

A Diverse Landscape: Independent Schools in Canada

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Executive summary

This study is the first of its kind to offer a national survey of independent schools in Canada. It seeks to address the persistent myth that independent schools are of one dominant type serving a single sort of family. Contrary to the common caricature that they are enclaves for the urban elite, independent schools parents come in a wide variety of types and serve many educational preferences. They address diverse religious preferences, pedagogical variations, and special needs.

Using school-level data from each provincial ministry of education, this study builds a national picture of the variety of independent schools in Canada.

Although a recent study found that the share of students enrolled in independent schools in Canada is increasing while the share enrolled in government schools is in decline (Van Pelt et al., 2015), it did not examine enrolments in different types of independent schools.

In 2013/14, Canada's ten provinces were home to 1,935 independent schools. They enrolled 368,717 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, equivalent to 6.8 percent of total enrolments in independent and government schools in Canada's ten provinces. Their enrolment distribution roughly matched the population distribution across the country, as a third attended independent schools in Quebec (33.4 percent), almost a third in Ontario (31.4 percent), a fifth (20.4 percent) in British Columbia, and 7.6 percent in Alberta.

Although Canada is overwhelmingly an urban society (over 80 percent of the population lives in urban areas), 37.1 percent of all independent schools were located outside of large urban areas. 22.1 percent were in rural areas and 15 percent in small or medium-sized centres.

Almost half (48.6 percent) of independent schools in Canada had a religious orientation. Almost a third of all independent schools were Christian non-Catholic (30.1 percent), 8.4 percent were Catholic, 4.9 percent Islamic, and 4.5 percent Jewish. Together, religious independent schools enrolled 48.3 percent of all independent school students. Of these 178,119 students, 45.2 percent attended Christian non-Catholic schools, 31.6 percent independent Catholic schools, 10.8 percent Jewish schools, 9.1 Islamic schools, and 3.3 percent attended schools defined by other religions.

A total of 581 schools (30 percent of independent schools) were classified as specialty schools. These declared a special emphasis in the curriculum (e.g., arts, athletics, language, or science/technology/engineering/math), distinct approaches to teaching and learning (e.g., Montessori or Waldorf), or an emphasis on serving specific student populations (e.g., students with special needs or distributed learners). In 2013/14, specialty schools enrolled 27 percent of all independent school students in Canada (99,614 students).

Perhaps surprisingly, independent schools most evidently matching the stereotypical image of the traditional type of private school are considerably less common than might be anticipated. When membership in the Canadian Accredited Independent Schools was used as a proxy for such schools, they constituted only 90 independent schools (4.7 percent) and enrolled just 12.1 percent of all students attending independent schools in 2013/14.

In terms of grade-level variation, approximately two-fifths of all independent schools were elementary-only (44.3 percent), two-fifths (37.3 percent) secondary-only, and a fifth (18.4 percent) combined elementary and secondary grades.

In terms of variation in school size, while 65 percent of independent schools had fewer than 150 students, almost half of independent school students (47.2 percent) attended schools with over 500 students.

The funding status of independent schools varies across Canada, in accordance with whether the province offers partial government funding for independent schools (as is the case in five of the provinces). In all, at least 60.6 percent of independent schools in Canada receive no government funding. Considered another way, government funding is not received for at least 41.4 percent of all students enrolled in independent schools in Canada.

The evidence examined in this study leads to a clear finding. Rigid typecasting of independent schools is more myth than reality. In Canada, the lingering stereotypes are not reflective of the landscape. Independent schools are diverse in their religious orientations and their academic emphases. A disproportionate number are located outside of urban centres. They span a diversity of sizes and grade levels. Their funding statuses vary, even in the five provinces where the provincial governments offer some support.

In all, the parents of over 368,000 students—one of every fifteen students in Canada—are sending their children to one of the 1,935 independent, non-government schools in the country, and the picture is clear. They are choosing schools that differ in many ways from one another, the vast majority of which do not conform to the prevailing caricature that private schools in Canada are exclusive enclaves serving only the wealthy urban elite.

