

Ontario School Boards:

Enrolment, Finances and Student Outcomes

Briefing Deck

Purpose and Overview

- This report examines how provincial funding is allocated to Ontario's 72 district school boards and reviews differences across English Public, English Catholic, French Public and French Catholic school systems. In addition, the report:
 - analyzes the demographic composition of Ontario's students and the availability of French-language and Catholic school spaces;
 - analyzes school board revenue, spending, budget balance and accumulated surplus patterns; and
 - discusses academic performance by school board and system.

School Boards and Enrolment



Enrolment by School System

- In 2021-22, there were approximately 2.0 million children enrolled in Ontario's public schools across the four school systems.
- The English Public school system is the largest, followed by the English Catholic, French Catholic and French Public systems.

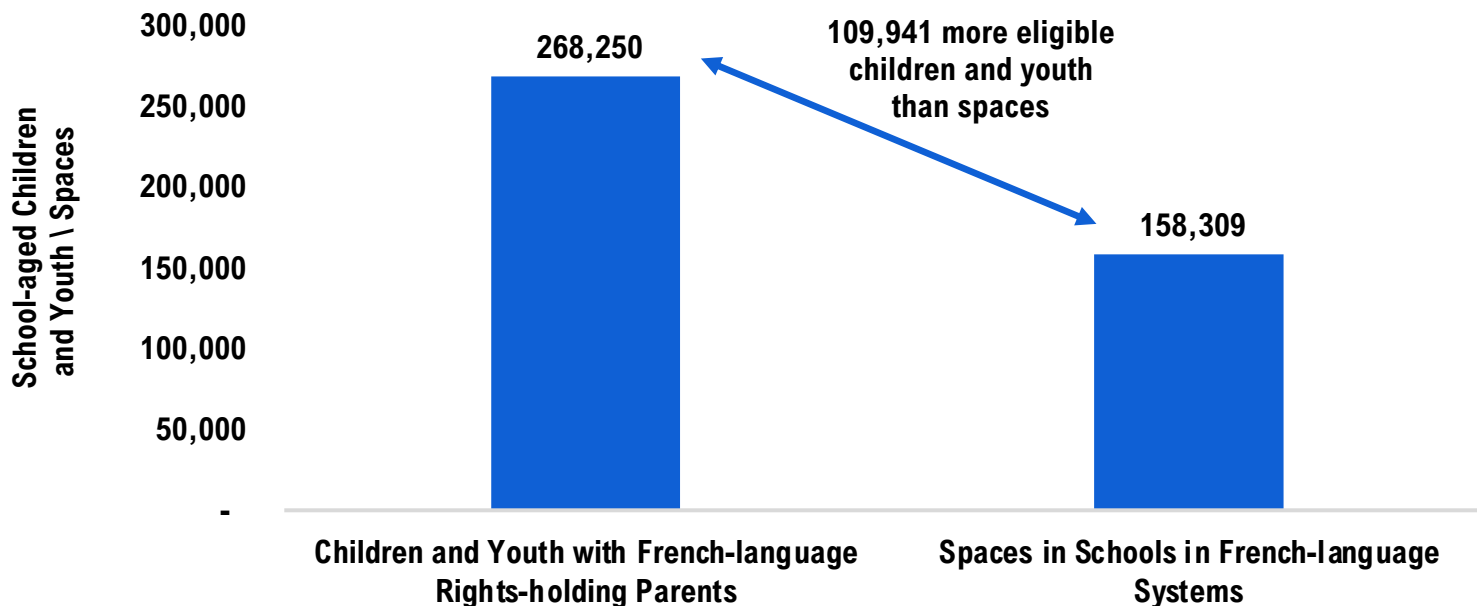
School System	Enrolment	Share of Students (%)	Number of School Boards	Average Enrolment by School Board	Average Geographic Area by School Board (km ²)
English Public	1,331,907	66.7	31	42,965	7,060
English Catholic	554,739	27.8	29	19,129	6,995
French Public	34,588	1.7	4	8,647	54,715
French Catholic	76,501	3.8	8	9,563	25,392
Total	1,997,736	100	72	27,746	11,251

Note: In this report, enrolment refers to Average Daily Enrolment (ADE), which is a full-time equivalent measure of student enrolment based on two count dates during the school year in October and March.

Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Children of French-language Rights-holders

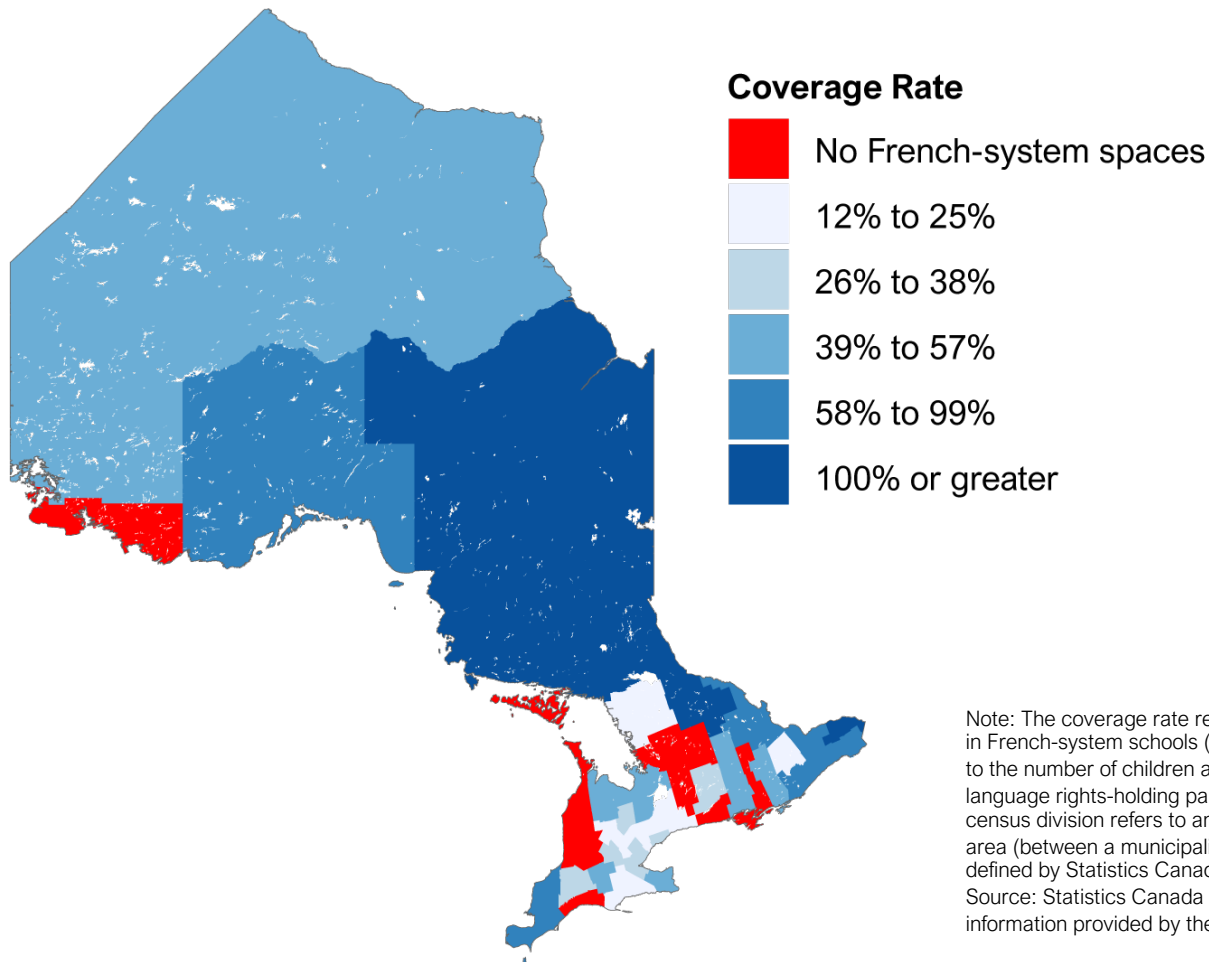
- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the right to access French-language education in Ontario for the children of French-language rights-holders.
- In 2021, there were 268,250 school-aged children and youth whose parents were French-language rights-holders and 158,309 total spaces in French-system schools, resulting in a coverage rate of 59.0%.



