

## Ontario Budget 2019 Summary of Education/School Boards Sections

### **Funding:**

- Nominal increase to funding for the Ministry of Education of \$1 billion over 3 years, which works out to just under 1.2% increase per year
  - Year 1 = \$700 million
  - Year 2 = funding freeze
  - Year 3 = \$300 million
- This is insufficient to meet existing needs in schools and leaves no room for wage increases unless other savings can be found by boards.
  - Explicit mention on p. 51 of the government's plan to restrain compensation costs in the broader public sector
- The budget notes that the majority of additional funding to education is due to projected increasing enrolment, which means that money will not be used to improve programs. When the Grants for Student Needs documents are released it will be possible to see what funding looks like on a per-pupil basis.
- "The government is looking to partners in the education sector to find efficiencies and improve accountability, to ensure that funding is targeted and to improve the in-class experience and education outcomes for students." (p. 127)

### **Other Announcements:**

- Creating a Minister's Task Force on School Boards.
  - This is the first mention of such a task force, but it is consistent with the February leak that mergers were being considered. It is also consistent with

recommendations in the Ernst and Young report calling for fewer transfer partners (and explicitly identifying school boards in that discussion).

- The consultation will look for “efficiencies”, but also claims that it will respect the four publicly funded education systems in Ontario. It is possible, however, to merge boards (or eliminate them) and still provide education in both official languages and continue to provide access to Catholic schools.
- Parents’ Bill of Rights: this is not a new announcement, but there is some greater detail on what it will look like
  - Intent to “improve communication with parents”
  - Will include parents’ right to withdraw students from classes that teach things with which they disagree, and right of parents to express their opinion of what is being taught in the classroom especially on health and physical education.
  - Clearly this is an attempt to appeal to social conservatives
- \$13 billion in capital grants over 10 years
  - This is less than the current requirement to meet existing school renewal and repair needs.
  - At an average of \$1.3 billion per year, this is less than what the Auditor General of Ontario indicated was needed on an annual basis to meet ongoing needs.
- \$1 billion over 5 years to create up to 30,000 childcare spaces in schools.
- \$3.7 million to fund FNMI studies curriculum and the Indigenous Graduation Coach Program in targeted boards
- Class size – reiteration of previous announcement to increase class sizes
- Teacher hiring practices – reiteration of previous announcement
- Curriculum Reform – reiteration of previous announcement