Executive summary table 1**Summary of distribution of independent schools and enrolments in Canada, 2013–14**

		Schools		Enrolment	
		Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
Total	<i>Canada</i>	1,935	100%	368,717	100%
Religious orientation (Catholic, Other Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Other)	<i>Affiliated with a religion</i>	940	48.6%	178,119	48.3%
	<i>Not affiliated with a religion</i>	995	51.4%	190,598	51.7%
Special emphasis (Montessori, Waldorf, Arts/ Sports/STEM, Distributed Learning, Special Education, Other)	<i>Specialty school</i>	581	30.0%	99,614	27.0%
	<i>Not a specialty school</i>	1,354	70.0%	269,103	73.0%
Location	<i>Rural, small and medium population area</i>	717	37.1%	88,923	24.1%
	<i>Large urban population centre</i>	1,218	62.9%	279,794	75.9%
Grade level	<i>Elementary only</i>	857	44.3%	104,014	28.2%
	<i>Secondary only</i>	357	18.4%	86,745	23.5%
	<i>Combined, elementary & secondary</i>	721	37.3%	177,958	48.3%
Government funding	<i>Does not receive funding</i>	1,172	60.6%	151,678	41.1%
	<i>Receives partial government funding</i>	738	38.1%	211,374	57.4%
School size	<i>Fewer than 50 students</i>	737	38.1%	17,068	4.6%
	<i>50–499</i>	1,007	52.0%	177,627	48.2%
	<i>500 or more students</i>	191	9.9%	174,022	47.2%

Introduction

Canada's independent schools have been attracting more students and increased attention in recent decades. Nine of ten provinces reported an increased share of students attending independent schools over the thirteen year period from 2000/01 to 2012/13, while the share of students attending public schools declined (Van Pelt, Clemens, Brown, and Palacios, 2015). More than 365,000 students were enrolled in independent schools in Canada in 2013/14.

Recent studies have explored aspects of this growth and variations in provincial policies toward independent schools (Allison, 2015; Bosetti and Gereluk, 2016; Clemens, Palacios, Loyer, and Fathers, 2013), but little is known about the schools themselves, about their distribution, composition, and variety. In particular, there is a perception that independent schools—commonly called private schools—are of one dominant type and that they exist mainly to serve the wealthy. This study addresses such stereotypes and related questions with specific reference to the distribution of independent schools and their enrolments by geographical location, grade level, school size, funding status, religious affiliation, and specialty types. The study is the first of its kind in Canada to survey the national independent school landscape in such detail.

Purpose and relevance

There are two major kinds of K–12 school in Canada—government schools and independent schools. Debate continues over whether non-government schools are best described by the terms private or independent. This is sometimes resolved by using some other term, such as “non-state” or “non-government,” or by blending terms as in “private-independent.” We retain the usage of “independent” school in this study, partly because it allows for the recognition of schools that are run more or less independently of government and associated agencies.

A case in point is provided by the variety of Catholic schools operating across Canada. In addition to the independent Catholic schools established in all provinces (except Prince Edward Island), fully government funded

and managed Roman Catholic separate schools have been a feature of the educational landscapes in Alberta, Ontario, and Saskatchewan since they became part of the Canadian confederation.¹ These constitutionally recognized denominational schools form an integral and substantial part of the government school systems in these provinces: almost a third (29.8 percent) of Ontario students attend Catholic separate schools, as do some 23.3 percent of Alberta students, and 21.9 percent of those in Saskatchewan (Van Pelt et al., 2015: Table 4). By their nature, the independent Catholic schools in these and other provinces are connected with the Catholic church, but in different ways, some being defined by specific religious orders, others evincing more independence. The Diocesan systems of independent schools in Manitoba and British Columbia offer particularly interesting examples of a midpoint between the greater dependence of the separate Catholic schools and the more autonomous forms of Catholic independent schools.