Source: Statistics Canada and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

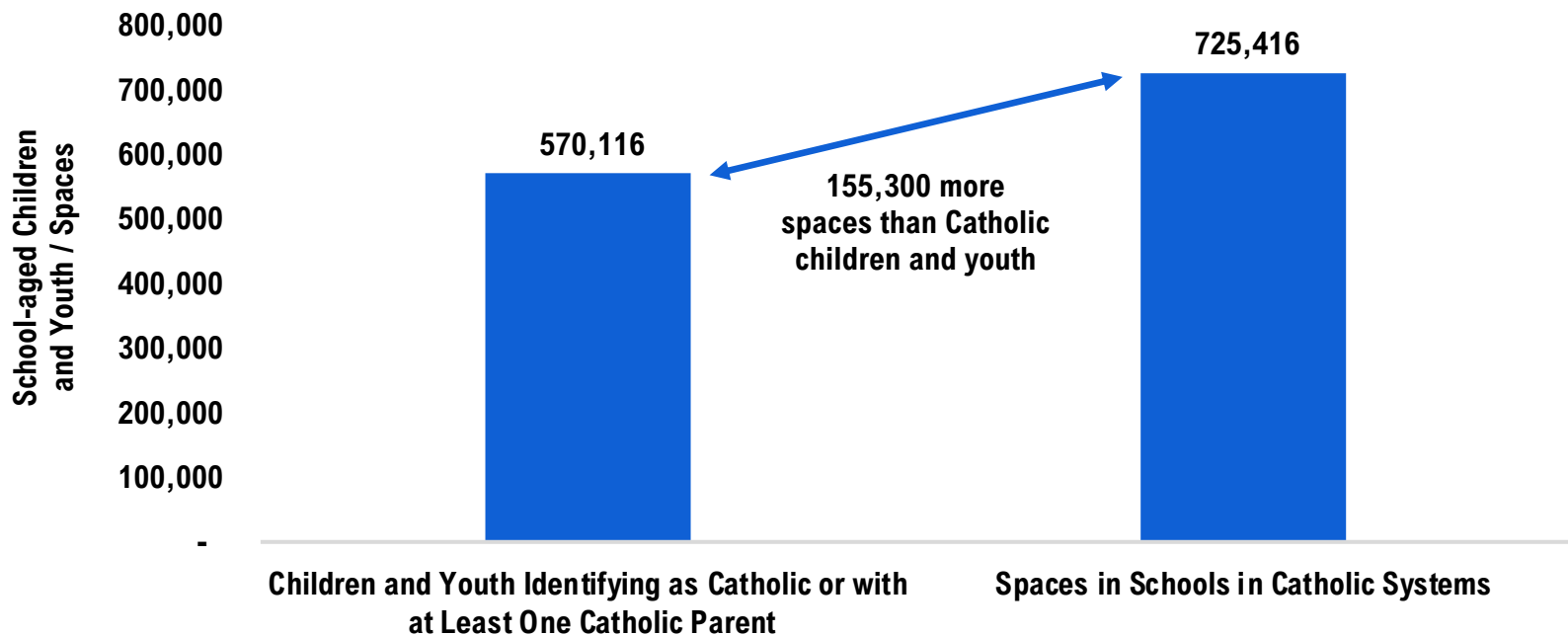
Children of French-language Rights-holders

- 30 of 49 census division in Ontario had French-language rights-holders coverage rates below 50 per cent, including 12 with no French-system schools at all.



Catholic Children and Youth

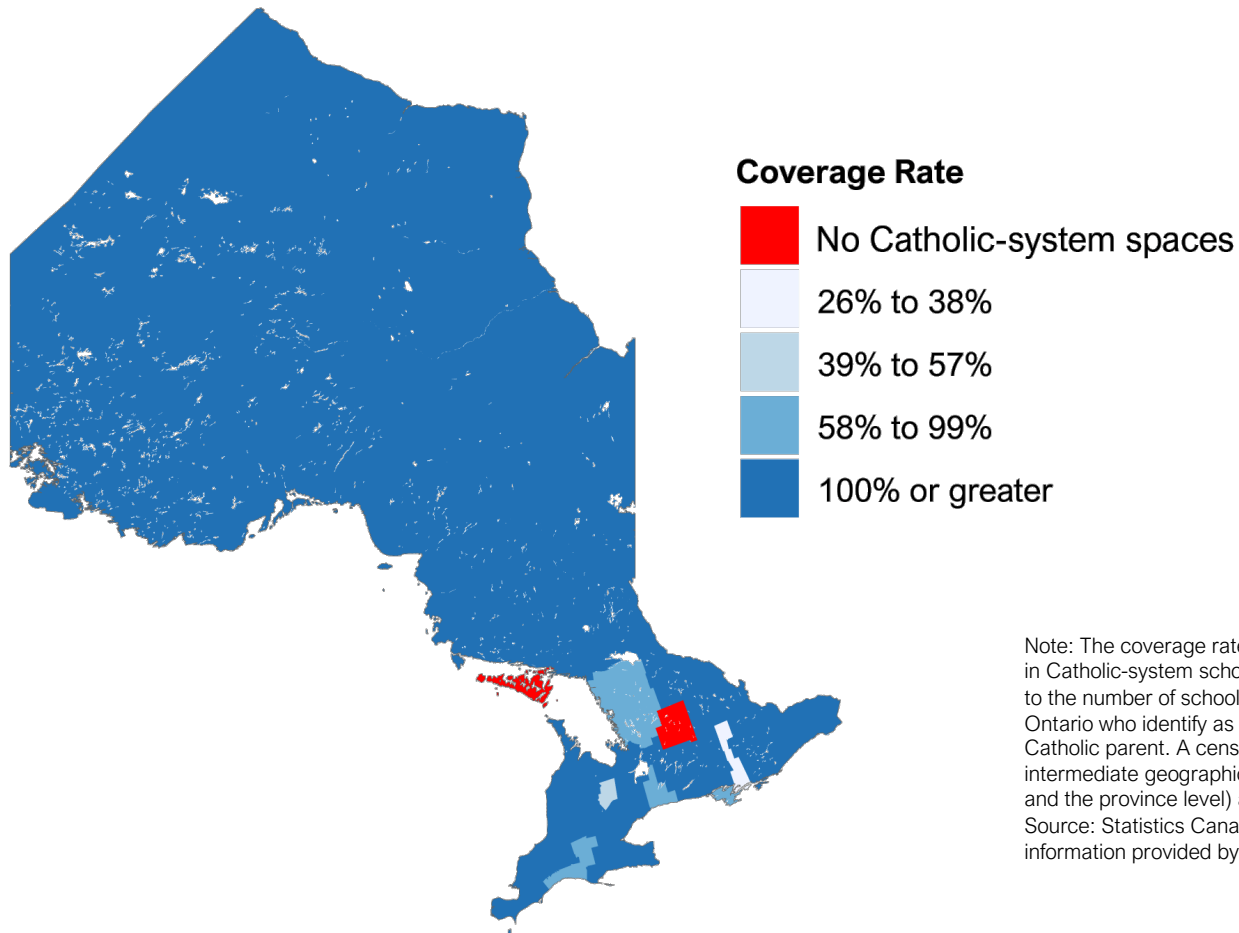
- Schools in Catholic systems are available to school-aged children and youth who are baptized as Catholic or have at least one Catholic parent.
- In 2021, the FAO estimates that there were 570,116 children in Ontario who identified as Catholic or had at least one Catholic parent, and 725,416 spaces in Catholic-system schools, resulting in a coverage rate of 127.2%.



Source: Statistics Canada and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Catholic Children and Youth

- 38 of 49 census divisions in Ontario had Catholic system coverage rates greater than 100 per cent.
- Two census divisions, Haliburton and Manitoulin, had no Catholic-system schools.



