



# Business Gone Quiet:

WHY DOES CANADA'S EDUCATION  
MONOPOLY CONTINUE  
UNQUESTIONED?

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Canadian businesses tend to be leading players in public policy debates, pushing governments to ask hard questions about costs and efficacy....**except in K-12 education.**

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## Executive Summary

Canadian businesses and business associations are vocal and active participants in Canadian policy debates. Whether the topic of conversation is corporate tax rates, international trade policies, employment insurance premiums, or the appropriate level of investment in skills training, you can count on Canadian businesses and their associations to have an opinion.

In fact, debates on these topics tend to give way to a wide range of opinions that are expressed vigorously in public campaigns and in political lobbying. Canadian businesses tend to be leading players in the great and sometimes boisterous game of public policy in Canada.

It would be surprising to walk into a policy discussion—particularly in an area that has direct implications for business tax costs and workforce development—and have virtual silence from the business community.

And yet, when it comes to debates about the delivery of K-12 education, the business community appears to have contracted a rare case of policy laryngitis. We surveyed the policy positions of thirty-one leading business associations across the country and found that only one association, the Business Council of Canada, offers any clear commentary or position on K-12 educational delivery. Rather than the usual cacophony of policy ideas and positions, the business community is virtually silent on an issue to which governments dedicate more money than any other service save health.

**The business community is virtually silent on an issue to which governments dedicate more money than any other service save health.**

This paper asks a simple question: Why? Why is it that a community that is rightfully concerned with the effective delivery of public services is silent on the delivery of one of the largest and most expensive.

We also hope to put forth a few friendly, deliberately provocative hypotheses that might explain this silence. We suggest that a combination of entrenched economic interests, ideology, and simple inertia are preventing Canadians from moving toward a better education system. Debate is an indication of concern for the public good, and it is in that spirit that we write this paper. The hope is that we can raise the level of public debate around the delivery of K-12 education in a spirit of common commitment to its importance in Canadian public life.

# Monopolies, Competition, and Canadian Public Life

There is a general consensus in Canada that monopolies do not serve the public's interest. The vast bulk of the goods and services that support Canadian's livelihoods and society can be attained from multiple providers. In some cases—food, clothing, automobiles, and so on—the choices are many. In some sectors—retail, banking, or airlines for instance—the market provides fewer options for Canadians. But even in these cases there are still multiple providers of these goods and services who, through a variety of means, compete for the attention and patronage of Canadians.

In these cases, Canadian law recognizes that having diverse providers is *in the interests of Canadians* and our nation as a whole. And, as a corollary, that Canadians are *worse off* when they have no choice of the provider of a particular good or service. We consider this diversity to be such an important part of our social fabric that we have various laws and government bureaus that protect the vitality of our markets and the interests of consumers. They exist to “ensure that [Canadian] businesses and consumers prosper in a competitive and innovative marketplace.”<sup>1</sup>

While there are some who consider monopolies better for Canadian public life, the trend over time has seen sectors such as energy (NEP, Hydro), telecommunications (Bell), and grain sales move from being monopolies to competitive markets that, if not yet places of perfect competitiveness, serve to discipline producers toward better customer service and innovation.

It is important to note that our competition laws are intentionally aimed at the *economic* life of our nation—specifically the actions of business corporations and individuals conducting business.

Other parts of our social life, many of which operate under the auspices of government, have considerable economic import yet function as state-run or state-supported monopolies: health care, law enforcement, defence, many of our transportation networks, many utilities, and liquor sales in Ontario are examples of this.

Some of these monopolies have a strong basis and protect the public interest. The territorial monopoly of coercive force (defence, policing), for instance, is integral to the very nature of the nation-state. Others—despite being clear examples of economic activity conducted by corporations run by private companies in many jurisdictions—remain under monopoly because the government deems it to be in the public interest (or the government's interest) to maintain a monopoly. Sometimes the monopoly is the product of our history (liquor control as a product of Prohibition), our geography (Canada Post), government paternalism (liquor, gambling), state reliance on the revenues generated from such monopolies (liquor, gambling), or because the state is concerned that leaving the providence of a good or service to the market is likely to lead to inequality in service, which will undermine social solidarity, public health, or other goods (health care, for instance). Sometimes the reasons for the maintenance of state monopolies are a mix of any or all of these.

Whatever the case, it remains something worthy of public debate to question whether a state monopoly or competitive market is likely to better serve the public interest in a given sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada Competition Bureau, “What Is the Competition Bureau?,” audiovisual recording, website last modified November 5, 2015, [http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/h\\_00125.html](http://www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/eic/site/cb-bc.nsf/eng/h_00125.html).

# Canadian Government, Business, and Alternative Service Delivery

Yet there are many cases where the choice between a complete state monopoly or a purely competitive market is too stark. There is a wide variety of areas of our public life where neither the state nor economic markets alone are sufficient to serve the interests of the public.

In recent decades, this understanding has developed into a policy framework that allows for a continuum of public and private involvement in the delivery of goods and services. **Alternative service delivery** (ASD) is a model that accounts for this continuum and attempts to leverage the strengths of the public and private sectors in the public interest.

John Wilkins, in a report to the World Bank, describes ASD as follows:

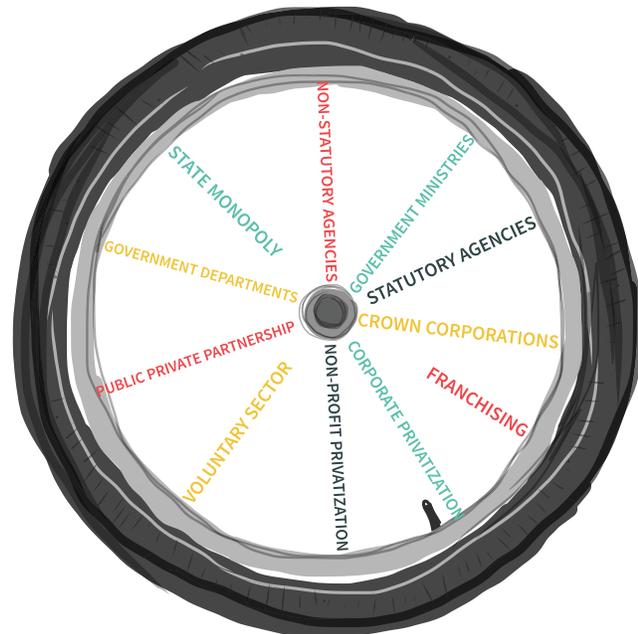
ASD is not exclusive. It includes privatization, as well as reorganization and reengineering of mainstream government. It is not just about deficit reduction, devolution, and central agency controls, but it does involve rethinking roles and functions. It depends heavily for success on a strong policy foundation and on a client service focus.<sup>2</sup>