The essential differences between government and independent schools are rooted in ownership, governance, finance, and purpose (Bidwell and Dreeben, 2006). Government schools are state-owned, governed by elected or appointed public bodies, managed by the officials they appoint, established and administered according to public policies, and financed almost completely from government funds. Independent schools may be partially supported by government funds and will be subject to public policies and official regulations, but they rely more or less extensively on fees paid by parents, fundraising efforts, and philanthropic generosity. They are established and governed independently, usually by non-profit boards of governors accountable to parents and/or school supporters in response to the varying preferences that parents and communities have for the education of their children. Davies and Quirke (2005a, 2005b) have noted an increase in the proportion of for-profit, entrepreneurially managed independent schools in Toronto, but such schools remain few in number.

Independent schools are also almost always self-managed, relying on leadership and management internal to the school, rather than the echelons of specialists resident in public school board offices. Government schools are established and operated in order to provide access to programs of universal education. Independent schools are established and sustained to realize an educational purpose valued by founders and supporters which is generally not otherwise available to them. Although default thinking tends to view such schools as alternatives to what is available in the government school systems, that tells us only part of the story. Independent schools are first and foremost purposeful investments in defining sets of values (Bosetti, 2004; Bosetti and Gereluk, 2016; Davies and Quirke, 2005a, 2005b; Taylor, 2001; Van Pelt et al., 2007). Clarity on the different kinds of independent schools that exist

1. There are also two Protestant separate schools, one in Ontario and one in Saskatchewan.

and where they are located helps us understand the educational investments made voluntarily by Canadians, and the values they represent.

Thus it is important for Canadians to better understand the choices that parents are making so that those choices can be supported. Furthermore, it is vital that lingering stereotypes and common caricatures of independent schools be questioned for their accuracy. The broader implications address government stances toward educational diversity and choice: does public policy support a wide variety of different kinds of schools and, if so, how?

We cannot sensibly consider these key questions and their important implications for the economy and society in the absence of an informed appreciation of the different kinds of independent schools that exist and their relative numbers. This paper sets out to do this by describing the landscape of Canadian independent schools, and exploring their diversity on fundamental features and purpose—giving particular attention to how they are designed to serve religious and specialty educational purposes and needs not served by government schools. Included in the analysis is an examination of how independent schools vary in organizational characteristics—including grade level (elementary, secondary, combined), enrolment, and funding status—and how they are concentrated within and across major urban centres.

Provincial variation

While the vast majority of students in Canada attend a public school, the share of enrolments in independent schools varies markedly from province to province. As Van Pelt et al. (2015) found, in 2012/13 the province with the highest proportion of independent school enrolment was Quebec, at 12.6 percent of students. British Columbia and Manitoba had the next highest proportions of independent school students, with 11.6 percent and 7.6 percent respectively. Ontario followed with 5.6 per cent of students attending an independent school.

Five provinces offer some provincial funding toward the education of students in independent schools: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Quebec. Levels of support vary from province to province, as do the standards to be met to qualify for funding (Alberta Education, 2015: 34; British Columbia, 2016; Manitoba, 2012; Quebec 2015; Saskatchewan, 2015: 40; Saskatchewan, 2012a: 6; Saskatchewan, 2012b: 526, 715; Saskatchewan, 2012c: 52).

While comparative, by-province enrolments in independent and government schools in Canada have been reported previously, and as far back, for example, as Easton (1988), the independent school landscape has not previously been explored using disaggregated school level data.