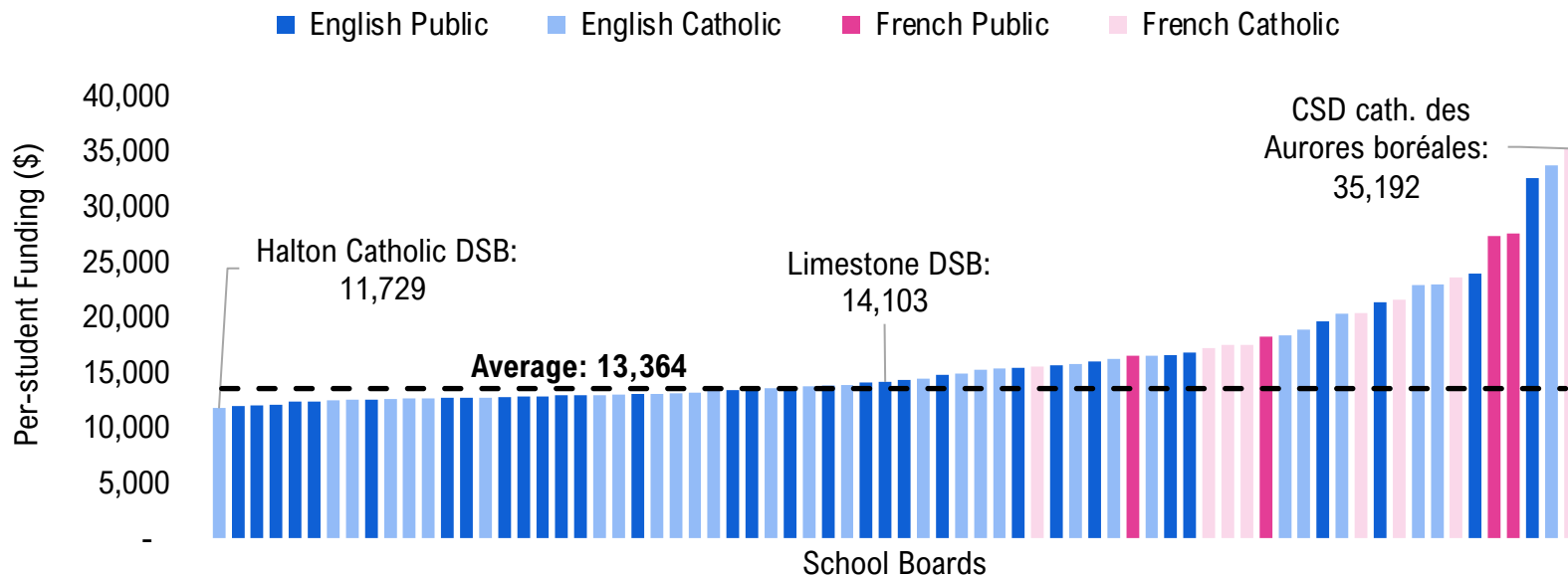
Note: The coverage rate represents the share of spaces in Catholic-system schools (English and French) relative to the number of school-age children and youth in Ontario who identify as Catholic or have at least one Catholic parent. A census division refers to an intermediate geographic area (between a municipality and the province level) as defined by Statistics Canada. Source: Statistics Canada and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Provincial Operating Funding for School Boards



Provincial Operating Funding for School Boards

- In 2021-22, the Ministry of Education provided an estimated \$26.7 billion in operating funding to school boards.

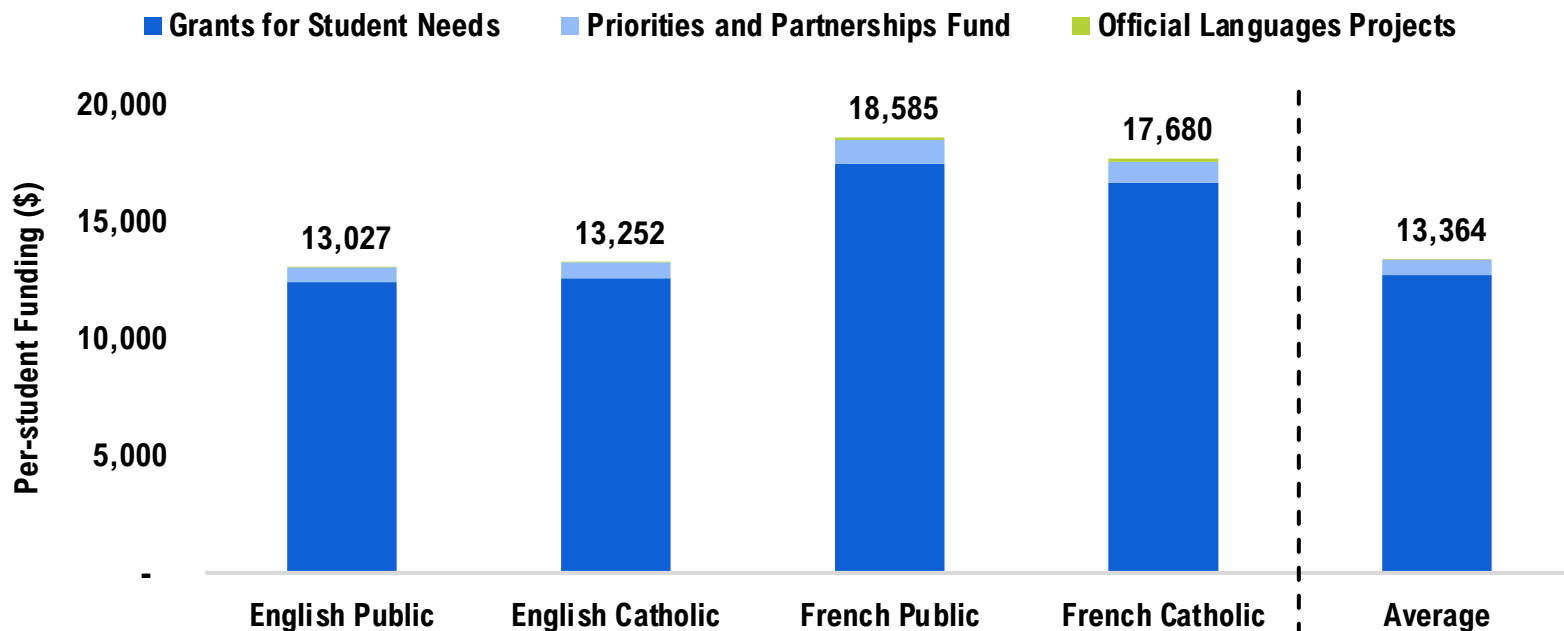


Source: 2021-22 school board financial statements and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

- On a per-student basis, school boards received an average of \$13,364 in provincial funding, with significant variation by school board and school system.

Key Factors Determining Funding

- The primary factors that determine provincial funding to school boards are student enrolment, base funding, distance and dispersion, remoteness and additional funding for French-language instruction.
- On average, French-system school boards receive higher per-student funding because they have lower enrolment, have higher dispersion, are more remote and receive targeted French-language funding.



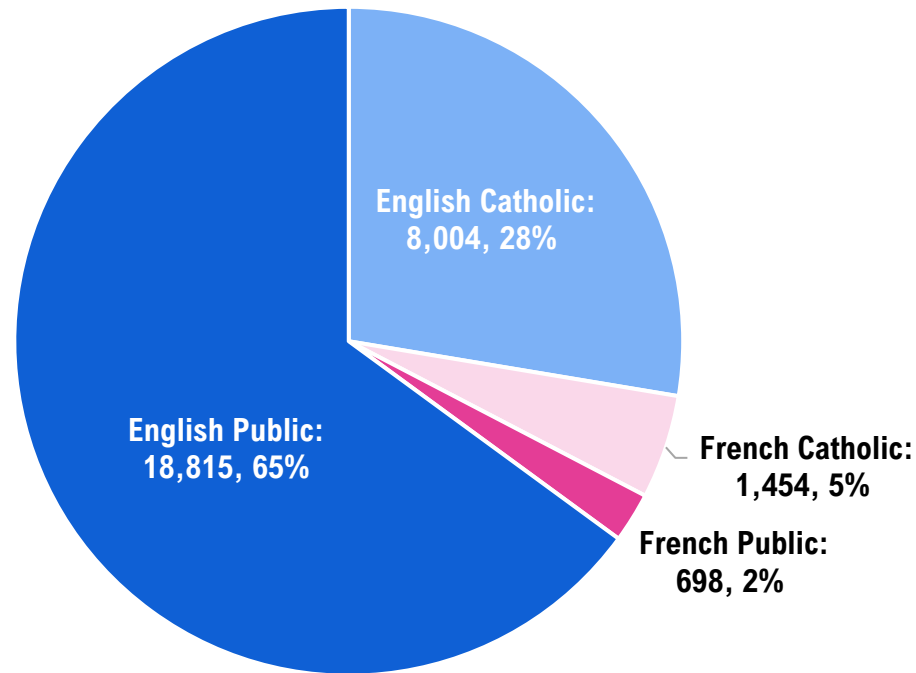
Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Total School Board Revenue