ASD aims to diminish the emphasis on the *platform* delivering the service and increase the emphasis on the *end user* of that service. As noted by Wilkins, this approach involves thinking about which institutions, and which forms of institutions, are likely to lead to the desired policy goals. And, equally important, while cost savings are part of the aim of ASD, they are not a goal in their own right—the goal is effective and efficient delivery of a particular service to meet the needs of those who require it. As the Ontario government’s report on the subject notes:

Although ASD may often appear at face value to be fuelled by fiscal constraint, ASD’s principles of sharing responsibilities and service delivery functions with other sectors bring many benefits, creating synergies by drawing on a diversity of expertise.<sup>3</sup>

Since its inception in the 1990s, ASD has become integral to the way governments deliver services at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels, as well as within various government bodies. Governments have pursued a broad spectrum of ASD options, ranging from outright privatization of former state-owned enterprises, to the moving of services out of departments into crown corporations or agencies, to government purchasing of services from private providers,

ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY WHEEL



<sup>2</sup> John Wilkins, “Alternative Service Delivery Mechanism,” The World Bank, May 17, 2000, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/0,,contentMDK:20134061~isCURL:Y~menuPK:286310~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:286305,00.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ontario Public Service Restructuring Secretariat, “Alternative Service Delivery in the Ontario Public Sector,” August 1999, 3, [http://www.iccs-isac.org/en/pubs/asd\\_on.pdf.pdf](http://www.iccs-isac.org/en/pubs/asd_on.pdf.pdf).

to partnerships where each party shares in risks and rewards, to franchising, to contracting out services in government-run facilities. Examples include the privatization of Hydro One in Ontario, the contracting out of food services in hospitals, public-private partnerships on major infrastructure projects like highways, and funding of tuition (though not capital costs) for independent schools in Alberta. It is not, as some might initially suspect, an inherent move of services into a purely market-based, profit-driven environment, but a lens that attempts to determine how best to ensure that the goals of a given service are best delivered.

On virtually everything—from management of defence department properties, to our country’s air navigation system, financing of major public roads, to attaining a licence to drive on those roads, the procurement of dinner at a hospital cafeteria—governments are seeking with varying degrees of success to implement the ASD framework in their work.

What is particularly helpful about this approach is that it requires governments to ask basic yet fundamental questions about its role and the relation of its role to the rest of civil society.

The World Bank report outlines six high-level test questions:

#### ASD FRAMEWORK TEST QUESTIONS

##### STRATEGIC FOCUS

##### QUESTION

##### Public Interest Test

Does the program or service continue to serve a public interest?

##### Role of Government Test

Is there a legitimate and necessary role for government in this program or service?

##### Jurisdictional Alignment Test

Is the lead responsibility for this program or service assigned to the right government jurisdiction?

##### External Partnership Test

Could, or should, this program or service be provided in whole or in part by the private or voluntary sector?

##### Business Principles Test

If the program or service continues within the existing government context, how could its efficiency and effectiveness be improved?

##### Affordability Test

Is the program or service affordable within fiscal realities?

The first two questions are particularly important, and are the source of the greatest public debate. As noted in an Ontario public service descriptor,

The concept of public interest cannot be easily defined and can vary with the philosophy and priorities of the government. It can include public health and safety, protection of civil rights, access to fundamental services, environmental protection, economic development, or the rights and privileges bestowed upon each citizen under the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.<sup>4</sup>

In this sense, the movement toward ASD places government services right into the thick of democratic debate—where a variety of individuals, groups, and communities can make the case for why, or why not, a given service should be delivered by government, or the markets, or an alternative.

**The business community routinely pushes governments to ask hard questions about both the costs and the efficacy of delivering services.**

## Business Associations' Key Proponents of ASD

One of the most vocal communities in this discussion and debate is Canada's business community. From Newfoundland and Labrador<sup>5</sup> to British Columbia,<sup>6</sup> and everywhere in between, the business community routinely pushes governments to ask hard questions about both the costs and the efficacy of delivering services.

As a report written for the Ontario Chamber of Commerce notes,

In areas where the public service economy is prominent, government is inattentive to the market it creates, passive in market design and stewardship, and often fails to deliver value-for-money. An observation regarding Australia applies equally in the Ontario and Canadian contexts: "policymakers have given little thought to the appropriate mix of providers (public, private, and not-for-profit) in most sectors, and the extent to which they can or should be exposed to user choice, competitive tendering, and performance benchmarking."<sup>7</sup>

Provincial governments across the political spectrum and from east<sup>8</sup> to west have seen the wisdom of adopting ASD across many of their departments and functions, ranging from construction of major infrastructure projects to information managements systems. Even the sacrosanct Canadian health-care system has been identified as a place that would benefit from ASD.<sup>9</sup>

4 Ontario Public Service Restructuring Secretariat, "Alternative Service Delivery in the Ontario Public Sector," 8.

5 <http://www.thewesternstar.com/Business/2015-03-27/article-4091428/Employers%26rsquo%3B-Council-encourages-alternative-delivery-models-for-services,-programs/1>

6 BC Chamber of Commerce, "BC Chamber Says Core Review Promises 'Substantive' Gains," July 31, 2013, <http://www.bcchamber.org/advocacy-news/bc-chamber-says-core-review-promises-substantive-gains>

7 Josh Hjartarson, Liam McGuinty, and Alexandra Schwenger, "Unlocking the Public Service Economy in Ontario: A New Approach to Public-Private Partnership In Services," Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2014, 5, <http://www.occ.ca/Publications/UnlockingPublicServiceEconomyOntario.pdf>

8 New Brunswick Executive Council Office, "Government Looks for Savings via Alternative Service Delivery," November 19, 2015, [http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news\\_release.2015.11.1100.html](http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2015.11.1100.html)

9 Dean, Tony. "Is Public Service Delivery Obsolete? Why competition between civil servants, corporations and non-profits is good for everyone", *Literary Review of Canada*, September, 2011.

Business associations are leading proponents of this approach and, in many jurisdictions, advocate regularly for the government to re-examine the way it delivers services. Ontario's chamber, in particular, has included ASD as one of its focus issues. It has called Ontario a "laggard" on this file and has asked the Ontario government to "partner with the private sector to conduct a government-wide ASD audit as a means of identifying areas where the public would benefit from the introduction of an ASD model."<sup>10</sup>

In many cases, the business community's support for ASD is led by concern for the long-term financial sustainability of public services. But the business community is not solely concerned with the level of expenditures—it is not simply a question of lowering expenditures. As the Ontario example shows, the concern is directed more toward government services that are not achieving the desired objectives—it is a question of whether the money spent is achieving the end at which it is aimed, and whether this end is in line with the needs of the business community. In many cases this concern outweighs concerns about strict dollars and cents.<sup>11</sup>

## Canadian Business and the Education Sector

This concern for effect over expense is particularly acute in the education sector. While Canada's primary education system is ranked seventh globally, the same ranking saw Canada's higher-education ranking slip two spots (from sixteenth to eighteenth).<sup>12</sup> And for consecutive years, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce notes that aspects of Canada's education system act as barriers to international competitiveness.

