



FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION FUNDING

On February 7, 2014, the federal government announced new funding for First Nations education that has now been locked into the 2014 federal budget tabled on February 11. Specifically:

- new core funding of \$1.25 billion from 2016-17 to 2018-19 in support of First Nations education with an annual growth rate of 4.5 per cent;
- an Enhanced Education Fund that will provide funding of \$160 million over four years starting in 2015-16; and,
- \$500 million over seven years beginning in 2015-16 for a new First Nations Education Infrastructure Fund.

Is this new funding?

Yes. The funding announced on February 7 and locked into the 2014 federal budget on February 11 is new money. This is not funding that has been “re-profiled” or re-announced in previous budgets. An initial analysis of funding projections indicates that First Nations will see more than \$2 billion in education support by 2021-22.

Education funding has been under a 2% cap since 1996. What happens with the 2% cap?

The 2% cap on education funding has been eliminated. As noted above, there will be an annual guaranteed growth rate of 4.5%. This annual growth will be enshrined in statute so it cannot be reduced. An escalator of 4.5% is comparable to rates of growth in annual transfers between provinces and the federal government.

Will the new investments be enough to close the funding gap in First Nations education?

The new investments announced will have a significant impact on First Nation schools and students. AFN has done many estimates of the funding gap in First Nations education, and the new investments of \$1.9 billion will make a significant contribution to closing this funding gap. There are certain areas, however, where the AFN estimates more funding will be required. Specifically, in the development and support of First Nations Education Systems, and ongoing maintenance to ensure schools are safe and secure.

Is the new funding conditional on the Conservative Party of Canada winning the upcoming 2015 election?

No. This new funding is not subject to the outcome of the 2015 federal election. Regardless of which party wins in 2015, these investments will be passed by Parliament through the budget implementation bill and are then locked into future fiscal planning. On this point, it is worth noting that all parties in the House of Commons have stated their support for this new approach and the new investments.