Total School Board Revenue

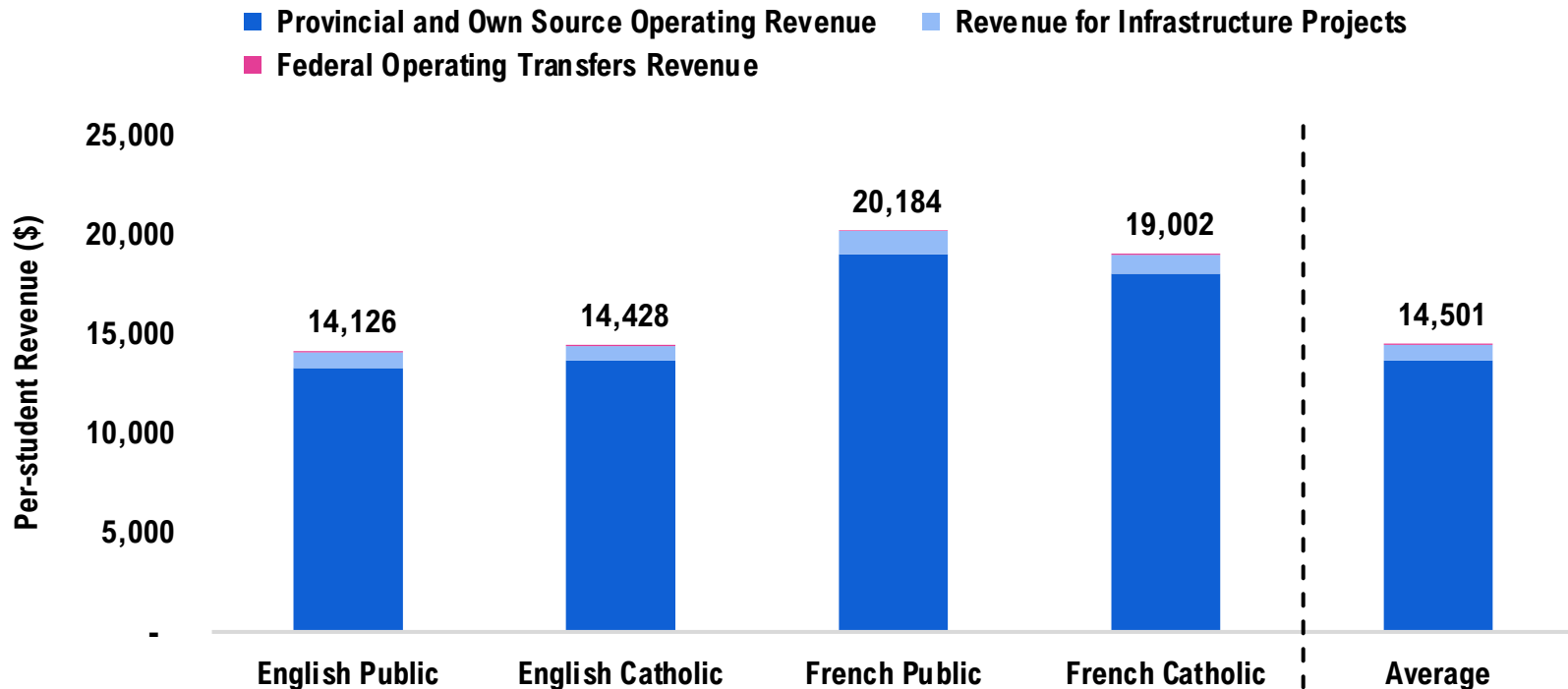
- In 2021-22, school boards recorded \$29.0 billion in revenue, which included operating funding provided by the Province and own source revenue (\$27.3 billion), revenue for infrastructure projects (\$1.6 billion) and federal operating transfers (\$0.2 billion).
- Of the \$29.0 billion, English Public school boards accounted for \$18.8 billion, followed by English Catholic school boards at \$8.0 billion. French Catholic and French Public school boards had significantly lower total revenue at \$1.5 billion and \$0.7 billion, respectively.



Source: 2021-22 school board financial statements and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Per-student Revenue by School System

- On a per-student basis, the English Public and English Catholic systems recorded lower per-student revenue than French school systems.
- Variation was largely driven by provincial operating funding.



Source: 2021-22 school board financial statements and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Total School Board Spending



Total School Board Spending

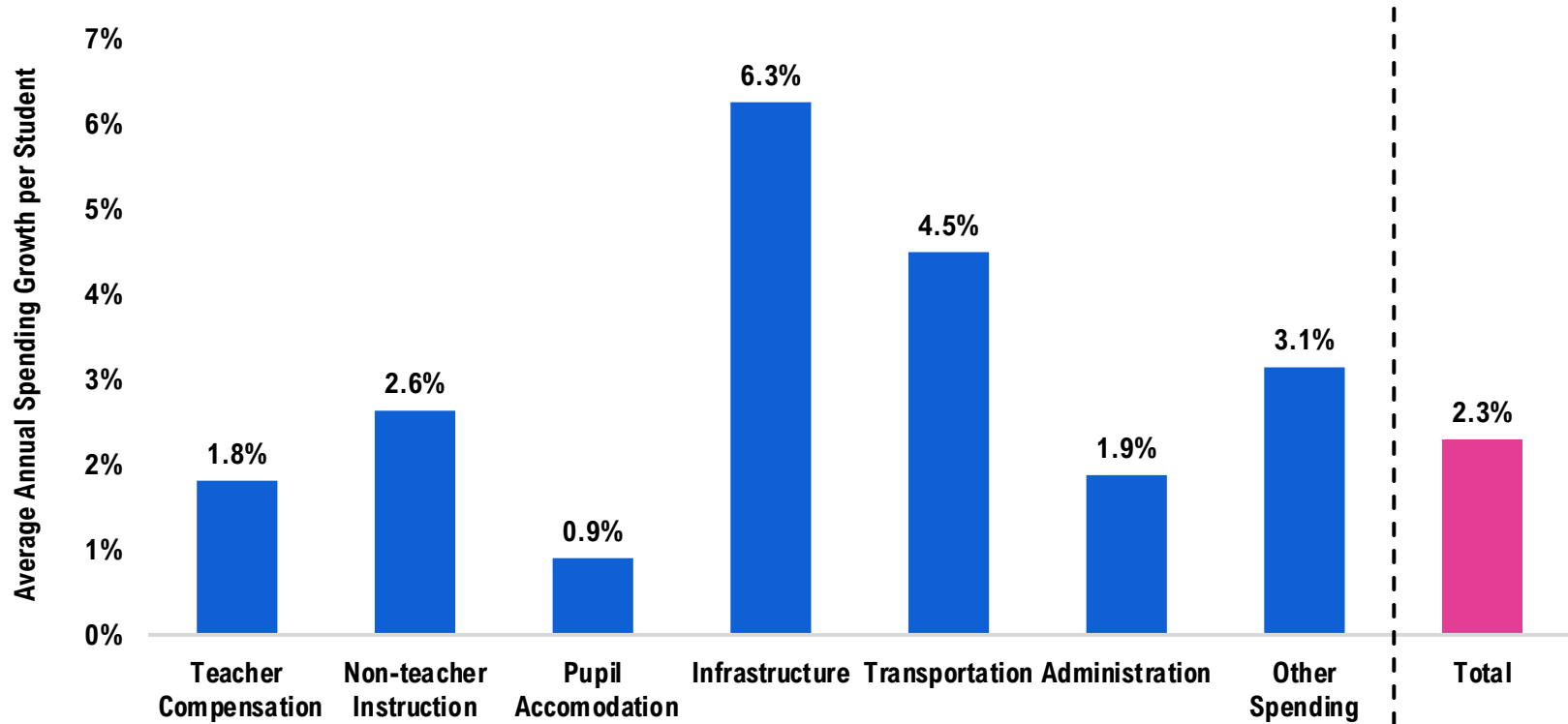
- In the 2021-22 school year, school boards spent \$28.8 billion.

