

BCTF Research Report

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BC international-student K-12 enrolment and tuition fees in decline: Update, 2009–10

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The years of ever-increasing revenue from international students appear to have come to an end. Data show that the number of international students and the revenue they generated rose annually throughout the first years of the past decade; however, enrolment and associated fee revenue for school districts reached its highest level in 2007–08, and has declined in the two years since then (see charts on the following pages).

Revenue information is gathered from Schedule 2 of school-district audited financial statements as of June 30 of each year. Student numbers are drawn from ministry Student Statistics reports, which show that the headcount¹ of non-resident students enrolled in BC public schools in September 2009 was 9,014.

Not surprisingly, reduced district revenue from fees followed the pattern of downturn in the global economy. Total provincial international-student-fee revenue of \$121,019,957 for 2009–10 was down \$8,087,998 from the high of \$129,107,955 in 2007–08.

Impact of international students

International students can enrich the education of BC students by producing more diversity and rich experiences in classrooms. However, concerns have been raised by teachers.

In some cases, students are simply assigned to classes, adding to the class size without additional supports. These practices can leave the international students without the ESL support they need and presumably are expecting. When the teacher does respond to their particular needs, this may reduce the attention they can provide to all the other students in the class.

¹ Full-time-equivalent [FTE] numbers are not being reported for non-resident students after 2008-09.

Inequity between school districts

The ability to attract international students varies substantially between school districts. Most of the smaller districts and the geographically-isolated districts enrol no international students at all, and never have. Even among the larger, urban districts, numbers of international students varies.

Table 1 (pp. 5–6) shows that while a third of school districts received virtually no revenue from international-student fees, a few districts receive substantial additional funds from this source that allow for a richer program for all their students. This inequity runs counter to the provincial education funding system, which has equalization factors to reflect realities such as geographical dispersion and unique student needs.

Districts that generate significant revenues from international-student enrolments are better able to offset the budget shortfalls currently plaguing school districts across the province. Districts without these additional revenues are left to further cut core services and close schools to balance district budgets. In other words, the current funding practices of the provincial government are creating pressures within the public system that are reinforcing systemic inequalities between upper/middle/low-income communities as well as urban/rural communities.

West Vancouver, the school district with the highest socio-economic status in the province, is also the district where international student tuition revenue is greatest: this supplemental funding is equivalent to 16.4% of the district's operating grant.

The other districts receiving a revenue supplement from these fees equal to more than 5% of their operating grants are Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, North Vancouver, Coquitlam, and Greater Victoria.

On a dollar basis, the top district is Coquitlam, with more than \$14 million in offshore-fee revenue. Vancouver received almost \$13 million, with Greater Victoria, Surrey, Burnaby, and Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows each bringing in over \$8 million.

Revenue instability

Overall, provincial revenue from international student fees fell by 6% from 2008–09 to 2009–10. While 29 out of BC's 60 school districts experienced a reduction in fee revenue, 20 others managed to attract more students than last year and actually increased their fee revenue. Clearly, although global economic instability can have an impact on enrolments, so does the effectiveness of international-student recruitment. These factors make this funding source unpredictable, making it difficult for districts to plan delivery of services. For example, Surrey, Richmond, and Coquitlam experienced decreases in fee revenue of more than \$1 million; Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows showed an increase in revenue of over \$1 million.

Economic impact of international students

Tuition fees of \$12,000 to \$14,000 per student contributed more than \$100 million to the provincial economy annually for each of the past five years. In addition, there is probably at least another \$100 million or more a year coming into the province from homestay fees and other related goods and services.

Unpublished Ministry of Education data (Form 1530 data—Staffing by Program, 2009–10) for Program 1.62, Off-shore students, indicates that 374.74 full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching positions existed in BC schools during 2009–10 to provide educational programs for international students.

