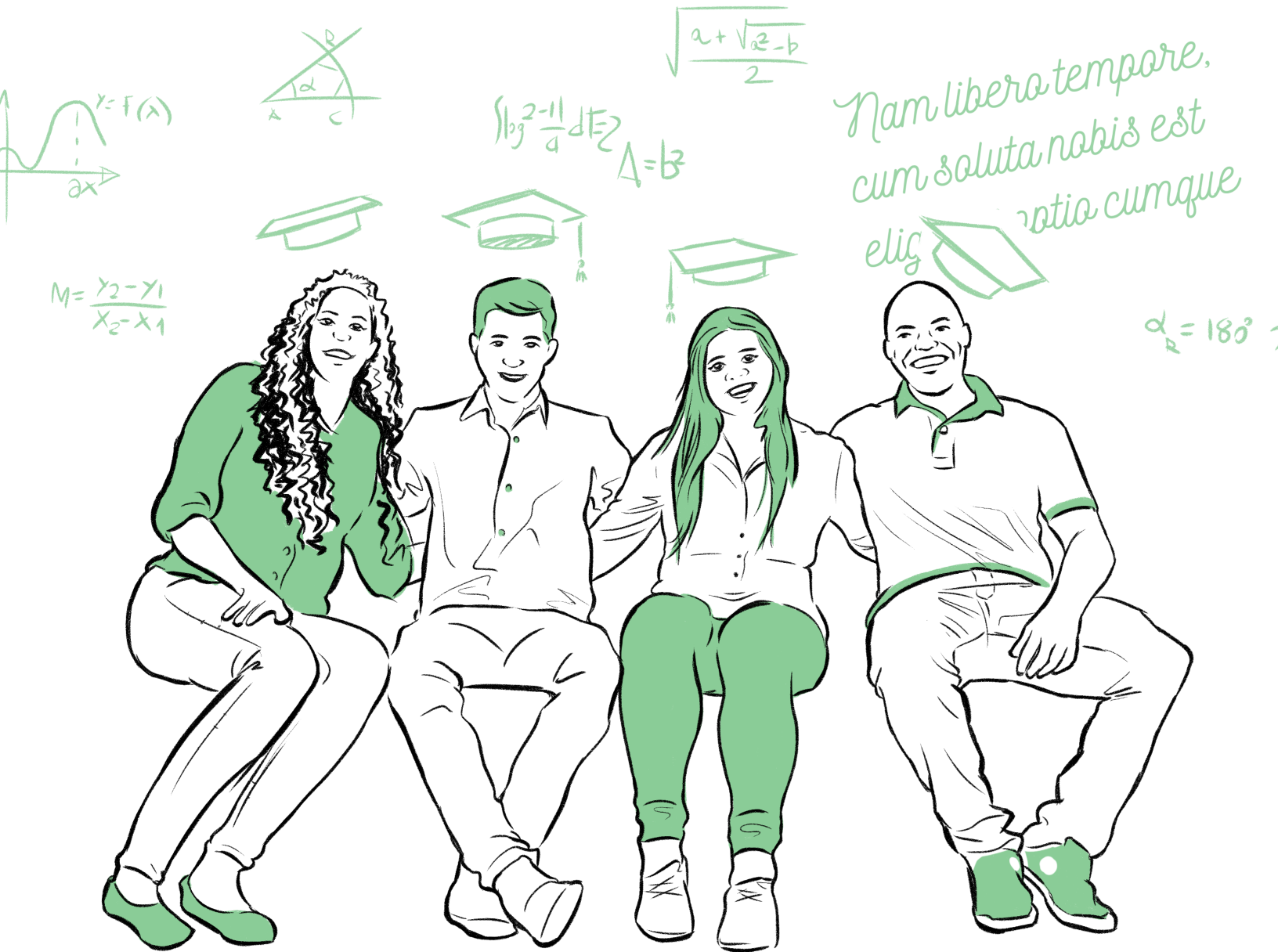


CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY

2018: BRITISH COLUMBIA BULLETIN

By Beth Green with Doug Sikkema and David Sikkink,



CARDUS

CARDUS EDUCATION SURVEY

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Produced in partnership with Cardus, Inc. an Exempt Public Charity
under section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Green, E.; Sikkema, D.; Sikkink, D.;