Expense Category	Description	Spending (\$ millions)	Share of Total (%)	Spending per-Student (\$)
Teacher Compensation	Teacher salaries and benefits	13,791	48	6,903
Non-teacher Instruction	Education assistants, principals and other staff, supplies, computers, libraries and school offices	7,635	26	3,822
Pupil Accommodation	School operations, maintenance and other expenses	2,911	10	1,457
Infrastructure	Amortization of capital assets	1,616	6	809
Transportation	Spending related to the transportation of students to and from school	1,195	4	598
Administration	Spending on school board trustees and administration	740	3	370
Other Spending	Spending related to school-generated funds (largely for field trips, fundraising activities, student council, and student activities and clubs) and all other spending	931	3	466
Total Spending		28,820	100	14,426

Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Growth in Per-student Spending

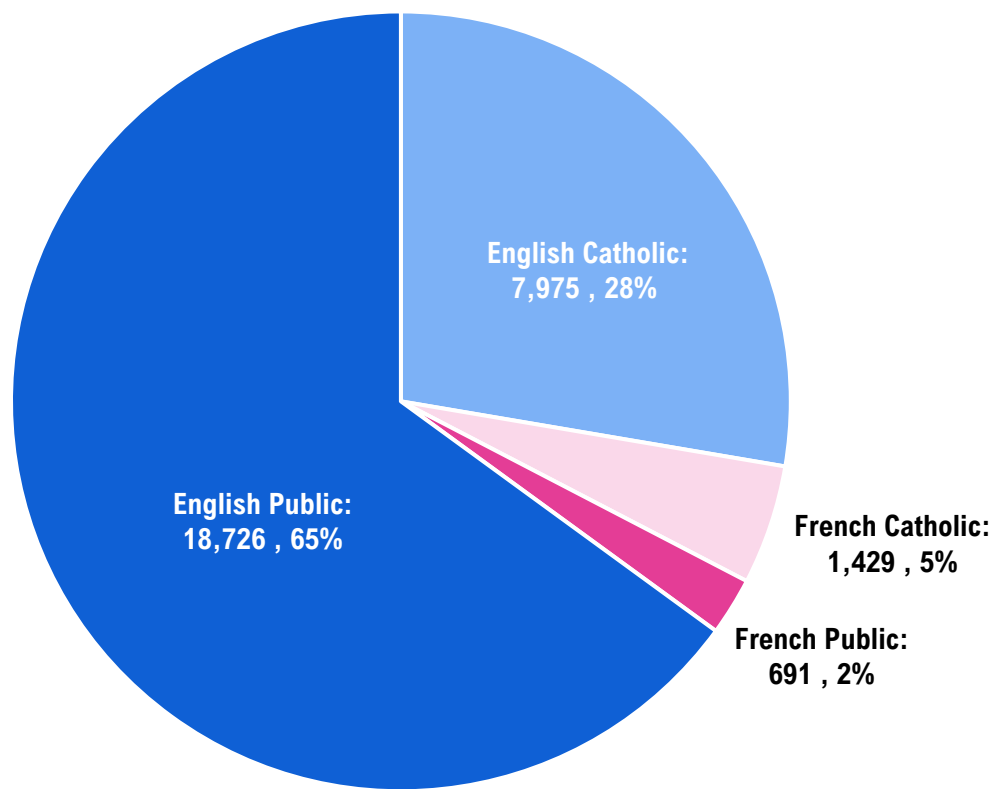
- Between 2015-16 and 2021-22, total school board per-student spending grew at an average annual rate of 2.3%, compared to an average annual inflation rate of 2.5% over this period.



Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Total Spending by School System

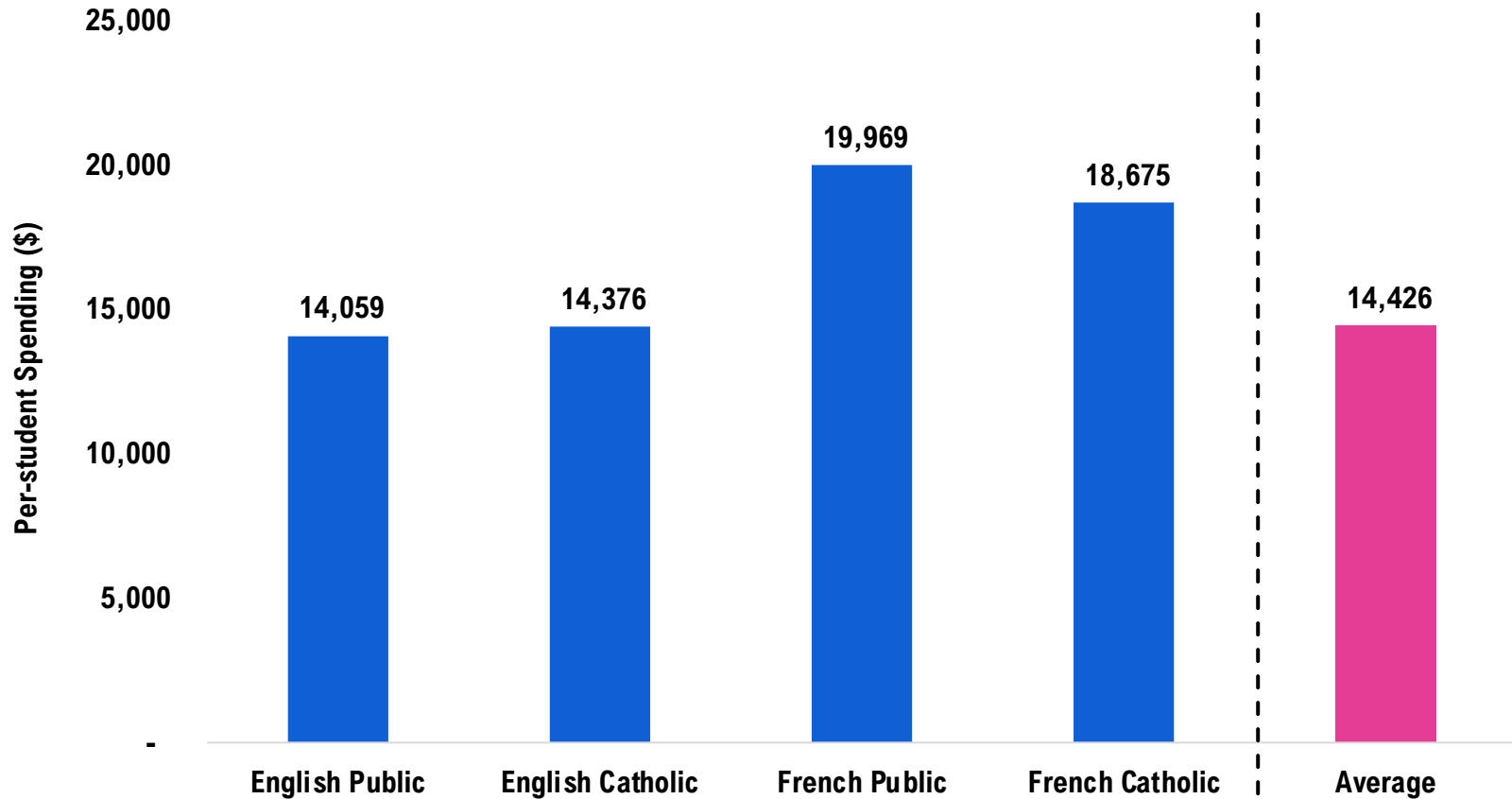
- Of the \$28.8 billion in total school board spending, English Public school boards accounted for \$18.7 billion (65%), followed by English Catholic school boards at \$8.0 billion (28%). French Catholic and French Public school boards had significantly lower spending at \$1.4 billion (5%) and \$0.7 billion (2%), respectively.



Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Per-student Spending by System

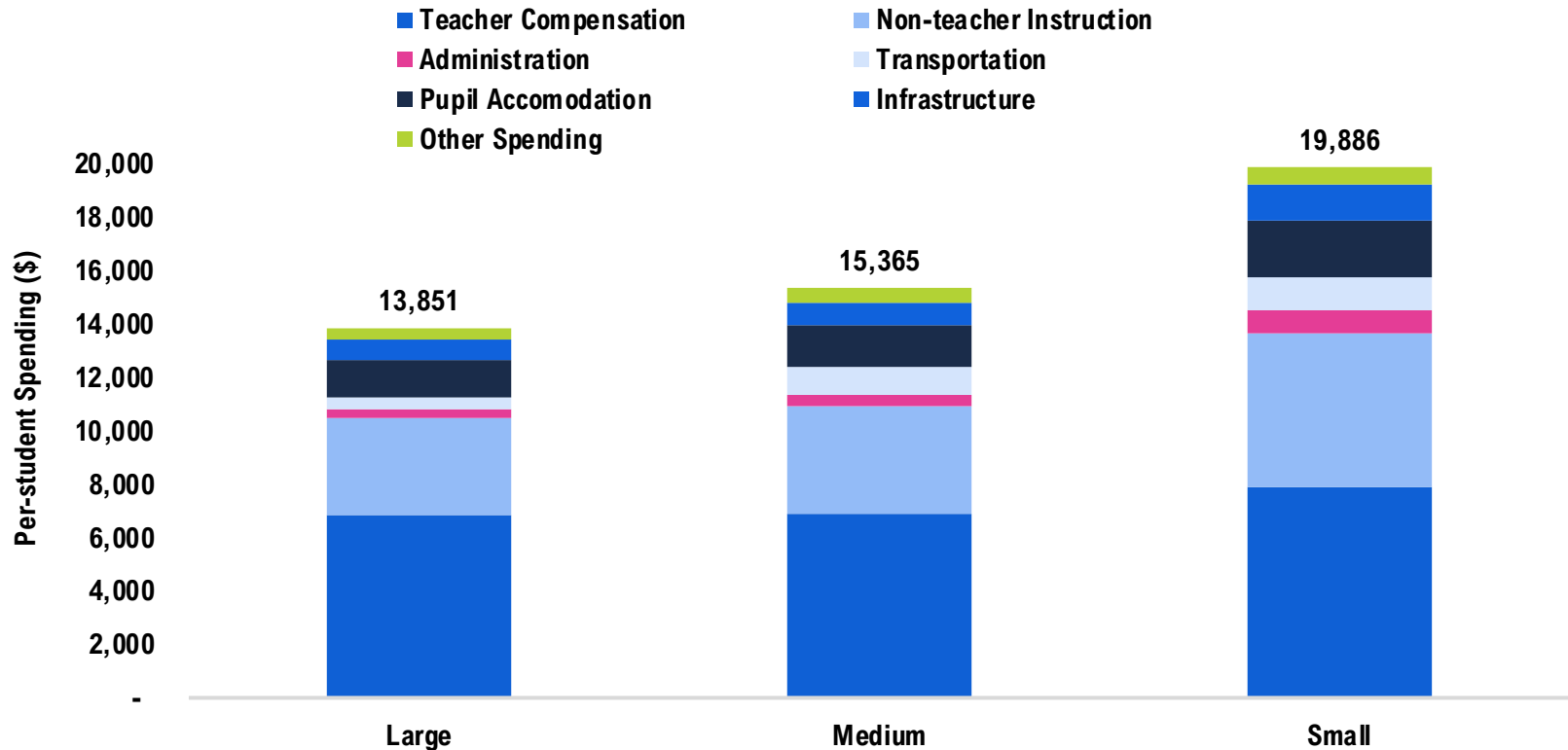
- On a per-student basis, French-language school systems spent more per student than the English Public and English Catholic systems.



Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Per-student Spending by Board Size

- Generally, smaller school boards tend to have higher total spending per student compared to larger school boards.

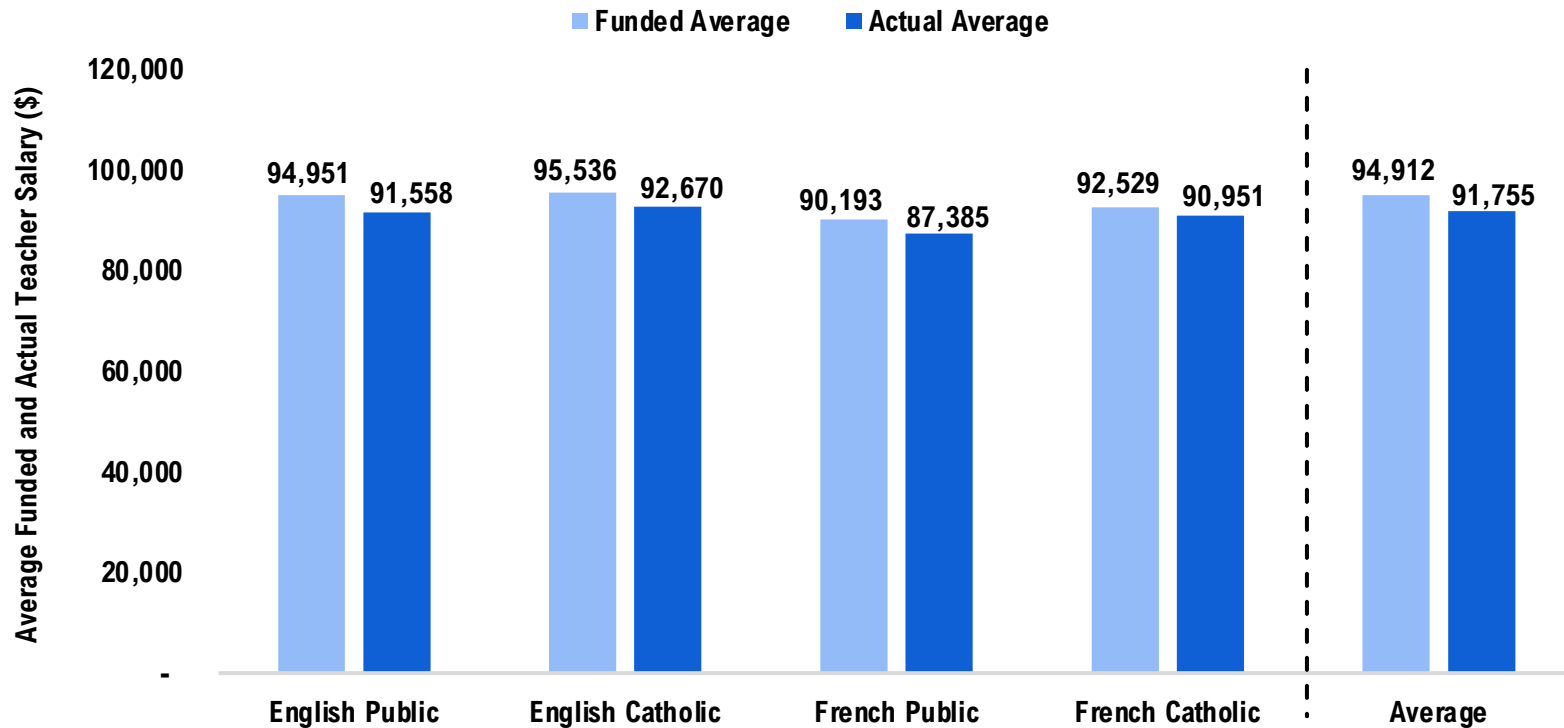


Note: Small school boards refer to the 24 school boards with the lowest enrolment (less than 8,895 students), medium-sized school boards refer to the 24 school boards with enrolment between 8,895 and 22,502 students and large school boards refer to the 24 school boards with the highest enrolment (greater than 22,502 students).

Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Spending on Teacher Salaries

- The Province provides equal base funding for teacher salaries and additional funding based on teachers' qualifications and experience.
- Actual average teacher salaries reflect regional differences in cost of living and the supply of teachers, in addition to differences in qualifications and experience.