In many cases, and in line with the Conference Board's rankings, much of the effort (especially in recent years) has been focused on post-secondary education and its link to skills training.

**We need stronger efforts to coordinate between the silos of education and employers.**

In 2015, the Canadian chamber noted that "Canada is not producing enough graduates with the skills needed for its economy. Canada has shortages and high demand forecast in a wide range of occupations,"<sup>13</sup> and they further noted that "we need stronger efforts to coordinate between the silos of education and employers." They identified these silos as one of their top ten barriers to competitiveness. Similar concerns have been raised by the chamber for a number of years, including concerns about "a lack of literacy and essential skills necessary for a 21st century workforce."<sup>14</sup>

10 Ontario Chamber of Commerce, "Ontario Needs to Provide Its Services More Efficiently by Seeking Opportunities to Partner with Not-for-Profits and the Private Sector," 2016, <http://www.occ.ca/issue/alternative-service-delivery/>.

11 Ibid

12 Jessica Edge and Douglas Watt, "Canada's Competitiveness Performance: Billowing in the Winds of Change," Conference Board of Canada, September 3, 2014, [http://www.conferenceboard.ca/topics/education/commentaries/14-09-03/canada\\_s\\_competitiveness\\_performance\\_billowing\\_in\\_the\\_winds\\_of\\_change.aspx](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/topics/education/commentaries/14-09-03/canada_s_competitiveness_performance_billowing_in_the_winds_of_change.aspx).

13 Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Tackling the Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness 2015. <http://www.chamber.ca/download.aspx?t=0&pid=b34b6200-23a3-e411-80f8-000c29c04ade>

14 Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Tackling the Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness 2013. [http://www.chamber.ca/media/blog/Booklet\\_Top\\_10\\_Barriers\\_2013.pdf](http://www.chamber.ca/media/blog/Booklet_Top_10_Barriers_2013.pdf)

But it is not simply post-secondary education that is of concern. The Business Council of Canada (formerly Canadian Council of Chief Executives) notes that

Canadian PISA results in reading, science and mathematics have been trending downward for a decade. It is not just that others are passing our 15-year-olds in the “league tables.” There has actually been some absolute regression in Canadian scores: we are treading water or going backwards while others are moving forward.<sup>15</sup>

And the seemingly cheery picture of Canada’s strong K-12 education system is also not as bright as it seems. The same report notes that

*We outspend and out-credential almost all partners yet: Our graduates display relatively low levels of basic competencies; We are numerically weakest in those STEM domains that are most closely aligned with innovation, productivity and economic success; Our universities collectively are viewed globally as not competitive; We lag in key indicators related to research, development and innovation.*<sup>16</sup>

Leading economists at Canadian banks also highlight these challenges, noting that “Canada’s results in literacy and numeracy [are] depressing.”<sup>17</sup> The TD report analyzes the results of the OECD surveys of adult skills (PIAAC)<sup>18</sup> and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)<sup>19</sup> and provides a rather bleak picture of where today’s educational failures will lead.

The lack of improvement over the past ten years is a concern as essential skills provide the foundation from which other more complex skills are based. Although there is little evidence to suggest that there is currently a widespread skills shortage issue in Canada, the essential skills challenge we are seeing today points to potential growing skill shortage issues in the future. The need to right this ship is more pressing than ever.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that the issue at hand is not one of expenditure. Education spending is consistently one of the highest expenditures in provincial budgets, and provinces have been making significant increases of 26-72 percent in the last decade. And they’ve been doing so even in the face of declining enrolment during the time span between the most recent OECD surveys, with per student expenditures raising from 41 to 73 percent.<sup>21</sup> The government of Ontario, for instance, has acknowledged this fact, noting that “over the past decade, funding . . . has increased, even though demographic factors have caused enrolment to decline.”<sup>22</sup>

15 Paul Cappon, “Think Nationally, Act Locally: A Pan-Canadian Strategy for Education and Training,” Business Council of Canada, July 2014, 12, <http://thebusinesscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Paul-Cappon-Think-nationally-act-locally-July-4.pdf>.

16 Ibid., 16.

17 “Canada’s Literacy and Numeracy Challenge Worsens,” TD Economics Special Report, December 12, 2013, 1 (emphasis added), <https://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/CanadaLiteracyAndNumeracyChallengeWorsens.pdf>.

18 “About the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC),” OECD, <http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/surveyofadultskills.htm>.

19 Pierre Brochu et al., “Measuring up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study,” Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2012, [http://cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/318/PISA2012\\_CanadianReport\\_EN\\_Web.pdf](http://cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/318/PISA2012_CanadianReport_EN_Web.pdf).

20 “Canada’s Literacy and Numeracy Challenge Worsens,” 7.

21 See Jason Clemens, Deani Neven Van Pelt, and Joel Emes, “Enrolments and Education Spending in Public Schools in Canada,” Barbara Mitchell Centre for Improvement in Education, Research Bulletin, September 2015, <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/enrolments-and-education-spending-in-public-schools-in-canada.pdf>

22 Ontario Ministry of Education, “A Guide to the Grants for Students Needs,” 2015–2016, 3, <https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1516/2015GSNGuideEN.pdf>.

## Great Expectations: Canadian Business, ASD, and Education

In the eyes of the business community, delivery of education should be a prime—perhaps *the* prime—target for ASD. In Canada the overwhelming majority of students are educated in a single, or dual, state-run education system. Only a tiny minority of students – ranging from 1 percent in Prince Edward Island to approximately 12 percent in Quebec and British Columbia – are educated in independent schools.<sup>23</sup> Expenditures are high, results are poor, and both of these have a direct and growing impact on the success of Canadian businesses. Understanding the keen interest in ASD, and in the inclusion of K-12 education as strategic priorities for the business community, you might expect a loud chorus of calls for government to explore ASD in this sector.



But have we heard such a call?

Cardus surveyed the policy positions and research documents of thirty-one Canadian business and trade associations to determine the degree to which K-12 education is part of these associations' policy platforms, and whether such platforms discuss or pursue ASD in K-12 education (See Survey Appendix A).

