

Public Funds for Public Schools

Public Interest Alberta joined 13 other organizations in calling on the Government of Alberta to:

1. Phase out public funding of private schools, exempting special education schools, over three years.
2. Re-allocate the funds to fulfill campaign promises:
 - reduce mandatory school fees
 - reduce class sizes
 - increase classroom supports
 - introduce a school lunch program



Participating organizations:

Public Interest Alberta

Progress Alberta

Alberta Teachers' Association

Public School Boards Association of Alberta

Edmonton Public School Board

Support Our Students (SOS) Alberta

CUPE Alberta

Calgary and District Labour Council

Edmonton and District Labour Council

CBE Staff Association, various staff for Calgary Board of Education schools

CUPE Local 40, various staff for Calgary Board of Education schools

CUPE Local 474, custodial staff for Edmonton Public Schools

CUPE Local 3550, support staff for Edmonton Public Schools

Unifor Local 52A, support staff for Edmonton Catholic Schools

Public Interest Alberta and partners in the news

Public Interest Alberta calls for private school funding to be phased out by Kevin Maimann, Metro
Edmonton

Public funds should not subsidize private schools, advocates argue by Claire Theobald, Edmonton Sun

Alberta private schools need to pay their own way, education and labour groups say by Min Dhariwal, CBC
News

NDP resists call to defund private schools by James Wood, Calgary Herald

Groups push for Alberta to phase out funding for private schools Canadian Press

Support our Students: Alberta's ten strategies for achieving equitable public education Ryan Jespersen show

Media releases | February 23, 2017

EDMONTON—Public Interest Alberta joined with 13 other organizations today to urge the provincial government to phase out the public funding of private schools, exempting special education schools, over three years and reallocate the money to fulfill its education-related campaign promises.

“Public funding for education should be focused on building the best Public, Catholic, and Francophone school systems possible,” said Joel French, Executive Director of Public Interest Alberta. “Private schools in Alberta receive some of the highest subsidies in Canada, while core government campaign promises in education remain unfulfilled. We need a change of priorities.”

The organizations’ proposal is to:

1. Phase out public funding of private schools, exempting special education schools, over three years.
2. Re-allocate the funds to fulfill campaign promises:
 - reduce mandatory school fees
 - reduce class sizes
 - increase classroom supports
 - introduce a school lunch program

Representatives of organizations supporting the proposal offered the following comments:

“Alberta’s public education system, which includes Public, Separate, and Francophone school boards, is globally recognised for excellence and equity. As teachers, we believe that public dollars should go to public education, ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed. Simply put, public education works!” – Jonathan Teghtmeyer, Associate Coordinator – Communications, The Alberta Teachers' Association

“Since our inception, SOS Alberta has advocated for a barrier-free education system. Barriers to public

education include fees and the ability for students to access classroom and mental health resources and supports. Reducing funds going to the private system will go a long way to lessening the financial burden on families and recommit support for the public education system.” – Carolyn Blasetti, Executive Director of Support Our Students (SOS) Alberta

“By continuing to support Alberta’s private schools, we are taking funds away from children attending our Public Schools. In turn, this limits the opportunities available to our students. We believe all of Alberta’s children should be afforded an equal and equitable education, which will only lend itself to an enhanced and inclusive society.” – Arlene Hrynyk, President of Public School Boards Association of Alberta

“Workers on the front lines in schools across the province are trying their best to support the students in their classrooms, but there are simply not enough staff. Classroom conditions are in urgent need of attention, and that is why fulfilling the governing party’s campaign promises now is so important.” – Lee-Ann Kalen, Edmonton Vice President of Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Alberta

“The Edmonton Public School Board passed a motion last year that the provincial government should phase public funding away from private schools and reinvest it in public education. Private schools in five Canadian provinces do not receive a single penny from public funds, yet Alberta funds them at a rate of 70%. Clearly that needs to change.” – Michael Janz, Chair of Edmonton Public School Board