MORE

- [2018–19 Funding for Education: Grants for Student Needs](#)
- [Help for Parents of Children with Special Education Needs](#)
- [Providing More Choice for Families in the Ontario Autism Program](#)

- [Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Excellence in Ontario](#)
- [Throne Speech Announces Major Investments Guided by a Commitment to Care and Creating Opportunity](#)

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