Included in this survey are major national business associations such as the Business Council of Canada, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, as well as major sectoral associations such as the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Association. Additionally, we surveyed provincial counterparts and those of major urban centres such as Toronto and Vancouver.

These associations stand as a credible sample of business interests across Canada. The websites, public papers, reports, speeches, bulletins, and any communications that evidence a policy perspective on K-12 education were thematically analyzed. The analysis focused on references to K-12 education, and paid particular attention to any references to competition and diversity of delivery. Summaries for each of the business associations were created and compiled and can be found in the appendix below.

**In the eyes of the business community, delivery of education should be a prime—perhaps *the* prime—target for Alternative Service Delivery.**

<sup>23</sup> Van Pelt, Deani and Eisen, Ben. "Demand for independent schooling on the rise in Canada." Fraser Forum. Fraser Institute. October 30, 2015, <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/blogs/demand-for-independent-schooling-on-the-rise-in-canada#sthash.yBnHOZqE.dpuf>.

What is striking is that most of the associations surveyed make no policy comment on K-12 education or education of any kind. It is difficult to determine why this is the case, but the fact that any mention of education tends to be in respect of post-secondary education, and there specifically with regard to skills training, seems to indicate an “instrumentalist” view of education. That is, education in which the student is less likely to be seen as a “worker” is of less interest to the business community than education that immediately precedes the entrance of said student into the workforce.

When associations do highlight K-12 education, the interventions group around three topics:

1. The level of investment.
2. Calls to enhance basic skills (especially mathematics and science).
3. Calls to enhance integration of the school system with the business community.

Arguably, calls for greater integration of the business sector and the education sector hint at the possibility of nonstate school actors offering education (indeed, the business community is a leading investor in education in their own right), but associations show very little interest in exploring alternative service delivery in the education sector. There were a few hints at structural issues—the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, for instance, notes that part of the challenge in achieving better results is a product of the educational system’s structure<sup>24</sup>—but in general, interventions assumed a structural status quo.

**Associations show very little interest in exploring alternative service delivery in the education sector.**

A notable exception is the Canadian Council of Chief Executives. Their report “Career Ready: Toward a National Strategy for the Mobilization of Canadian Potential” notes the usual concerns about investment and performance, but also highlights the fact that, when given a chance, parents are voting with their feet. They note that

The current emphasis on self-esteem and low-pressure teaching—which thousands of Canadian families explicitly reject by sending their children to private schools or after-school programs such [as] Sylvan Learning Centres or Kumon—is going to have to give way to a greater role for basic education and more competitive outcomes.<sup>25</sup>

This report is part of a long line of interventions by the Council on the outcomes of K-12 education, questioning the efficacy of Canada’s current education system, and advocating for a revisiting of our approach to K-12 education and our measurement of education, including teacher performance. As the council’s CEO noted in a speech delivered to educators in Alberta in 2014,

It’s time for an honest conversation about what’s working and what isn’t. It’s time to stop congratulating ourselves on the quality of our education system, and face up to the fact that our performance in international rankings is getting worse, not better.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Eric Blake, “The Chamber’s Thoughts on Education,” Halifax Chamber of Commerce, July 8, 2014, <http://halifaxchamber.com/the-chambers-thoughts-on-education/>

<sup>25</sup> Ken Coates, “Career Ready: Towards a National Strategy for the Mobilization of Canadian Potential,” Business Council of Canada, March 2015, 18, <http://www.ceocouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Career-Ready-Ken-Coates-final-March-251.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> “Honourable John Manley, P.C., O.C.,—Jobs, Skills and Opportunities,” YouTube video, uploaded March 14, 2014 (quoted material is at 25:06–25:20). Linked to at “Video: John Manley at Alberta’s Inspiring Education Symposium,” Business Council of Canada weblog, March 18, 2014, <http://www.ceocouncil.ca/blog-innovation-and-competitiveness/2014/03/video-john-manley-on-jobs-skills-and-opportunities>.





## Explaining the Silence

When it comes to debates about the delivery of K-12 education, the business community appears to have contracted a rare case of policy laryngitis. Rather than the usual cacophony of policy ideas and positions that would be consistent with the business community's approach to effective delivery of education, they are almost entirely silent.

Why? Why is it that a community that is rightfully concerned with the effective delivery of public services is silent on the delivery of one of the largest—and certainly one of the most expensive—public services?

What follows are three intentionally provocative suggestions that are intended to open up and expand the conversation about education, ASD, and business.

### Suggestion 1—Economic Interests

Given that Canada's education structure is so heavily consolidated, and given the large amounts of funding streaming to the sector, could it be that the financial costs of challenging the current system are too high for any one sector to take the lead? Here, might we consider the possibility that those who are the main beneficiaries of increased spending do not want to face greater accountability or competition? While the millions of dollars spent on political contributions by Ontario's teachers union federations get a lot of media attention, the concern

extends across the country, as can be seen in the response from the Alberta Teachers' Federation to John Manley's Alberta speech on education reform.<sup>27</sup>

But this critique cuts both ways. As we have noted elsewhere,<sup>28</sup> the strictly instrumental approach to education is unlikely to be persuasive to educators, legislators, parents, or students who rightfully see that education should be something more than a pathway to employment. While it is important to note that teachers and their unions have an interest in maintaining the status quo, it is equally important to acknowledge concerns from those who, even while sharing concerns about employment outcomes, consider education as a social sphere in its own right.

## Suggestion 2—Ideology

We noted above that it remains worthy of public debate to question whether a state monopoly or competitive markets, or some hybrid thereof, are likely to better serve the public interest. We also noted that debate will inevitably be shaped by ideology. There are those who argue that a centralized, state-run education program is necessary for social cohesion.<sup>29</sup> This is essentially the position held by the ministry in Ontario, where equality of access for all is placed, unnecessarily, against equitable parental choice. Derek Allison, a scholar at Western University, notes that “rather than being viewed and treated as contributing partners in Ontario's educational project, the province's non-public schools and their supporters seem to be barely tolerated by the educational establishment and influential opinion leaders,”<sup>30</sup> and he cites a series of punitive administrative measures that have contributed to a “hostile demeanour” toward nonstate schools in Ontario.