Cardus Education Survey: 2018 British Columbia Bulletin

1. School effects 2. Religious schools 3. Private schooling 4. Independent schooling 5. Christian schools 6. Catholic Schools 7. Independence non-religious schools 8. Home education 9. Home schooling 10. Graduate outcomes 11. Education Policy 12. Purposes of education 13. Cultural engagement 14. Educational attainment 15. Spiritual formation

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CONTENTS

Preface.....	5
Schooling in British Columbia.....	7
Family, Post-Secondary Education, and Work.....	8
In (x) We Trust?.....	9
Social Ties.....	10
Volunteering and Giving.....	11
Political Activities and Views.....	13
Religious Views and Activity.....	14
Survey of Secondary School Experience.....	15
Concluding Summary.....	16



Public
School

Independent
Catholic

Non-religious
Independent

Evangelical
Protestant

Four types of schooling in British Columbia

2018: BRITISH COLUMBIA BULLETIN

PREFACE

IN 2016 WE DELIVERED our second report on the Cardus Education Survey for Canada.¹ Those reports—and this—present findings from surveys examining outcomes for secondary school graduates of independent schools and public schools. The Cardus Education Survey makes a particularly significant methodological, theoretical, and empirical contribution to the research into religious schools in Canada and the United States and is the only study that uses repeated measures to report on the outcome of religious non-government schooling and compare it to public school outcomes.² One of the main problems with existing data is the lack of attention to diversity within the independent school sector. In addition, regional differences in the impact of independent schools on students' lives have not been carefully considered. Cardus research addresses this gap in the literature.

The following report concentrates on British Columbia graduates in 2018, drawing on graduates between twenty-four and thirty-nine years old who attended one of the following sectors in the province: **public, independent Catholic, evangelical Protestant, and non-religious independent**. The data for British Columbia was conducted in April through June of 2018. The total number of respondents screened across all survey research firms was just over 38,000, and the final working sample of respondents who primarily attended high school in British Columbia was 715. For this report, we classified each case according to the high school that the respondent primarily attended. Of the 715 cases, we had 455 non-religious public schoolers, 92 non-religious independent schoolers, 99 independent Catholic schoolers, and 61 Protestant schoolers.³

Since they are the most common type of graduate, the public school graduates set the “benchmark” against which other sector graduates are compared and contrasted. Therefore, when you read “more likely” and “less likely” it will *always* imply the clause “than the graduates from public school.” Furthermore, it is good to keep in mind that public and non-religious independent speaks to the

1. Beth Green, *Cardus Education Survey 2016: Educating to Love Your Neighbour*, Cardus Education, 2016, <https://www.cardus.ca/research/education/reports/cardus-education-survey-2016-educating-to-love-your-neighbour/>.

2. Beth Green and Ray Pennings, “Religion in Schools,” in *The Wiley Handbook of School Choice*, ed. Robert A. Fox and Nina K. Buchanan (New York: Wiley, 2017), 465–77.

3. There are also 8 religious homeschoolers; however, due to the limited nature of this sample size, we have not reported on our findings for this group in the following report.

sector but is not synonymous with “non-religious” graduates. Religious Canadians attend public schools and non-religious independent schools. What we are looking at, rather, is how school sector has shaped that graduate into the adult they are today, independent of all other variables.

Our Cardus Education Survey report is undergirded by a set of assumptions about what type of people are needed for our shared life to flourish. These are people who are not only gainfully employed, intelligent, and capable of developing various skills. Such things are good,

but our common life also needs people whose disposition is one of service; who give of their time, resources, and skills; who get involved with their churches and local political groups and are committed to their families and their communities; who, ultimately, are capable of loving their neighbours. Our findings in British Columbia largely support the findings of our 2016 Canadian report that independent schools do not create a socially elite enclave of detached and uninterested individuals. Rather, graduates from such school are as—if not more—civically minded, public-facing members of society.