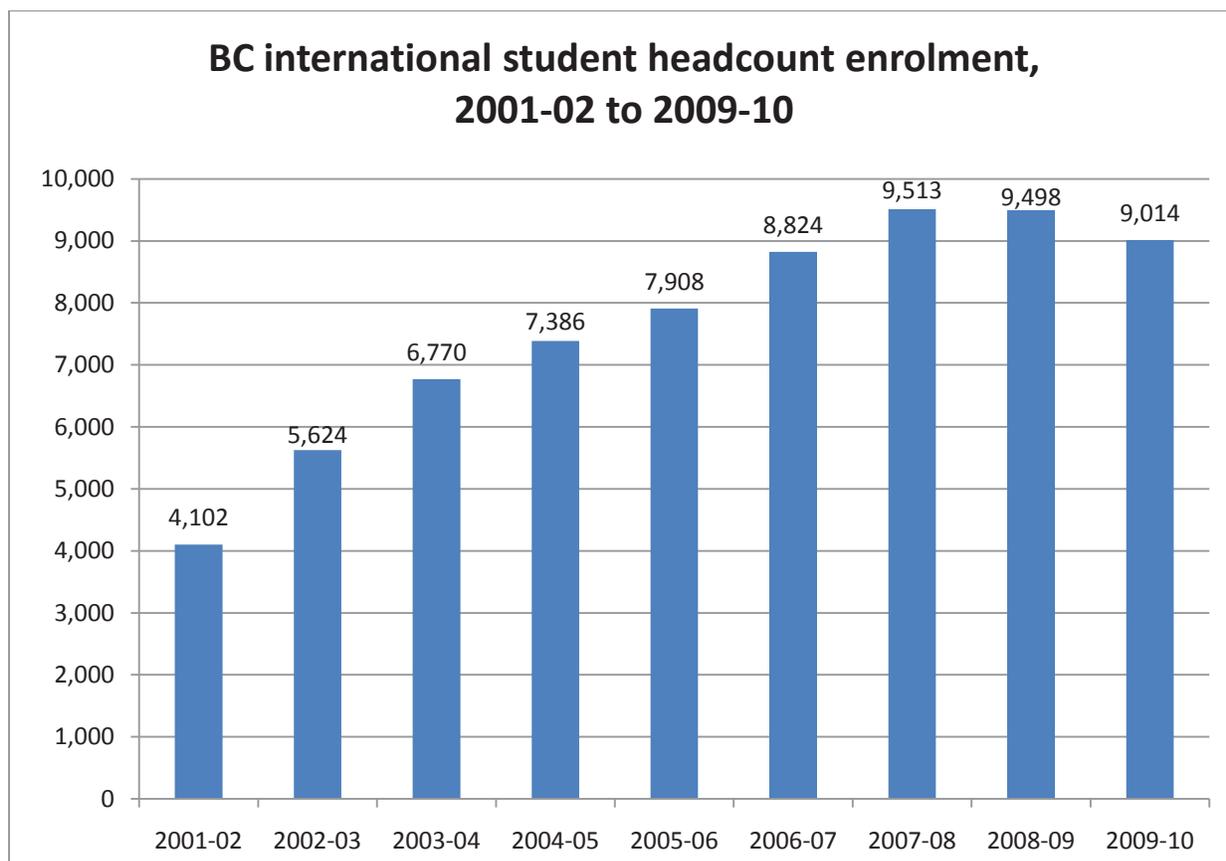
Attracting international students

The International Public School Education Association (IPSEA) of BC is an organization of 38 member school districts that host international students. It was created to promote BC schools to potential international students. Its web site, at <http://studyinbc.org/>, says:

Enjoy a wonderful learning experience in schools that welcome international students