This attitude is prevalent today, but it was not always so. In 1985, Dalton McGuinty Sr. noted that “the common good of our society does not hinge on a single, uniform type of schooling, in a monolithic system.”<sup>31</sup>

Other provinces recognize this, and have taken the view that while the government has the responsibility to ensure equity in educational provision, this does not necessarily mean government has to be the sole provider. Alberta, for example, proposes a wide mix of providers, including charter schools. In Saskatchewan, the ministry argues that access need not be at the expense of equitable parental choice. As the most recent province in Canada to undergo significant reform, Saskatchewan still only designates fully government-funded schools as “public” but recognizes different providers and allows access to different levels of funding in return for a sliding scale of regulation and curriculum accreditation.<sup>32</sup>

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27 Dennis Theobald, “Viewpoints: Only You Can Save Us, John Manley!” February 25, 2014, <http://www.teachers.ab.ca/Publications/ATA%20News/Volume-48-2013-14/Number-12/Pages/Viewpoints.aspx>

28 Brian Dijkema and Ray Pennings, *The Building Meaning Project*. <https://www.cardus.ca/store/4332/> 41.

29 See Stephen Macedo, *Diversity and Distrust: Civic Education in a Multicultural Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). See also the debate between Ray Pennings and then Alberta Liberal MLA (now federal cabinet minister) Kent Hehr, hosted by Speakers Corner in Calgary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ag4R2HSHMaY>

30 Derek J. Allison, “Toward a Warmer Climate for Ontario's Private Schools,” *Cardus Education*, 2014, 6, <https://www.cardus.ca/store/4288/>

31 *Ibid.* 11.

32 K. Gabel, “Independent Schools in Saskatchewan” (paper presented at *Toward a Warmer Climate: Could a Warmer Climate for School Diversity Improve Education in Ontario?*, Cardus Education, Toronto, November 5, 2015).

## Suggestion 3—Inertia and Lack of Imagination

While it is tempting—because they are so politically charged—to highlight political interests and ideology as reasons for the silence, it is also possible that the lacuna can be explained by inertia or a lack of imagination on behalf of the education community and the business community in Canada. It is unfashionable to say it, but there are times when a conversation does not happen because no one has anything new to say, or can't imagine that the field would look differently than it does today. Inertia and lack of imagination are powerful forces in public debate.

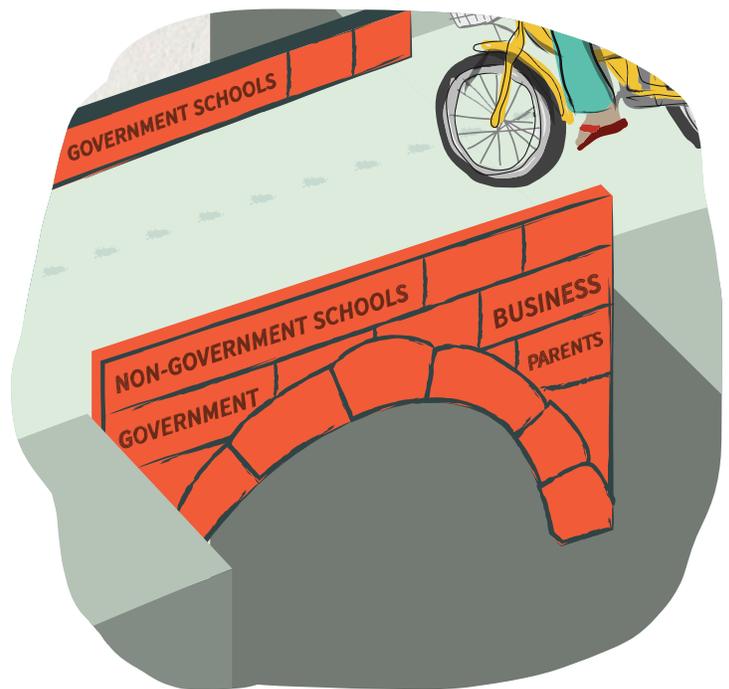
## Ingredients for an Honest Conversation About ASD between Educators, Businesses, and Government

What would it look like to imagine an education sector that meets the concerns of businesses and educators, and that provides education in a diversity of forms and from the same diversity of perspective as exists in our society today?

An honest way forward in this conversation would be to acknowledge both the interests and the diversity of ideological perspectives while taking into account the best data we have on schooling outcomes from around the world, and in North America.

Cardus's survey of school-sector impact on educational outcomes has demonstrated that diverse educational models within North America already deliver on a broad range of indicators valued by employers and businesses. On certain key metrics the graduates of independent religious and nonreligious schools significantly differ from those of public schools, showing a stronger orientation toward society and community engagement.<sup>33</sup>

The Cardus Education Survey confirms what is already well documented, that the attainment of pupils in independent nonreligious and independent Catholic schools supports a trajectory into higher education, higher earnings, and managerial and professional roles. These graduates will spend longer overall in education than graduates of government schools. Other interesting questions for our discussion, therefore, are, What kind of employee is shaped by this time spent in education? What will Canadian graduates do with what they know? And how are they being formed for the workplace? In addition to measuring academic outcomes the Cardus



<sup>33</sup> Pennings, R.; Sikkink, D.; Van Pelt, D.; Van Brummelen, H.; and von Heyking, A. (2012) Cardus Education Survey: A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats. Cardus: Hamilton, Ontario.

study is unique in that it examines school-sector effect on vocational, social, and civic engagement. This places educational attainment, adult occupation, and earnings into the wider context of citizenship and contribution to the public good; this is in keeping with the stated goals for education in all of the Canadian provinces.

It also provides a glimpse about the potential of alternative service delivery in the K-12 education sector. If an extremely small segment of independent schools can achieve results which belie the fears that diversity runs counter to social cohesion, and if these schools are able to move closer towards the goals that are set out by public schools, and do so in a way that meets the needs of the business community, perhaps it is time for businesses to come off the sidelines and bring voice into the debate about improving K-12 education in Canada.

Canadian graduates of independent schools, both religious and nonreligious, match or exceed the graduates of government schools across all measures for occupation and employment.<sup>34</sup> This includes some finely tuned variables such as the sense of ethical obligation for others that respondents feel in the workplace, their expectations of work and income, how much effort they put into their occupation, and their motivation to achieve goals and workplace satisfaction. The most striking finding regarding work goals in this study was that graduates of independent non-religious schools demonstrated a significantly stronger orientation toward community and society and have a stronger sense of ethical obligation in the workplace. Their work goals were not entirely about self or even family interests but extended to concerns about public good. This research demonstrates that nongovernment providers not only offer models capable of delivering on knowledge and skills and access into higher education but are also capable of forming a workforce connected to community and civic society.

A national conversation about how to replicate this success across K-12 delivery ought to at least be on the table for the sake of Canada's business interests. But it is also about more than this—it is in the interest of Canadian students, and indeed in the interest of our country as a whole.