Cardus Education is publishing bulletins for British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario in 2018. Don't miss the other provinces' reports:

carduseducationsurvey.com

SCHOOLING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA ENTERED the Confederation in 1871 but made no special provision for Catholic separate schools as provinces like Ontario did. British Columbia has the second highest proportion of enrolments in independent schools after Quebec. According to the Freedom Involves Secure Alternatives site for British Columbia, the proportion of students enrolled in independent schools was 13.2 percent, the current high point in a trend that has gone up steadily since the late 1970s, when such enrolments were at 4 percent.⁴ Over half of BC independent schools are religious, and

the 1989 *Independent School Act* makes provision for varying levels of funding. Depending on compliance with different levels of accountability measures, independent schools in British Columbia can receive between 35 and 50 percent of the per-pupil operating grants received by government schools. The largest independent sector in British Columbia is the independent Catholic system, with an enrolment of just over twenty-two thousand students, which amounts to over 27 percent of the overall independent school enrolment.⁵

4. "Enrolment Comparing Public and Independent—Historical," FISABC, <https://fisabc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Enrolment-Ind-Public-Comparison2017.doc.pdf> (accessed September 2018).

5. "Enrolment by Independent School Association—Historical," FISABC, <https://fisabc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Enrolment-by-Assoc.-Historical-2018.pdf> (accessed September 2018).

FAMILY, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND WORK

- WHEN IT COMES TO FAMILY LIFE, school, and work, our findings reveal that there is not a vast school-sector difference on most categories; however, a few distinctions to note include:
 - Evangelical Protestants are more likely to have been married longer and at younger ages, but are no more or less likely to have children.
 - Catholic independent graduates are less likely to cohabit (live together while unmarried).
 - No school sector is more or less likely to be divorced than another, although the non-religious independents are more likely to be single than married.
 - Evangelical Protestants are less likely to eat meals together than graduates of other sectors, which may reflect work schedules, but more likely to pray and read the Bible as a family. (Higher religiosity for these measures is accounted for by family background in this sample.)
- Both independent Catholic and non-religious independent are more likely to attend

university and a graduate program; however, the evangelical Protestants are just as likely on both counts.

- When it comes to work, the non-religious independent and Catholic independent report much higher average incomes than the public or evangelical Protestant by between \$13,000 and \$16,000 CAD.
- All independent sectors report being more likely to pursue work that fulfills a religious calling.

Higher Education



Both independent Catholic and non-religious independent are *more likely* to attend university and a graduate program.



Evangelical Protestants are *just as likely* to attend university and a graduate program.

IN (X) WE TRUST?

TRUST IS THE BEDROCK of a shared life together. Without it we cannot live with one another for long. In terms of graduates' civic orientations, our survey seeks to find in what (or in whom) people trust. Overall, our findings indicate that religious school attendance doesn't reduce overall trust except trust in neighbours for evangelical Protestants, who, as we will see in a moment, are much more likely to believe the general society is hostile to their views; however, the non-religious independent schools have done a good job in cultivating a higher-than-average sense of civic trust.

- Evangelical Protestants are less likely to trust their neighbours and strangers; however, the non-religious independent and independent Catholic are more likely.
- When considering all trust measures, excepting for congregational trust, Protestant school graduates are no different than public schoolers, and Catholic and independent non-religious have higher degrees of trust.
- The non-religious independent graduates have a significantly higher likelihood of trusting co-workers, people of other languages, and people in their congregations. Other independent graduates are just as likely to trust these groups as the public school graduates, but more so when not accounting for their (more religious) family background.

Want to learn more?

Comment Magazine, Cardus's flagship journal, dedicated an entire issue to TRUST:

"This issue analyzes the social dynamics of trust from different angles and constructively considers how to reweave the web. Generating a diagnosis is important, so woven throughout this issue are multidisciplinary accounts that give us insight into the sources of our cynicism—from fake news to ubiquitous surveillance to the broken realities of racism."

READ IT, FREE, ONLINE: cardus.ca/comment/browse/print-issues/trust-reweaving-our-social-fabric



SOCIAL TIES

IF TRUST IS THE CONDITION in which civic, shared life is made possible, the development of social bonds is the visible manifestation of our views of others. Overall, the findings suggest that there is some indication of religious homophily (grouping together with those who are similar) and sequestration (detaching from the broader culture into a tightly knit subculture), but that is also balanced out by the fact that the religious school graduates have a diverse range of social ties as well. As we argued in 2016, it is hard for one to love their neighbour if they are not in any form of meaningful relation. Our survey of BC graduates reveals the following:

- Evangelical Protestant school graduates report a lower amount of close friends, but higher likelihood of interaction and confiding with their friends as well as a higher likelihood of helping a friend out financially or in other ways. (This finding corroborates their higher likelihood of overall giving—see below.)
 - On a similar note, the non-religious independent graduates are less likely to interact with friends often and less likely to have a friend to confide in or to help a friend financially or in other ways. These graduates seem to be more self-sufficient.
 - Our overall findings indicate that independent schoolers are not socially isolated, at least no more so than graduates from the public school sector.
 - Evangelical Protestant graduates are:
 - Just as likely to have a friend who owns a home, makes over \$100K a year,
- makes under \$25K a year, has a BA, is a co-worker, is gay or lesbian, is a recent immigrant, is of a different race.
 - More likely to have a friend who shares their religious beliefs, who goes to their congregation, whom they pray for.
 - Less likely to have a friend who is an atheist or has an advanced degree.
- Catholic independent graduates are:
 - Just as likely to have a friend who is a manual labourer or unemployed, makes over \$100K a year, makes under \$25K a year, is a co-worker, or is someone they pray for.
 - More likely to have friends with an advanced degree and who share their religious beliefs.
 - Less likely to have a friend who is an atheist, but only due to family. They are just as likely to have a friend who is gay or lesbian.
- Non-religious independent graduates are:
 - Just as likely to have a friend who is unemployed, is a manual labour, makes under \$25K a year, attends religious services, and shares their religious beliefs.
 - Less likely to have friends who are born again evangelicals or have different political opinions.

VOLUNTEERING AND GIVING

ONE OF THE TRUE MEASURES of a publicly minded graduate is in his or her desire and ability to give of their resources and time and skills in service to the common good. Our findings in British Columbia reveal that independent school graduates (especially non-religious independent school graduates) are very well-prepared to create an adult life marked by a capacity to give.

- In almost every category of volunteering laid out by Statistics Canada, the non-religious independent sector graduates are more likely to participate than their peers from public school. The evangelical Protestant and independent Catholic graduates are often just as likely to volunteer. This includes, but is not limited to, fundraising, door-to-door canvassing, mentoring, teaching, coaching, refereeing.
- In British Columbia, the overall trend for the independent Catholic graduates is to be less likely to volunteer in a host of areas (though they are no different in Statistics Canada volunteer activities) and to be less civically engaged while the non-religious independent graduates and, to a lesser extent, the evangelical Protestant graduates, are quite civically engaged.
- Evangelical Protestants, Catholic, and non-religious independent note a higher likelihood of volunteering because of religious conviction. (Evangelical Protestants are in fact 4.3 times more likely to volunteer for this reason, though the school effect generates about 2.2 times greater likelihood.) They are also more likely to volunteer within their congregations.

Volunteering among graduates from...

Door-to-Door Canvassing



Public Schools

Fundraising



Evangelical Protestant Schools

Sit on a Board or Committee

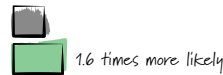


Non-Religious Independent Schools

Coach or Referee



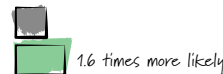
Provide Health Care and Support



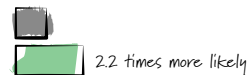
Maintenance and Repair to Buildings



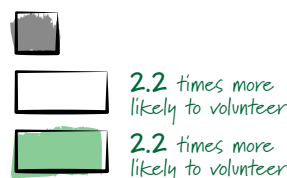
Volunteer Driving



First Aid, Fire, and Rescue



Total Volunteer Activities



- When it comes to giving, some of the intriguing findings reveal:
- Overall, the evangelical Protestants are the most likely to give of finances and

to a higher degree, although the non-religious independent graduates do so as well. Both of these sectors indicate a higher likelihood of giving for religious reasons.



Evangelical Protestant giving

4 times more likely to give in collection at church.



2.7 times more likely to donate to religious congregation.



Independent Catholic giving

1.8 times more likely to give in collection at church.



1.8 times more likely to donate to religious congregation.



Non-religious Independent giving

2 times more likely to give blood without pay.



2.2 times more likely to donate to political causes.



1.6 times more likely to donate to Red Cross or Salvation Army.