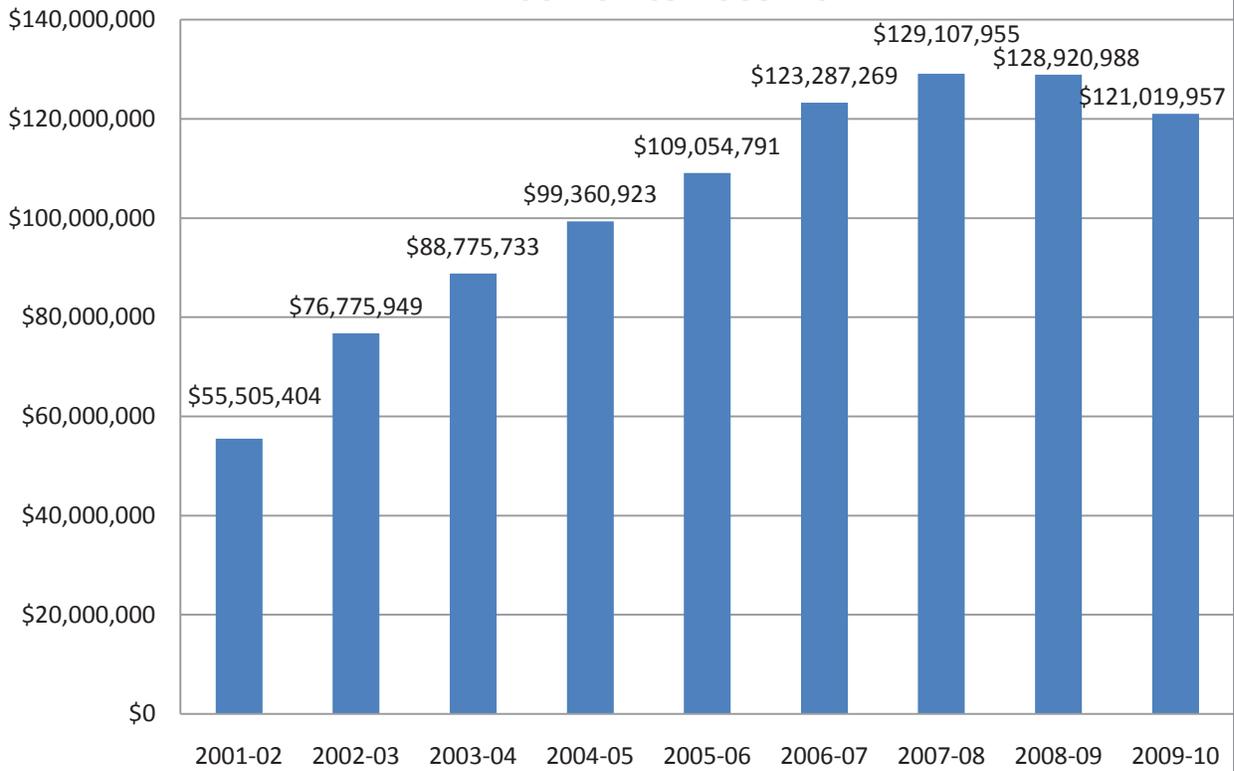
British Columbia is Canada's westernmost province, known for its breathtaking scenery and family-oriented communities. BC public schools welcome international students from around the world to study in top-rated education programs built on high standards of academic excellence. You can choose to complete your secondary school education and graduate with a BC education diploma – a stepping-stone to university and college entrance, or take general studies to build English language skills while experiencing life with a Canadian family.

Educating international students has clearly become a business in British Columbia.



Sources: BC Ministry of Education *Student Statistics—2009/10, Province: Public and Independent Schools Combined* (January 2010; http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/student_stats/prov.pdf), and *Student Statistics—2001/02 to 2005/06, Full-year summary report* (December 2005).

BC International student tuition fee revenue, 2001-02 to 2009-10



Source: School district audited financial statements as of June 30 of each year. Available on school district web sites.

