

# School Library Funding in Ontario

The Ministry of Education recognizes the vital importance of staffed school libraries to student success, and provides all boards with funding for school library staff through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). The GSN defines all school board funding, including dedicated funding for school library staff through both through the Pupil Foundation Grant and the School Foundation Grant.

However because the bulk of this funding is not enveloped, **hundreds of thousands of Ontario students have lost access to school libraries and school library staff over the past two decades, along with the critical resources they provide.** The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this troubling trend and has put this critical resource at immediate risk for Ontario students.

Thirty years of international research has established that the active presence and participation of qualified library staff make a significant positive difference in student academic achievement. School libraries are critical to successful online learning, ensuring students achieve curriculum objectives, and curating the digital and print resources students need to succeed.

## Pupil Foundation Grant , School Library Staff\*

The majority of funding allocated for school library staff is provided through the Pupil Foundation Grant, a per-pupil allocation that supports the elements of a classroom education that are required by, and generally common to, all students.

Under the Pupil Foundation Grant, the Ministry allocates approximately **\$231.6 million** for salaries and benefits of school library staff.

**This funding is based on \$114.03 per elementary school pupil and \$95.90 per secondary school pupil.** This is the equivalent of:

- 1 school library staff\* for every **763** elementary students
- 1 school library staff\* for every **909** secondary students

While the 2021-22 GSN introduced accountability measures to ensure that school boards are spending funding for school libraries on the school library, **this funding is not enveloped.** This means that school boards are not required to spend the funds as intended by the ministry formula.

## School Foundation Grant, Library Staff Allocation

The School Foundation Grant provides school-based funding for in-school administration and leadership, as well as funding to support targeted library staff for elementary schools and parent engagement. Through the Library Staff Allocation, approximately **\$10.2 million** is provided for teacher-librarians and/or library technicians to support elementary school students.

**The funding is based on fixed amounts of \$53,324.40 per school board and \$1,775.70 per elementary school within each school board.**

This funding is **enveloped**, meaning that school boards are required to spend these funds only on school library staff.

## Library Materials

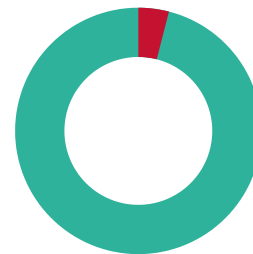
The Ministry provide separate funding for **library materials** through the Pupil Foundation Grant. Library materials are included under both the allocation for "Textbooks and learning materials," and "Additional Educational Software Licensing."

## Provincial School Library Funding

Pupil Foundation Grant  
= \$231.6 million

School Foundation Grant  
= \$10.2 million

} = \$241.8 million



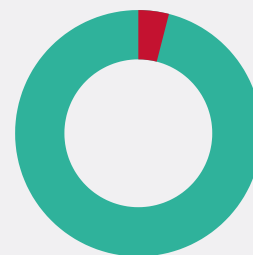
## Example: School Library Funding at an Average Ontario School Board

In an average Ontario School Board, with: 41 elementary schools, 9,730 elementary school students and 4,245 secondary school students, the school library staff allocation is \$1.64 million.

Pupil Foundation Grant  
= \$1.52 million

School Foundation Grant  
= \$126,128

} = \$1.64 million



\* School library staff may include teacher-librarians, school librarians, library technicians or library clerks. The Pupil Foundation Grant is calculated according to the salary pay scale and benefits of a Teacher-Librarian (TL).