Overall, *Evangelical Protestant* and *Non-religious Independent* graduates are the most likely to give of finances.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND VIEWS

IT IS ONE THING TO GIVE and volunteer as ways of being publicly active. However, political involvement is perhaps the most explicit way to measure how involved graduates are in the shared life of their province.

- There is almost no sector effect when it comes to voting at the municipal, provincial, or federal level. The only noticeable variation is that non-religious independent graduates are about 1.6 times more likely to vote in the municipal elections.
- Evangelical Protestant graduates are over 2 times more likely to identify as conservative, but the overall identification with a political party is equal across school sectors after accounting for family background.
- Overall, we find that the non-religious independent graduates are more likely to be involved in a range of political activities while the Catholic independent and evangelical Protestant graduates are often just as or less likely.

Political Activity

Evangelical Protestant graduates are *70% less likely* to attend public meetings.

Catholic independent grads are *70% less likely* to participate in an anti-war demonstration.

Catholic independent grads are *60% less likely* to participate in the gay or lesbian movement.
Evangelical Protestant and **Non-religious independent** grads are *just as likely*.

Non-religious independent graduates are *60% more likely* to give to environmental causes.
Evangelical Protestant grads are *70% less likely*.



RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND ACTIVITY

IT IS NOT SIMPLY THE HOME that shapes our beliefs and religious behaviours such as devotions, prayer, and tithing; such things are also learned and cultivated in school. Our findings indicate that the evangelical Protestants are distinctly shaped in this regard while the non-religious independent and Catholic independent are quite similar to the public school graduates in terms of many beliefs. However, religious behaviours are distinct for the independent sector.

- Evangelical Protestant graduates are more likely to claim God is a person, to believe their spirituality gives them fulfillment and have spiritual peace, to strengthen their relationship with God, to experience deep communion with God, and to believe suffering happens for a reason.
- All independent sectors are more likely to feel obligated to pray and read Scriptures (especially the Catholic independent and evangelical Protestant graduates).
- All the independent sectors are also more likely to believe it is their obligation to

tithe 10 percent of their annual income to charitable causes.

- Both religious independent schools form graduates who are more likely to pray, but not to attend a service or confess sins.
- The evangelical Protestants eat fewer meals together as a family each week (about one day less per week from the public school average of five days per week). NB: Eating together is one marker of social resilience and stability.
- There is also no significant difference between public school graduates and all the independent sectors when it comes to the likelihood of praying, talking about God, or reading the Bible as a family. But note that without family-background controls, the results show that EP are doing these things a lot more regularly as a family. The habits of devotion, then, are not distinct among graduates as we find in other provinces like Ontario.

SURVEY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

FINALLY, HOW GRADUATES LOOK BACK on their experiences is important. With a little experience, one can look back and have a better sense of whether their school really prepared them for life beyond its walls. In British Columbia, the following is what we found with regard to how graduates assess their school sector:

- All independent school graduates are more likely to view their high school experience more favorably than that of public school graduates and believe that they received a good quality of education.
- Whether it was relationships with teachers, relationships with other students, how the school handled spiritual issues, or the overall quality of teachers, the independent sector reports a higher level of satisfaction overall.
- On a similar note, all independent sector graduates feel more strongly than public school graduates that they were prepared for relationships, post-secondary education, work, and religious life from their secondary school.



All independent school graduates are *more likely* to view their high school experience more favorably than that of public school graduates and believe that they received a *good quality of education*.