Data sources and approach

Our approach to mapping the landscape of Canadian independent schools required us to first identify all independent schools and then classify each school by organizational characteristics, purpose, and other features. Schools were identified by requesting lists of independent schools for the 2013/14 academic year from the Education Ministries or Departments concerned.² Our requests also asked for grade-by-grade enrolment data, school postal codes, web addresses, and several other variables. The initial lists were reviewed to ensure schools had students enrolled within the K–12 range and were not publicly operated First Nations or other government-operated schools. The remaining 1,935 schools were accepted as officially designated independent schools operating in Canada during 2013/14. As described more fully in Appendix A, additional information was then sought by visiting individual school web sites and consulting publicly accessible membership lists of religious organizations and independent school associations. Almost 15 percent (14.7) of schools either did not have websites or the provided addresses were inaccessible. In those cases, appropriate information was sought through web searches.

2. Requests were made by email on or about January 22, 2016.

Variation in independent schools in Canada

Distribution of independent schools among the provinces

A total of 1,935 independent schools were recognized as operating in Canada's ten provinces in 2013/14. Together they enrolled 368,717 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. This is 6.8 percent of all students enrolled in independent schools and governments schools in the ten Canadian provinces in 2013/14.³

Fully half of Canada's independent schools (954, or 49.3 percent) were located in Ontario (**table 1**). With 340 independent schools, British Columbia was home to just under one in five of all Canada's independent schools (17.6 percent). Quebec had the third largest number of independent schools, a total of 285, representing one of every seven of Canada's independent schools (14.7 percent). Taken together, the four Atlantic provinces hosted just 59 independent schools, representing three percent of the national total.

When enrolments are considered, the relative positions change. Quebec, with 123,161 students, had more students attending an independent school than any other province, accounting for 33.4 of national independent school enrolments (table 1). Ontario followed with 31.7 percent of all independent school students, followed by British Columbia (20.4 percent) and then, in a more distant fourth position, Alberta (7.6 percent). Between them, these four provinces accounted for more than 93 percent of all independent school students in Canada in 2013/14. The two largest provinces of Ontario and Quebec enrolled almost two-thirds (65.1 percent) of all independent school students in Canada.

Considered together, the three Prairie Provinces—Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta—accounted for 15.3 percent of Canada's independent schools in 2013/14, and educated 12.9 percent of the country's independent school students. The three percent of Canada's independent schools located in the four Atlantic provinces enrolled only 1.6 percent of all

3. Total public school enrolments in 2013/14 were 5,034,378, according to data from Statistics Canada (2015b, 2015d).

independent school students in 2013/14. In all, the distribution of independent schools across the country is roughly in line with the distribution of the school-aged population (Statistics Canada, 2015c: A1).

Table 1

Distribution of independent schools and enrolments in Canada, 2013–14

	Schools		Enrolment	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	6	0.3%	957	0.3%
NS	31	1.6%	3,488	0.9%
PE	2	0.1%	209	0.1%
NB	20	1.0%	1,032	0.3%
QC	285	14.7%	123,161	33.4%
ON	954	49.3%	116824*	31.7%
MB	97	5.0%	15,260	4.1%
SK	55	2.8%	4,308	1.2%
AB	145	7.5%	28,076	7.6%
BC	340	17.6%	75,402	20.4%

* This value differs from the total of 117,154 supplied in the data file provided by the Ontario ministry as a result of adjustments made to the enrolments of individual schools to compensate for suppressed values in the original file. See technical notes for more details.

Distribution of independent schools by population centres and rural areas

Tables 2 and **3** present data on the distribution of independent schools by geographical location, and urban or rural settings. This is a relevant comparison given the popular stereotype that independent schools only service the urban elite.

Before considering the analysis, note that Canada is an overwhelmingly urban society with over 80 percent of the population living in urban areas (Statistics Canada, 2011 Census). To help provide a more meaningful distinction of urban (non-rural) areas we use Statistics Canada’s classification of small population centres (1,000–29,999), medium population centres (30,000–99,999), and large urban population centres (more than 100,000) (Statistics Canada, 2011).