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34 Ibid

## Appendix: An Analytical Survey of Canadian Business Associations' Approach to K-12 Education Policy and Alternative Service Delivery in Public Education

*What follows is based on a survey of business associations across Canada, in every province and territory, in respect of kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) education policy, wherein particular attention was given to uncovering policy comments regarding nonpublic delivery of K-12 education.*

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Calgary Chamber of Commerce Burns Building, Suite 600 237 8th Avenue SE Calgary, AB T2G 5C3 (403) 750-0400 <a href="http://www.calgarychamber.com">www.calgarychamber.com</a></p> <p>“For more than 120 years, the Calgary Chamber has been the city’s main connector of people, ideas and stories.”</p>	AB	YES	<p>An April 2014 <a href="#">news release</a> highlights a perceived need for K-12 education to make students more oriented to pursuing a career path in business. The chamber also organized a “Western Canada Roundtable on 21st Century Learning and Innovation” in 2014, but no report of the proceedings was found extant.</p>
<p>Edmonton Chamber of Commerce #600 - 9990 Jasper Avenue Edmonton, AB T5J 1P7 (780) 426-4620 <a href="http://www.edmontonchamber.com">www.edmontonchamber.com</a></p> <p>“Our diverse and talented network of notable professionals allows the Edmonton Chamber to be one of the most influential business organizations in the country.”</p>	AB	YES	<p>In a March 2014 <a href="#">policy submission</a> to the government of Alberta’s redesign of K-12 education, the chamber called for the reinstatement of “workforce exposure” by way of the former “Career Choices” program.</p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>BC Chamber of Commerce 1201 - 750 West Pender Street Vancouver, BC V6C 2T8 (604) 683-0700 <a href="http://bcchamber.org">bcchamber.org</a></p> <p>“The BC Chamber of Commerce is the largest and most broadly-based business organization in B.C. We represent local Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade in communities throughout the province.”</p>	BC	YES	<p>In a February 5, 2015, news release in conjunction with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the BC Chamber of Commerce identified the “<a href="#">Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness for 2015</a>” and argued that one obstacle was the lack of input from business to K-12 education labelling this obstacle as “Silos in skills development”:</p> <p>The BC Chamber of Commerce has been a leading voice encouraging the B.C. government to allow more input from business into the K-12 curriculum all the way to the post-secondary training being offered to meet the skills needed by employers. Improving the links between education and employment is not the responsibility of educators and governments alone. Employers are directly implicated.</p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Business Council of British Columbia 1050 West Pender Street, Suite 810 Vancouver BC V6E 3S7 (604) 684-3384 <a href="http://www.bcbc.com/">www.bcbc.com/</a></p> <p>“The Council has grown from 43 member companies in its first year to about 250 today. The Council’s membership consists of BC’s top employers, including companies from all of BC’s major economic sectors. Collectively, they are responsible for roughly a quarter of all jobs in BC.”</p>	BC	YES	<p>Among the “<a href="#">special initiatives</a>” of the council is the “BC Business Caucus”: The Business Caucus is comprised [sic] of over 30 senior business associations from across the economy. The Business Council initiated and provides the secretariat service for this leadership group that meets monthly. The goals are to better coordinate and leverage the voice of business; to understand common interests and collaboratively advance policy and issues and to be an advocate for greater economic and financial literacy particularly through organizations that can impact the K-12 system. In early 2015, the group successfully supported the renewed funding of Junior Achievement. Later in the year, the group will conclude an education declaration supporting the need for greater collaboration of business and the education system with the goal of producing students that have a comprehensive understanding of the economy, sector operations and practices, entrepreneurship, and career options and associated skills and education requirements.</p> <p>An April 2015 <a href="#">news release</a> suggested that the failings of BC employees may be due to inadequate K-12 education. This is repeated in <a href="#">a variety of blog posts etc.</a></p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Vancouver Board of Trade World Trade Centre Suite 400, 999 Canada Place Vancouver, BC V6C 3E1 (604) 681-2111 <a href="http://www.boardoftrade.com">www.boardoftrade.com</a></p> <p>“The Vancouver Board of Trade—Western Canada’s most active and influential business association—accelerates business success by advocating and influencing public policy, developing business leaders, connecting businesses and presenting thought leaders.”</p>	BC	NO	The board of trade’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Canadian Federation for Independent Business (CFIB) 99 Metcalfe St, Ottawa, ON K1P 6L7 (613) 235-2373 <a href="http://www.cfib-fcei.ca">www.cfib-fcei.ca</a></p> <p>“With the strength of over 109,000 small business owners from coast-to-coast—entrepreneurs just like you—the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is the big voice for small businesses.”</p>	FED	YES	In a recent online, CFIB “Labour Policy” report on training, “ <a href="#">How to Improve Training</a> ,” K-12 is positioned as one component of “basic skills training” and “job readiness.”
<p>The Canadian Chamber of Commerce 360 Albert Street, Suite 420 Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X7 (613) 238-4000 <a href="http://www.chamber.ca">www.chamber.ca</a></p> <p>“With a network of over 450 chambers of commerce and boards of trade, representing 200,000 businesses of all sizes in all sectors of the economy and in all regions, we are the largest business association in Canada, and the country’s most influential.”</p>	FED	YES	In “ <a href="#">Canada’s Skills Crisis: What We Heard</a> : A Canadian Chamber of Commerce Report on Cross-Country Consultations in 2012,” the aboriginal “education gap” was identified as “a \$90 billion issue” for which “the biggest payback is investing in K-12 education” (19).

