

# Education Property Tax Questions and Answers

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## Why does the province collect property taxes for education?

Education property taxes provide a stable source of revenue to fund education. Without this revenue, Albertans would be required to contribute to the costs of funding education through other taxes or charges.

## Where do education property taxes go?

Education property taxes help to pay for teachers' salaries, textbooks and other classroom resources in public and separate schools. They are not used to fund government operations, capital costs like school construction or renovation, or teachers' pensions.

## How is education property tax distributed among municipalities?

All municipalities pay an equitable share of the provincial education property tax in proportion to their total taxable property assessments which are equalized across the province. The equalization process ensures that properties of similar value and type across the province pay similar amounts of education property taxes. For more details regarding equalized assessment, please refer to the Municipal Affairs website at

<http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/1571>.

## How is education funding distributed to school boards?

Under the provincial funding model, all education property taxes, including property taxes received by separate school boards, are pooled by Alberta Education through the Alberta School Foundation Fund and distributed to public and separate school boards on an equal per-student basis. When a

separate school board has opted out of the fund and the local requisition per student is less than the fund payment, the difference will be paid from the fund. If the local requisition is more than the fund payment, the difference must be paid into the fund.

## Why are property owners asked to declare their faith?

In Alberta, the Constitution guarantees Roman Catholic citizens' minority rights to a separate education system. In communities with separate school jurisdictions, property owners can declare they are of the Roman Catholic faith so their education property tax dollars can be directed to those separate school jurisdictions. While declaration does not change the amount of per-student education funding, it helps provide education funding directly to separate school boards. The amount of per-student education funding is the same whether a student is enrolled in a public or separate school.

## Why must people without children pay education property taxes?

Alberta's education system supports the development of a skilled workforce, contributes to growth in the economy, and supports the social well-being of individuals and the province as a whole. These benefits reach all Albertans, regardless of their age, marital status, or whether they have children.

Questions about financial assistance for seniors or the Seniors Property Tax Deferral program can be directed to the **Alberta Supports Contact Centre at 1-877-644-9992 (in Edmonton - 780-644-9992)**.