22.1 percent of independent schools in Canada are located in rural areas, with another 15 percent in small or medium population centres. Put differently, 37.1 percent of all independent schools are located outside of large urban population centres. This is the overwhelming trend across the provinces with the exception of Quebec, which has 18.2 percent independent schools located outside of large urban populations centers.⁴

4. Additional analysis, by province, with respect to program levels, school size, and funding status can be found in Tables B1–B6 in Appendix B.

Table 2

Distribution of independent schools by population centres and rural areas, 2013–14

	Rural area		Small population centre		Medium population centre		Large urban population centre		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	1	16.7%	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	4	66.7%	6	100.0%
NS	10	32.3%	7	22.6%	1	3.2%	13	41.9%	31	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
NB	9	45.0%	3	15.0%	6	30.0%	2	10.0%	20	100.0%
QC	22	7.7%	12	4.2%	18	6.3%	233	81.8%	285	100.0%
ON	231	24.2%	57	6.0%	40	4.2%	626	65.6%	954	100.0%
MB	40	41.2%	11	11.3%	1	1.0%	45	46.4%	97	100.0%
SK	18	32.7%	11	20.0%	5	9.1%	21	38.2%	55	100.0%
AB	36	24.8%	19	13.1%	10	6.9%	80	55.2%	145	100.0%
BC	60	17.6%	53	15.6%	33	9.7%	194	57.1%	340	100.0%
Total	427	22.1%	174	9.0%	116	6.0%	1,218	62.9%	1,935	100.0%

Table 3

Distribution of enrolments in independent schools by population centres and rural areas, 2013–14

	Rural area		Small population centre		Medium population centre		Large urban population centre		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	134	14.0%	134	14.0%	0	0.0%	689	72.0%	957	100.0%
NS	413	11.8%	524	15.0%	45	1.3%	2,506	71.8%	3,488	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%
NB	162	15.7%	169	16.4%	562	54.5%	139	13.5%	1,032	100.0%
QC	7,222	5.9%	4,139	3.4%	11,146	9.0%	100,654	81.7%	123,161	100.0%
ON	18,353	15.7%	3,916	3.4%	2,953	2.5%	91,602	78.4%	116,824	100.0%
MB	1,642	10.8%	759	5.0%	139	0.9%	12,720	83.4%	15,260	100.0%
SK	1,187	27.6%	603	14.0%	432	10.0%	2,086	48.4%	4,308	100.0%
AB	5,056	18.0%	7,022	25.0%	1,660	5.9%	14,338	51.1%	28,076	100.0%
BC	5,773	7.7%	7,927	10.5%	6,642	8.8%	55,060	73.0%	75,402	100.0%
Total	39,942	10.8%	25,193	6.8%	23,788	6.5%	279,794	75.9%	368,717	100.0%

Distribution of independent schools by religious orientation

If independent schools existed mainly to serve wealthy parents, one would expect to find little evidence of schools designed and dedicated to serving other purposes. Yet when schools were classified for evidence of religious identity (and other special program emphases as discussed in the next section) a telling picture emerged. All 1,935 schools in our database were coded with evidence of religious identity and/or special program emphasis and membership in pertinent associations.⁵ (See Appendix A for discussion of methods used.)

The classification process considered whether or not a school had an evident religious orientation. Schools were classified as either Catholic, Other Christian, Islamic, Jewish, or Other. If insufficient evidence was discovered to assign a school to one of these categories it was coded as Not Religiously Affiliated.

Almost half (48.6 percent) of all independent schools operating in Canada in 2013/14 were coded as having a religious orientation (**table 4**). Together, these schools enrolled 48.3 percent of all independent school students (tables 4 and 5.) Just under a third of all independent schools in Canada were (non-Catholic) Christian and just less than one in ten were Catholic. One in twenty (4.9 percent) were Islamic and a similar proportion Jewish (4.5 percent). When considering enrolments (**table 5**), just under half of all independent school students attended schools that were religiously oriented (48.3 percent), one in five attended a non-Catholic Christian school (21.8 percent), 15.3 percent a Catholic school, 5.2 percent a Jewish school, and 4.4 percent an Islamic school. Less than two percent attended independent schools defined by other religions.

