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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

### **\$29.4-million back-to-school boost for B.C. classrooms**

VICTORIA – Government is giving schools throughout the province a funding lift to support student learning, cut costs for families and bring B.C.’s new curriculum to life in classrooms with the new \$29.4-million Student Learning Grant.

Government will begin flowing the extra funding to public and independent schools in the coming weeks so they can begin working with parents and teachers to prepare for the new school year. Schools will be required to put a priority on purchasing supplies and resources that reduce costs for parents and help teachers deliver B.C.’s new curriculum.

Schools can use the one-time funding to purchase a wide range of supplies for schools and classrooms – everything from textbooks, hands-on learning tools and computer programs, to athletic equipment, art supplies and lab equipment. They can decide what types of learning supplies to purchase, giving them flexibility to meet the local needs of parents, students and teachers.

These new resources will help teachers bring B.C.’s new curriculum to life in the classroom, so students can gain the hands-on experience, collaboration, critical thinking and communications skills they need to succeed in college, university and the workforce.

B.C.’s 60 school districts will receive a total of \$27.4 million based on the number of students in their district. Independent schools will receive \$2 million. School districts will be notified about the amount of funding they will receive before the end of February.

School districts and independent schools will be required to report to parents and the Ministry of Education on how the funds were used prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year.

As a result of B.C.’s strong economic growth and fiscal discipline, government was able to identify this one-time funding and use it toward important investments like the Student Learning Grant.

This builds on the Province’s record \$5.1-billion funding to B.C. public schools in 2016-17. In addition to this base funding, and including the new Student Learning Grant, school districts are benefiting from new measures announced over the course of the year totalling nearly \$125 million.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Mike Bernier, Minister of Education–**

“Thanks to our strong economy and fiscal management, we are finishing the year in a really

good position. I can think of no better way to take advantage of the available year-end funding than by investing in our students and classrooms.

"The \$29.4 million will flow in the coming weeks and I expect all school districts to begin talking to parents and teachers. They should have two goals in mind: how to ease back-to-school supply costs for parents and how to bring B.C.'s new curriculum to life in the classroom.

"This investment will help every student and is another part our commitment to make sure our kids are ready for the jobs of tomorrow."

**Quick Facts:**

- The Student Learning Grant will fund new classroom supplies at a rate of about \$50 per public school student.
- This announcement builds on the Province's record \$5.1-billion funding to B.C. public schools in 2016-17 and additional measures introduced over the course of the year to support student learning, help teachers bring the new curriculum to life and cut costs for families, including:
  - \$50 million for school districts to begin hiring more teachers and improve student supports for the 2016-17 school year;
  - \$14.7-million Student Transportation Fund to help school districts make bus services more affordable and accessible;
  - \$1.8-million Rural Education Enhancement Fund to keep eligible rural schools open;
  - A \$250 Back-to-School Tax Credit to help parents and guardians with school supplies and other back-to-school costs;
  - \$25 million to relieve operating pressures for school districts to invest in students; and
  - \$6 million to train teachers on coding and B.C.'s new curriculum and to buy computers for classrooms.

**Learn More:**

Learn more about B.C.'s new curriculum: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

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