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Chinese Business Chamber of Canada 1027 McNicoll Avenue, 2nd Floor Toronto, ON M1W 3W6 (416) 366-0966 <a href="http://chinesebusiness.org">http://chinesebusiness.org</a></p> <p>“Incorporated in 1998, the Chinese Business Chamber of Canada (CBCC) is a non-profit organization serving the Mandarin Chinese business community in Canada. Representing over 1300 manufacturers, importers/exporters, wholesalers, retailers, sales agents, doctors, lawyers, accountants, and other business professionals, we are the largest Chinese business association in Canada.”</p>	FED	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Indo Canada Chamber of Commerce 924 The East Mall Toronto, ON M9B 6K1 (416) 224-0090 <a href="http://www.iccconline.org/">http://www.iccconline.org/</a></p> <p>“The Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC), founded in 1977, is a premier, not-for-profit, member and sponsor funded business and diaspora organization.”</p>	FED	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Canadian Manufacturers &amp; Exporters (CME) 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1500 Ottawa ON K1N 7B7 Tel: (613) 238-8888 <a href="http://www.cme-mec.ca">http://www.cme-mec.ca</a></p> <p>“Founded in 1871, CME represents more than 10,000 leading companies nationwide, and—through various initiatives, including the establishment of the Canadian Manufacturing Coalition—touches more than 100,000 companies from coast to coast, engaged in manufacturing, international trade, and service-related industries. More than 85 per cent of our members are small and medium-sized enterprises.”</p>	FED	YES	<p>The CME sponsored a Public Policy Forum report, “<a href="#">Levelling Up: Succeeding Through Investments in Adult Literacy and Essential Skills</a>,” April 2013. The report argued that high return on investment (ROI) in adult literacy and “essential skills” can be achieved by investing in K-12 education:</p> <p>Further, stakeholders can attain a high ROI by focusing on K-12 students throughout the country. With almost 40% of high school students leaving school at literacy levels 1 and 2, too many individuals find it difficult to secure and maintain employment in Canada’s knowledge economy. In dollar terms the earnings loss due to the rise in youth unemployment is equivalent to \$10.7 billion. (7)</p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Canadian Council for Chief Executives (CCCE) 99 Bank Street, Suite 1001 Ottawa, ON K1P 6B9 (613) 238-3727 <a href="http://www.ceocouncil.ca">www.ceocouncil.ca</a></p> <p>“The Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE) is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization composed of the CEOs of Canada’s leading enterprises. . . . The companies they lead collectively administer \$7.5 trillion in assets, have annual revenues in excess of \$1.1 trillion, and are responsible for the vast majority of Canada’s exports, business investment, private-sector research and development, and employer-sponsored education and training.”</p>	FED	YES	<p>A CCCE report of January 2014, “<a href="#">Effective Management of Human Capital in Schools: Recommendations to Strengthen the Teaching Profession</a>,” suggested that K-12 education could be improved by instituting and refining regular teacher performance evaluation (8ff.). A July 2014 report, “<a href="#">Think Nationally, Act Locally: A Pan-Canadian Strategy for Education and Training</a>,” identified outcome shortfalls in Canadian public K-12 education. It went on to compare Canada’s public K-12 education with public K-12 education in Germany, Australia, Switzerland, and the European Union. A third report, of March 2015, “<a href="#">Career Ready: Towards a National Strategy for the Mobilization of Canadian Potential</a>,” argued that the failures of Canada’s K-12 public education to keep pace with rising global standards, especially in respect of mathematics and science, are traceable to a student-centred, “low pressure,” and self-esteem-oriented teaching style (18). This has driven parents to seek other deliverers of K-12 education by way of private, independent education, and their resorting to supplemental, remedial education at Sylvan Learning Centres and the like (ibid.).</p>
<p>The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce Suite 100-259 Portage Avenue Winnipeg, MB R3B 2A9 (204) 944-8484 <a href="http://www.winnipeg-chamber.com">www.winnipeg-chamber.com</a></p>	MB	YES	<p>In a May 2015 <a href="#">news release</a> commenting on the government of Manitoba’s 2015 budget, the chamber took issue with the government’s contention that increased K-12 public-education spending equates to better outcomes. In arguing its case, the chamber pointed to deficiencies in respect of mathematics and science.</p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Saint John Region, The Chamber 40 King Street Saint John, NB E2L 1G3 (506) 634-8111 <a href="http://www.sjboardoftrade.com">www.sjboardoftrade.com</a></p> <p>”The Chamber officially launched on May 7, 2014 when members of the business community voted in favour of regional cooperation. Geographic boundaries were expanded and a new governance structure was adopted, giving birth to a new regional chamber, including the Kennebecasis Chamber of Commerce, the River Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Saint John West Business Association and the Saint John Board of Trade.”</p>	NB	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>St. John’s Board of Trade 34 Harvey Road St. John’s, NL A1C 2G1 (709) 726-2961 <a href="http://www.stjohnsbot.ca">www.stjohnsbot.ca</a></p> <p>“We are a not-for-profit organization lead [sic] by a volunteer executive and board of directors representing local business. The St. John’s Board of Trade is the most influential voice of business in the province to all levels of government.”</p>	NL	NO	In a <a href="#">speech</a> to the board of trade, the former premier Danny Williams described the government of Newfoundland and Labrador’s capping class sizes for K-12 public education, among other things. Aside from this, however, the board of trade’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Halifax Chamber of Commerce 32 Akerley Boulevard, Suite 100 Dartmouth, NS, B3B 1N1, Canada (902) 468-7111 <a href="http://www.halifaxchamber.com">www.halifaxchamber.com</a></p> <p>“The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is a best-practice, business advocacy organization that continuously strives to make Halifax an even more attractive city in which to live, work and play. Together the approximately 1,500 member businesses and their over 90,000 employees, act as a single powerful voice through the Chamber to promote local business interests. The volunteer board of directors and chamber staff undertake initiatives by request of, and on behalf of our diverse membership.”</p>	NS	YES	<p>An August 2008 <a href="#">report</a> discloses that the Halifax Chamber Education and Training Committee that visited school boards in Ontario and Alberta, and identified best practices for board governance etc., arguing that this fulfills its prioritization of K-12 education in that effective board governance leads to good education outcomes. Last year, observing that the last comprehensive review of “P-12” education had been pursued twenty-five years ago, the chamber made a <a href="#">submission</a> to the government of Nova Scotia’s panel on education, including the following elements:</p> <p>System Structure Encourage innovation by providing schools and teachers with more freedom to decide how they will teach their students. Expand avenues for information sharing and collaboration in and between schools, as well as setting clear guidelines for what students are expected to achieve. Allow students to provide feedback on their teachers and use it as part of the professional development process as has become common in universities.</p> <p>Curriculum Enhance the curriculum to provide a strong focus on fundamental skills in math and science. Introduce entrepreneurship education to help students become adaptable and innovative.</p> <p>Expenditure Focus on ensuring that our existing education funds are being spent in an effective and innovative manner. Reduce the achievement gap between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds by ensuring that all schools have an equitable number of staff, infrastructure, and financial resources. Review hiring and certification practices to make sure that the best teachers available make it into the school system.</p> <p>In January 2015 the government’s action plan, “<a href="#">The 3 Rs: Renew, Refocus, Rebuild</a>,” was issued and, among other things, called for a “Business-Education Council” (11).</p>