CONCLUSION

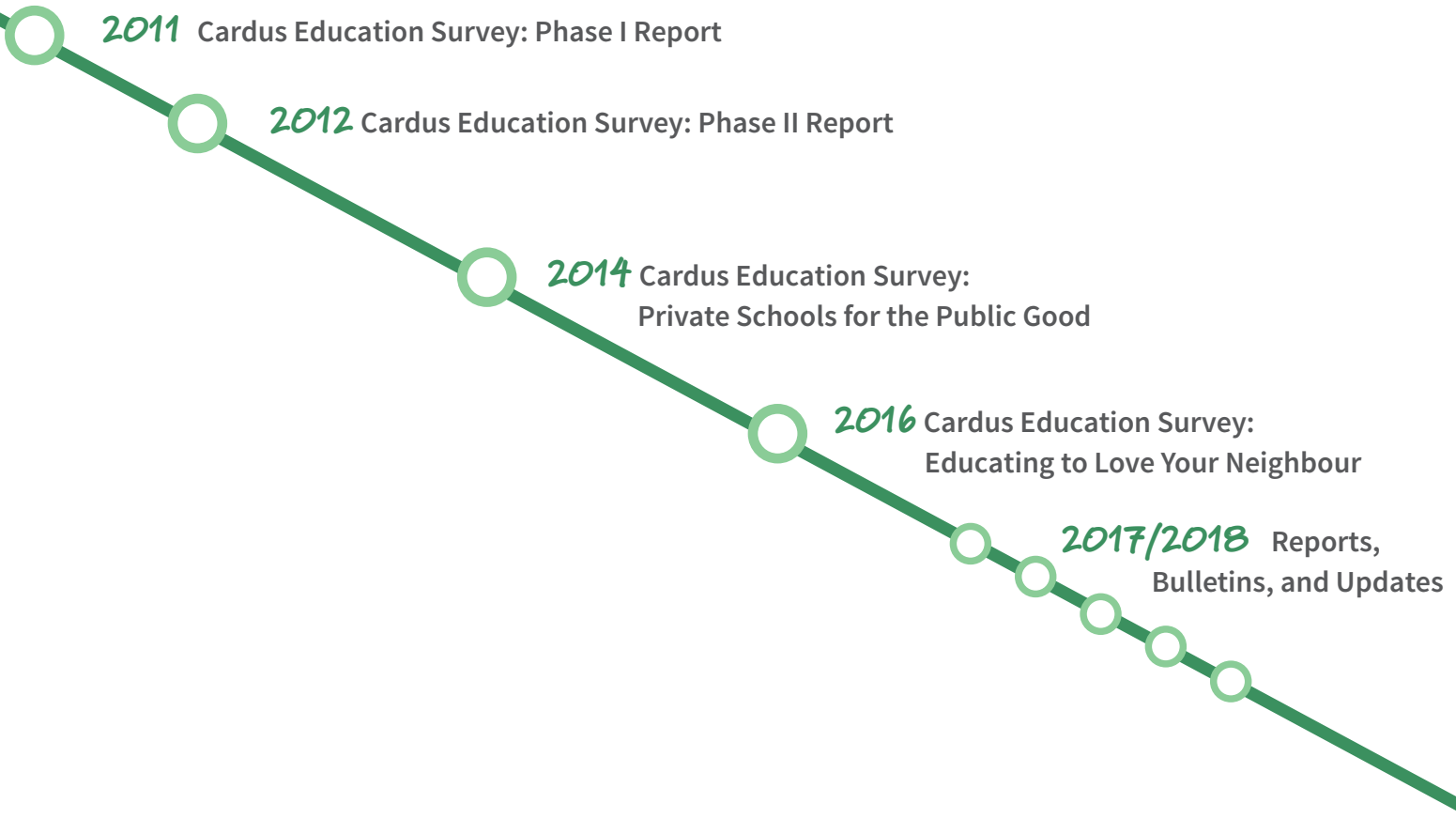
Our findings in British Columbia do not exactly correlate with the narrative told in our pan-Canadian studies, but they still exhibit that independent education is a public good. Graduates from such schools are just as likely (and often more likely) than their peers in the non-religious public sector to cultivate diverse social ties and be active and engaged members of their communities, committed to the well-being of their neighbours, and ready to give of both time and resources.

- Independent school graduates ***trust others*** to the same degree as public school graduates; however, the evangelical Protestants are less trusting of neighbours and are more likely to see the general culture as hostile to their views and beliefs.
- Independent school graduates ***have a socially diverse network***; however, there are indications that these graduates also have tight bonds with members who share their beliefs and religious institutions.
- In almost all Statistics Canada categories for volunteering, independent religious school graduates are ***more likely to give of their time and resources***.
- Independent school graduates are just as or more likely to ***get involved in a wide array of political activities***.
- Independent Catholic and non-religious independent are ***more likely to graduate from university*** than public school graduates, but graduates from the other sectors are just as likely.



Non-government school graduates cultivate diverse social ties, are *active and engaged* members of their communities, are *committed to the well-being* of their neighbours, and are *ready to give* of both time and resources.





All Cardus Education Survey reports and data packs are available for free download at

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Cardus Education exists to provide reliable, credible data for non-government types of education.

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