Table 1: BC offshore tuition fee revenue, 2009–10

#	District Name	Offshore tuition fee revenue 2009–10	2008–09 to 2009–10 incr(decr)
5	Southeast Kootenay	\$ 1,113,273	\$ 162,415
6	Rocky Mountain	\$ 656,333	(\$ 287,919)
8	Kootenay Lake	\$ 811,428	(\$ 445,464)
10	Arrow Lakes	\$ 0	\$ 0
19	Revelstoke	\$ 9,738	(\$ 17,162)
20	Kootenay-Columbia	\$ 201,288	\$ 62,603
22	Vernon	\$ 3,349,120	(\$ 248,866)
23	Central Okanagan	\$ 1,090,074	\$ 392,653
27	Cariboo-Chilcotin	\$ 20,701	(\$ 11,771)
28	Quesnel	\$ 602,491	\$ 58,200
33	Chilliwack	\$ 328,364	\$ 99,103
34	Abbotsford	\$ 3,744,651	(\$ 720,146)
35	Langley	\$ 6,796,404	(\$ 430,719)
36	Surrey	\$ 8,507,531	(\$ 2,161,498)
37	Delta	\$ 2,918,308	(\$ 276,365)
38	Richmond	\$ 4,058,430	(\$ 1,069,903)
39	Vancouver	\$ 12,866,704	\$ 101,011
40	New Westminster	\$ 1,809,477	(\$ 511,605)
41	Burnaby	\$ 8,657,076	\$ 716,457
42	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows	\$ 8,547,405	\$ 1,491,442
43	Coquitlam	\$ 14,474,473	(\$ 1,790,720)
44	North Vancouver	\$ 7,720,050	(\$ 941,775)
45	West Vancouver	\$ 7,960,407	(\$ 755,013)
46	Sunshine Coast	\$ 72,985	\$ 9,155
47	Powell River	\$ 231,003	(\$ 39,652)
48	Howe Sound	\$ 894,448	(\$ 206,432)
49	Central Coast	\$ 0	\$ 0
50	Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte	\$ 0	\$ 0
51	Boundary	\$ 15,797	\$ 15,797
52	Prince Rupert	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
53	Okanagan Similkameen	\$ 0	\$ 0
54	Bulkley Valley	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
57	Prince George	\$ 183,500	(\$ 136,690)

Recalculated District Operating Grants 2009–10	Offshore tuition fee revenue as % of 09–10 Recalc. Op. Grant
\$ 47,741,468	2.33%
\$ 30,603,366	2.14%
\$ 48,323,892	1.68%
\$ 7,208,878	0.00%
\$ 9,955,385	0.10%
\$ 35,995,806	0.56%
\$ 69,216,123	4.84%
\$ 163,011,899	0.67%
\$ 53,381,587	0.04%
\$ 35,216,801	1.71%
\$ 98,369,119	0.33%
\$ 143,542,770	2.61%
\$ 140,437,057	4.84%
\$ 511,446,485	1.66%
\$ 124,102,643	2.35%
\$ 169,595,884	2.39%
\$ 442,614,210	2.91%
\$ 51,823,871	3.49%
\$ 184,539,738	4.69%
\$ 111,028,814	7.70%
\$ 226,216,035	6.40%
\$ 119,670,809	6.45%
\$ 48,439,909	16.43%
\$ 33,327,422	0.22%
\$ 21,332,418	1.08%
\$ 35,022,250	2.55%
\$ 4,918,278	0.00%
\$ 9,711,434	0.00%
\$ 15,717,834	0.10%
\$ 25,499,725	0.09%
\$ 23,626,736	0.00%
\$ 22,859,155	0.03%
\$ 119,389,475	0.15%

Total revenue from offshore tuition fees, 2001 to 2010	Rank, based on total offshore tuition fee rev., 2001 to 2010
\$ 4,140,401	27
\$ 5,557,465	23
\$ 6,640,599	22
\$ 80,940	49
\$ 268,445	44
\$ 816,546	39
\$ 13,624,920	16
\$ 3,784,085	28
\$ 108,510	48
\$ 1,795,123	35
\$ 2,019,852	33
\$ 34,399,184	10
\$ 63,287,813	5
\$ 80,661,960	3
\$ 26,352,351	12
\$ 29,288,727	11
\$ 103,075,996	2
\$ 22,987,109	13
\$ 44,944,876	9
\$ 51,401,483	8
\$ 129,690,178	1
\$ 57,685,590	6
\$ 70,210,802	4
\$ 1,246,998	37
\$ 2,967,806	30
\$ 13,607,258	17
\$ 0	56
\$ 0	57
\$ 135,043	47
\$ 34,391	53
\$ 618,923	40
\$ 32,875	54
\$ 2,213,293	32