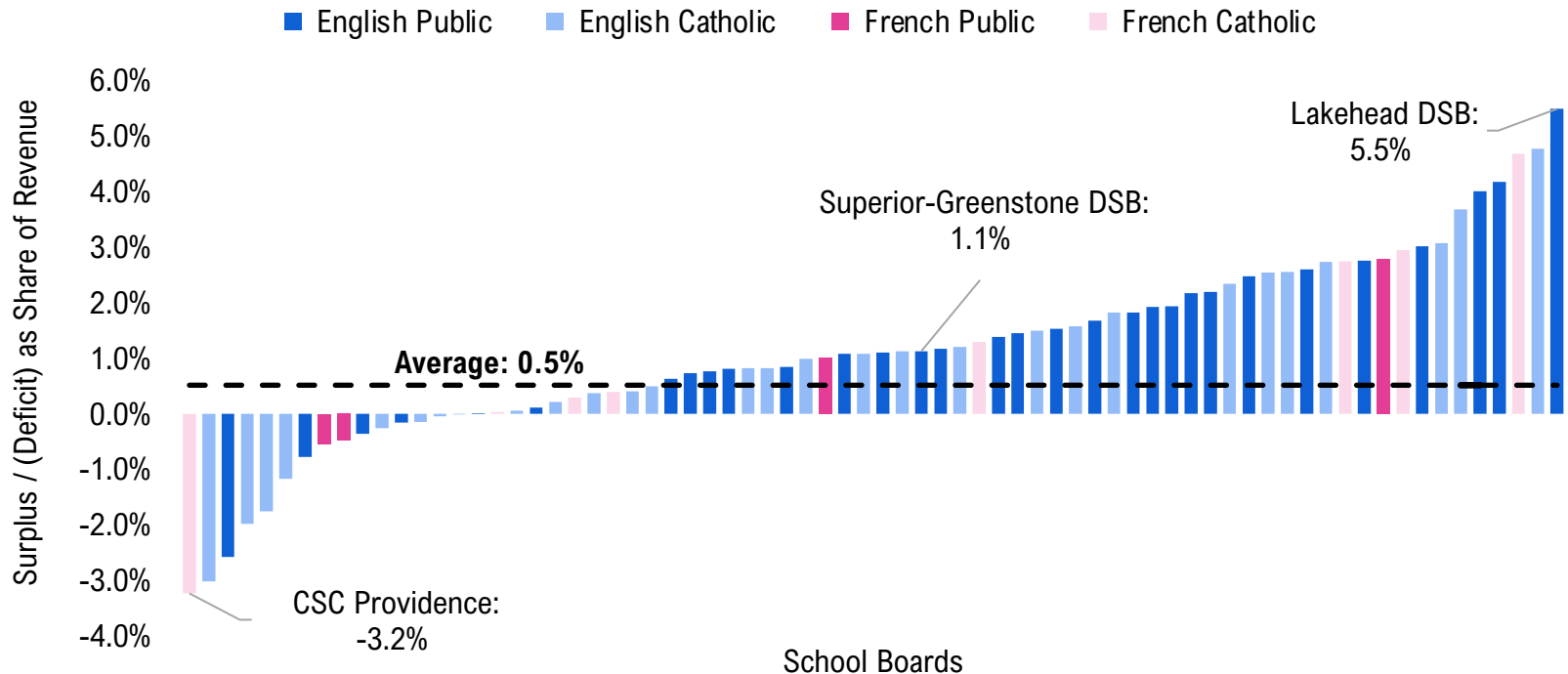
Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

School Board Budget Balance and Accumulated Surplus



School Board Budget Balance

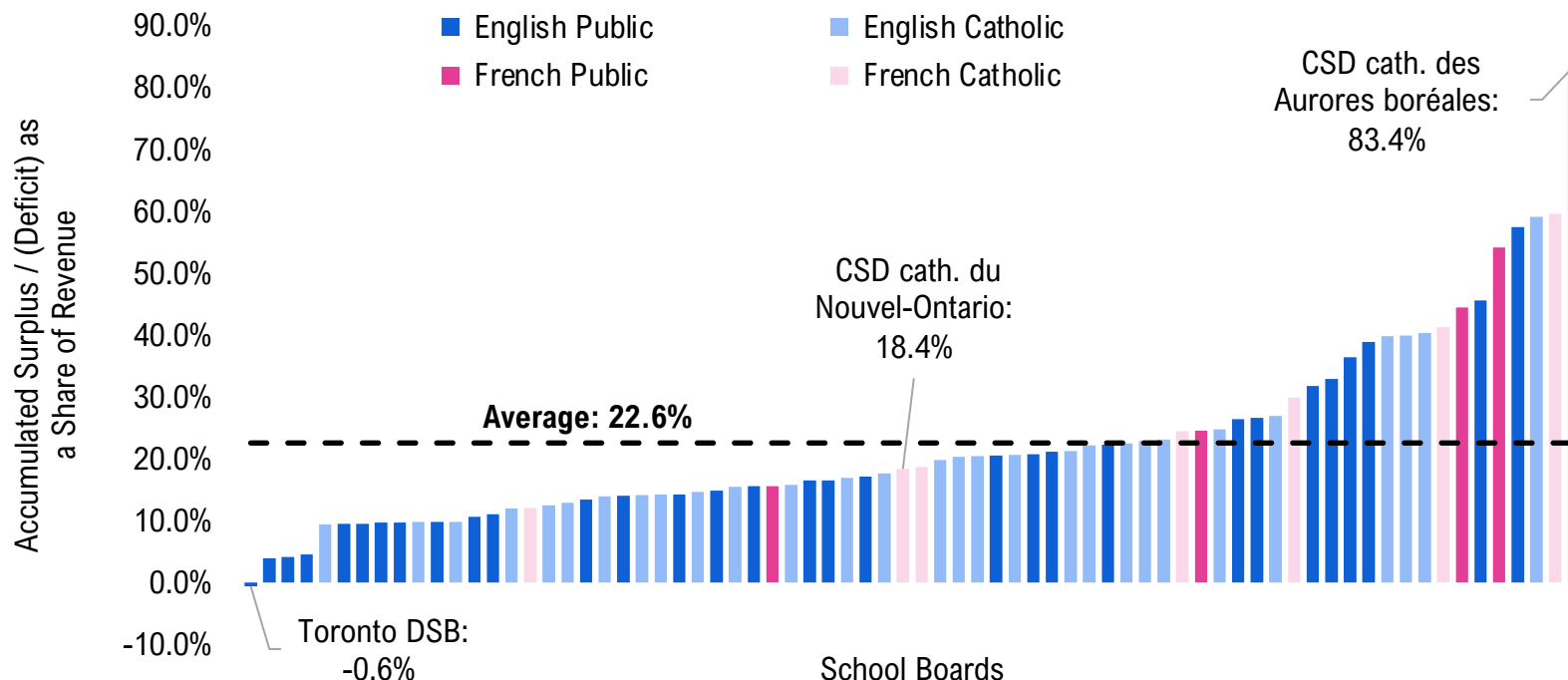
- In 2021-22, school boards recorded a combined budget surplus of \$0.1 billion, representing 0.5% of total school boards' revenue.
- 57 of 72 school boards recorded budget surpluses for the 2021-22 school year, while the remaining 15 school boards recorded budget deficits.



Source: 2021-22 school board financial statements and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

School Board Accumulated Surplus

- As of the end of the 2021-22 school year (August 31, 2022), school boards had a combined accumulated surplus of \$6.6 billion, representing 22.6% of 2021-22 revenue.
- 71 of 72 school boards had an accumulated surplus for the 2021-22 school year, while only one, the Toronto DSB, had an accumulated deficit.