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Ontario Korean Businessmen’s Association  130 Orfus Rd, North York, ON M6A 1L9  (416) 789-7891  <a href="http://www.okba.net">www.okba.net</a>  An association of Korean convenience store owners in Ontario.</p>	ON	NO	The association’s web site and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Toronto Board of Trade  First Canadian Place  77 Adelaide Street West  Suite 350  Toronto, ON M5X 1C1  (416) 366-6811  <a href="http://www.bot.com">www.bot.com</a>  “Our Members represent more than 12,000 individuals and 250,000 business professionals and influencers throughout the Toronto region, who reflect the breadth of the Toronto region’s diverse business community—from established corporations to emerging start-ups.”</p>	ON	NO	The board of trade’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>London Chamber of Commerce  101-244 Pall Mall Street  London, ON N6A 5P6  (519) 432-7551  <a href="http://www.londonchamber.com">www.londonchamber.com</a>  “The London Chamber of Commerce is a politically independent, membership based, volunteer driven, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to lead and serve the London business community.”</p>	ON	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Hamilton Chamber of Commerce 120 King St. W. Plaza Level Hamilton, ON L8P 4V2 (905) 522-1151 <a href="http://www.hamiltonchamber.ca">www.hamiltonchamber.ca</a></p> <p>“As a sought-out organization that is strong, influential, and self-sustaining, we champion the interests of ethical, free enterprise by effectively engaging business, community, and government leaders in the promotion of the long-term economic prosperity of our region.”</p>	ON	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Mississauga Chamber of Commerce 701-77 City Centre Drive Mississauga, ON L5B 1M5 (905) 273-6151 <a href="http://www.mbot.com">www.mbot.com</a></p> <p>“Mississauga Board of Trade represents approximately 1,500 businesses in Mississauga.”</p>	ON	NO	The board of trade’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Ottawa Chamber of Commerce 328 Somerset Street West Ottawa, ON K2P 0J9 (613) 236-3631 <a href="http://www.ottawachamber.ca">www.ottawachamber.ca</a></p> <p>“The Ottawa Chamber of Commerce has been helping small and large business for over 150 years.”</p>	ON	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>NWT Chamber of Commerce 4802 - 50th Avenue, Unit 13 Yellowknife, NT X1A 1C4 (867) 920 9505 <a href="http://www.nwtchamber.com">www.nwtchamber.com</a></p> <p>“The Northwest Territories Chamber of Commerce is the largest and most broadly based business organization North of 60, with representation from every region of the NWT.”</p>	NT	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce PO Box 59 Building 607 Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0 (867) 979-4654 <a href="http://www.baffinchamber.ca">www.baffinchamber.ca</a> “The Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce is a non-partisan organization established to foster, promote and improve business development in a responsible manner while providing value to membership through benefits, partnerships, communications, advocacy and initiatives.”</p>	NU	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>The Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce Confederation Court Mall, National Bank Tower 134 Kent Street, Suite 230, PO Box 67 Charlottetown, PE C1A 7K2 (902) 628-2000 <a href="http://www.charlottetownchamber.com">http://www.charlottetownchamber.com</a> “The Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization made up of business and professional people sharing a common goal: the economic development of the capital region. The Chamber’s over 1000 members reflect a diverse network of small, medium and large businesses from almost every industry sector and business profession.”</p>	PE	YES	In a March 2015 <a href="#">news release</a> , the chamber reported membership survey results that showed members ranked K-12 education second most important area of focus for 2015. This was included in the Chamber’s <a href="#">strategic action plan deck</a> (PowerPoint presentation) as a strategic objective (12). But a specific policy report developing this as a focus was not found.
<p>Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal 380 St. Antoine Street West, Suite 6000 Montreal, Quebec H2Y 3X7 (514) 871-4000 <a href="http://www.btmm.qc.ca">http://www.btmm.qc.ca</a> “More than 7,000 members among which 80% are decision-makers, served by nearly 100 experts.”</p>	QC	NO	The board of trade’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found. The only comments regarding education were in respect of post-secondary (post-K-12) education.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Québec 17, rue Saint-Louis Québec, QC G1R 3Y8 418-692-3853 <a href="http://www.ccquebec.ca">www.ccquebec.ca</a> "Its 4,500-strong membership from all sectors of economic activity make the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Québec (Québec Chamber of Commerce and Industry) the most important Eastern Québec business community organization. In operation since 1809, the Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the promotion of economic development in the Greater Québec Area."</p>	QC	NO	The chamber's website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Conseil du patronat du Québec (CPQ) 1010 Rue Sherbrooke O, Montréal, QC H3A 2R7 (514) 288-5161 <a href="https://www.cpq.qc.ca/">https://www.cpq.qc.ca/</a> An association of Quebec business leaders across the province.</p>	QC	YES	Co-chaired by the CPQ and participated in by the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, in the report " <a href="#">National Roundtable on the Adult Labour Force</a> ," which convened in Montreal in 2002, we found three oblique references to K-12 education. The first argues that adult reading ability can be attributed to both weaknesses in K-12 education and Canada's high levels of immigration (8). A second issue raised in respect of adult education argues that who is responsible and who pays for adult education should be "as clear for adult learning as they are for K-12 education" (9). A third comment in respect of recruiting to the skilled trades mentioned that since students currently engaged in K-12 education are at least four or five years away from being in a position to join a skilled trade, more focus should be put on young adults for skilled trade recruitment (11).

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	FED PROV TERR	K-12 POLICY? (Y/N)	POLICY COMMENTS
<p>Regina &amp; District Chamber of Commerce 2145 Albert Street Regina, SK S4P 2V1 (306) 757-4658 <a href="http://www.reginachamber.com">www.reginachamber.com</a> An association of Regina district business owners and leaders.</p>	SK	YES	In cooperation with the government of Saskatchewan, the chamber created and participated in the Regina District Industry Education Council, from October 2013. The council was designed to connect students to internships and to make them aware of opportunities in various sectors represented by the chamber ( <a href="#">ChamberLink</a> 17, no. 3 [March 2015]: 12).
<p>Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce 1630 1920 Broad Street Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3V2 (306) 352-2671 <a href="http://www.saskchamber.com">www.saskchamber.com</a> “The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce’s membership now includes almost 1,000 businesses, and 80 Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade who themselves have more than 10,000 members.”</p>	SK	YES	In a policy paper, “ <a href="#">Improving the K-12 Education System</a> ,” the chamber proposed adoption of the “Eight Principles for Education Leadership” described in the paper and originally put forward by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives. Among these is an acknowledgment of charter schools as a means of delivering K-12 education. Further, the principles include a commitment to shaping public policy as “fundamental.”
<p>Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce 104 - 202 4th Avenue North Saskatoon, SK S7K 0K1 (306) 244-2151 <a href="http://www.saskatoonchamber.com">www.saskatoonchamber.com</a> “The Chamber has been part of the Saskatoon business environment since 1903, when a group of individuals organized in the spirit of creating a better business climate in what was then a rapidly growing city.”</p>	SK	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.
<p>Yukon Chamber of Commerce #205-2237 Second Ave. Whitehorse, YT Y1A 0K7 (867) 393-6060 <a href="http://www.yukonchamber.com">www.yukonchamber.com</a></p>	YT	NO	The chamber’s website and other electronic sources were searched for K-12 education policy. None was found.

*(Footnotes)*

1 That is, federal (all-Canada), provincial, or territorial in scope.