#	District Name	Offshore tuition fee revenue 2009-10	2008-09 to 2009-10 incr(decr)
58	Nicola-Similkameen	\$ 0	\$ 0
59	Peace River South	\$ 128,560	(\$ 27,166)
60	Peace River North	\$ 246,562	\$ 2,111
61	Greater Victoria	\$ 8,267,789	\$ 180,120
62	Sooke	\$ 2,192,639	(\$ 17,093)
63	Saanich	\$ 2,217,649	\$ 299,796
64	Gulf Islands	\$ 599,928	(\$ 250,003)
67	Okanagan Skaha	\$ 360,194	(\$ 149,565)
68	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	\$ 2,293,858	(\$ 744,652)
69	Qualicum	\$ 1,744,464	\$ 95,271
70	Alberni	\$ 0	\$ 0
71	Comox Valley	\$ 1,342,471	(\$ 60,416)
72	Campbell River	\$ 337,673	(\$ 157,038)
73	Kamloops Thompson	\$ 1,609,478	\$ 165,614
74	Gold Trail	\$ 0	(\$ 44,376)
75	Mission	\$ 1,130,371	(\$ 281,157)
78	Fraser-Cascade	\$ 107,083	(\$ 111,470)
79	Cowichan Valley	\$ 660,936	\$ 94,163
81	Fort Nelson	\$ 22,000	\$ 22,000
82	Coast Mountains	\$ 12,630	(\$ 5,470)
83	North Okanagan-Shuswap	\$ 14,420	(\$ 19,834)
84	Vancouver Island West	\$ 0	\$ 0
85	Vancouver Island North	\$ 0	\$ 0
87	Stikine	\$ 0	\$ 0
91	Nechako Lakes	\$ 57,793	\$ 18,998
92	Nisga'a	\$ 0	\$ 0
93	Francophone Education Authority	\$ 0	\$ 0
Totals		\$ 121,019,957	(\$ 7,901,031)

Recalculated District Operating Grants 2009-10	Offshore tuition fee revenue as % of 09-10 Recalc. Op. Grant
\$ 24,378,188	0.00%
\$ 42,151,195	0.30%
\$ 51,860,909	0.48%
\$ 146,186,915	5.66%
\$ 70,244,539	3.12%
\$ 62,079,342	3.57%
\$ 15,745,991	3.81%
\$ 54,606,012	0.66%
\$ 115,320,874	1.99%
\$ 40,047,404	4.36%
\$ 36,881,510	0.00%
\$ 70,012,103	1.92%
\$ 48,923,755	0.69%
\$ 119,670,441	1.34%
\$ 20,216,283	0.00%
\$ 51,855,848	2.18%
\$ 19,391,365	0.55%
\$ 70,203,305	0.94%
\$ 9,500,567	0.23%
\$ 50,515,006	0.03%
\$ 61,590,379	0.02%
\$ 6,755,722	0.00%
\$ 18,378,215	0.00%
\$ 5,655,009	0.00%
\$ 49,609,206	0.12%
\$ 6,988,859	0.00%
\$ 55,273,997	0.00%
\$ 4,507,930,215	2.68%

Total revenue from offshore tuition fees, 2001 to 2010	Rank, based on total offshore tuition fee rev., 2001 to 2010
\$ 60,755	51
\$ 1,970,004	34
\$ 980,571	38
\$ 56,013,027	7
\$ 14,658,918	15
\$ 10,882,679	19
\$ 4,447,605	26
\$ 3,243,545	29
\$ 19,459,443	14
\$ 12,465,207	18
\$ 379,079	41
\$ 5,481,803	25
\$ 2,963,909	31
\$ 5,510,331	24
\$ 242,029	45
\$ 10,066,150	20
\$ 1,304,270	36
\$ 7,091,095	21
\$ 44,020	52
\$ 202,110	46
\$ 292,354	43
\$ 10,500	55
\$ 64,800	50
\$ 0	58
\$ 295,223	42
\$ 0	59
\$ 0	60
\$ 931,808,969	

Sources: Schedule A2, District Audited Financial Statements, available on school district web sites; Ministry of Education (December 2009). *Table 1A-Provincial overview of recalculated 2009/10 Operating Grants*. Available at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/k12funding/funding/09-10/recalculation/table1a.pdf>.