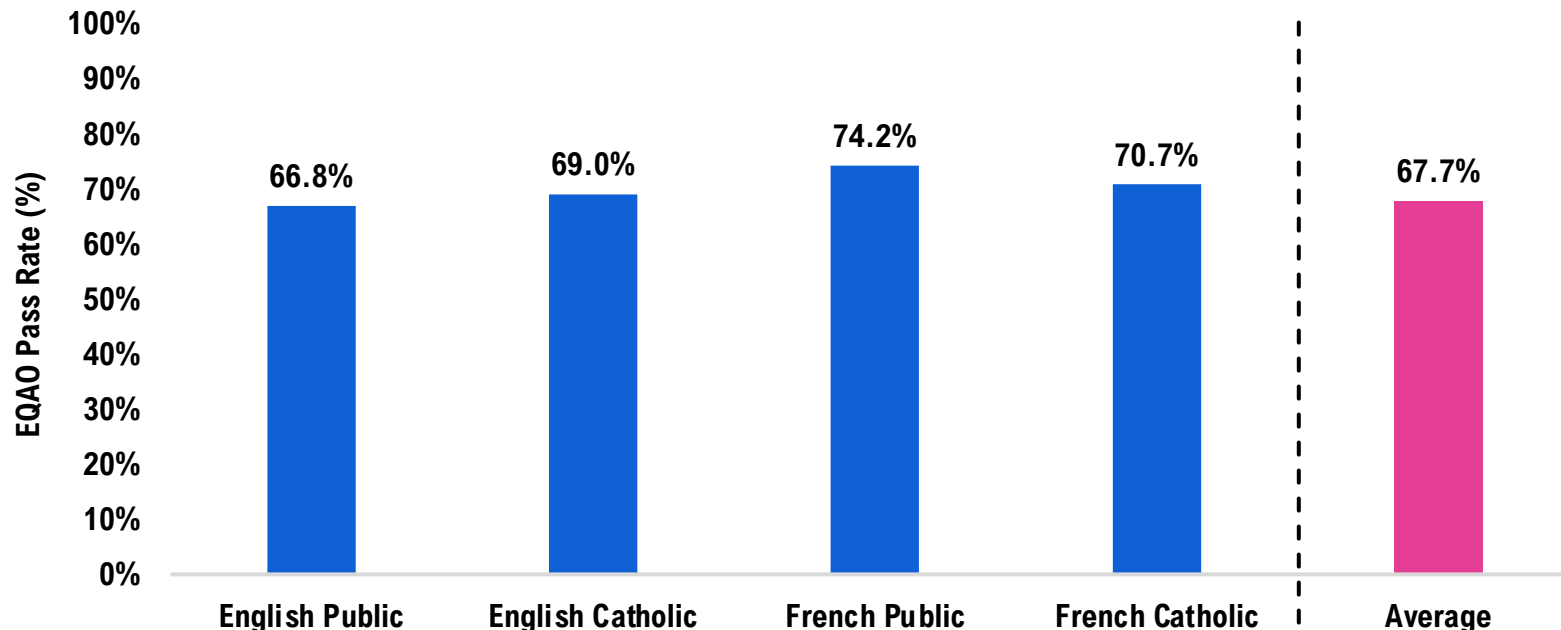
Note: Accumulated surplus / (deficit) is the sum of school boards' budget surpluses and deficits over time.
 Source: 2021-22 school board financial statements and FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

Student Outcomes by School Board and System



EQAO Performance by School System

- EQAO administers a province-wide standardized testing program each year to assess students' academic outcomes in reading, writing and math. Across all disciplines and grades, the FAO estimates that the province-wide average pass rate was 67.7%.
- In 2021-22, the French Public school boards had the best performance overall, followed by school boards in the French Catholic, English Catholic and English Public systems.



Note: EQAO results are assessed on a level basis, the highest being "Level 4", the lowest being "Below Level 1". Tests assessed at "Level 3" or above meet or exceed the provincial standard. The average pass rate is the share of tests administered across all disciplines and grades that were assessed as meeting or exceeding the provincial standard.

Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

EQAO Performance by Geographic Indicators

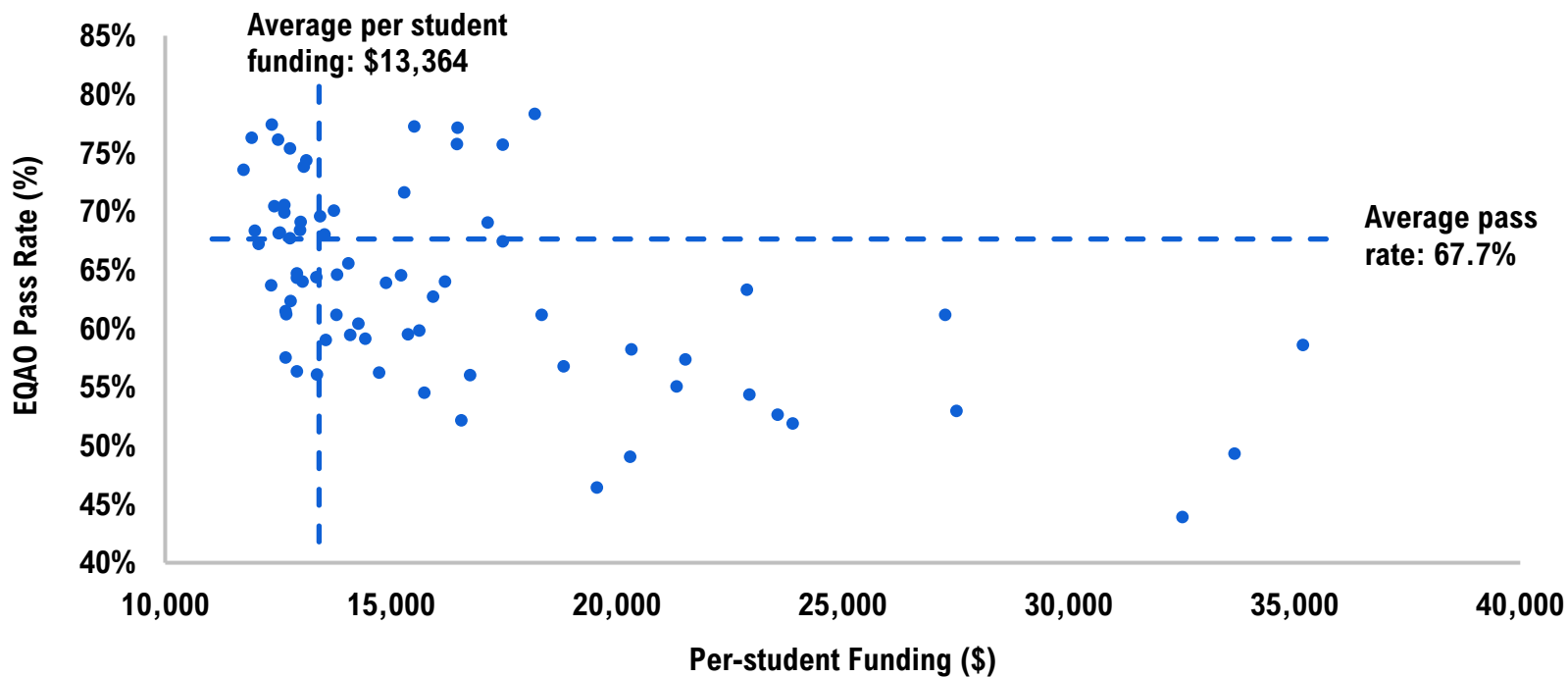
- Across all four school systems, on average, school boards that were more rural, more remote, more disperse and smaller had lower EQAO pass rates.
- In each of the school systems, the average EQAO pass rate was higher for urban and 'leans urban' school boards than for rural and 'leans rural' school boards.

School System	Urban	Leans Urban	Leans Rural	Rural	Overall
English Public	67.6	69.7	63.5	57.8	66.8
English Catholic	70.3	71.2	64.0	66.7	69.0
French Public	-	75.0	61.1	-	74.2
French Catholic	-	74.4	64.5	-	70.7
Average	68.5	70.7	63.6	60.2	67.7

Note: EQAO results are assessed on a level basis, the highest being "Level 4", the lowest being "Below Level 1". Tests assessed at "Level 3" or above meet or exceed the provincial standard. The average pass rate is the share of tests administered across all disciplines and grades that were assessed as meeting or exceeding the provincial standard. Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

EQAO Performance by Average Per Student Funding

- Higher per-student funding did not result in higher average EQAO pass rates.



Note: Each dot represents one of Ontario's 72 school boards. The average pass rate is the share of tests administered across all disciplines and grades that were assessed as meeting or exceeding the provincial standard.
Source: FAO analysis of information provided by the Province.

- Despite receiving higher per-student funding, schools in rural areas typically have fewer educational supports and may face different socio-economic circumstances than students in urban and suburban areas.

Thank you!



FAO

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY
OFFICE OF ONTARIO

2 Bloor Street West, Suite 900
Toronto, Ontario, M4W 3E2
416.644.0702

info@fao-on.org

fao-on.org