The presence and absence of Catholic separate schools contributes to provincial differences in the proportions of religious independent schools and students. The relatively high proportions of students attending religiously oriented independent schools in Manitoba and British Columbia are cases in point, the histories of both provinces suppressing the establishment of Catholic schools within their public systems.

5. Admissible evidence included statements of identity and purpose on school websites, inclusion on publicly accessible membership lists of accrediting and/or support organization(s), and distinctive information in a school's name or other source, such as a media report. We were informed by the typology of private schools developed and used by the National Center for Educational Statistics in the USA (Broughman and Swaim, 2013; McMillan and Benson, 1991). Although our categories do not duplicate those of the NCES they will allow for comparisons across and within major categories.

Table 4
Distribution of independent schools by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Catholic		Other Christian		Islamic		Jewish		Other	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	2	33.3%	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	1	3.2%	10	32.3%	1	3.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PE	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	2	10.0%	13	65.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	40	14.0%	10	3.5%	11	3.9%	33	11.6%	0	0.0%
ON	15	1.6%	325	34.1%	69	7.2%	44	4.6%	4	0.4%
MB	17	17.5%	40	41.2%	2	2.1%	2	2.1%	1	1.0%
SK	3	5.5%	30	54.5%	3	5.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AB	4	2.8%	58	40.0%	4	2.8%	3	2.1%	2	1.4%
BC	79	23.2%	94	27.6%	5	1.5%	6	1.8%	4	1.2%
Total	163	8.4%	583	30.1%	95	4.9%	88	4.5%	11	0.6%

	Total affiliated with a religion		Not affiliated with a religion		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	3	50.0%	3	50.0%	6	100.0%
NS	12	38.7%	19	61.3%	31	100.0%
PE	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
NB	15	75.0%	5	25.0%	20	100.0%
QC	94	33.0%	191	67.0%	285	100.0%
ON	457	47.9%	497	52.1%	954	100.0%
MB	62	63.9%	35	36.1%	97	100.0%
SK	36	65.5%	19	34.5%	55	100.0%
AB	71	49.0%	74	51.0%	145	100.0%
BC	188	55.3%	152	44.7%	340	100.0%
Total	940	48.6%	995	51.4%	1,935	100.0%

Table 5
Distribution of independent school enrolments by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Catholic		Other Christian		Islamic		Jewish		Other	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	472	49.3%	30	3.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	467	13.4%	542	15.5%	185	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PE	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	97	9.4%	579	56.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	24,612	20.0%	1,018	0.8%	2,265	1.8%	6,178	5.0%	0	0.0%
ON	3,496	3.0%	29,843	25.5%	10,023	8.6%	11,233	9.6%	1,211	1.0%
MB	5,022	32.9%	6,365	41.7%	250	1.6%	573	3.8%	72	0.5%
SK	501	11.6%	2,105	48.9%	516	12.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
AB	541	1.9%	13,553	48.3%	2,132	7.6%	327	1.2%	598	2.1%
BC	21,060	27.9%	26,229	34.8%	921	1.2%	842	1.1%	4,052	5.4%
Total	56,268	15.3%	80,473	21.8%	16,292	4.4%	19,153	5.2%	5,933	1.6%

	Total affiliated with a religion		Not affiliated with a religion		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	502	52.5%	455	47.5%	957	100.0%
NS	1,194	34.2%	2,294	65.8%	3,488	100.0%
PE	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%
NB	676	65.5%	356	34.5%	1,032	100.0%
QC	34,073	27.7%	89,088	72.3%	123,161	100.0%
ON	55,806	47.8%	61,018	52.2%	116,824	100.0%
MB	12,282	80.5%	2,978	19.5%	15,260	100.0%
SK	3,122	72.5%	1,186	27.5%	4,308	100.0%
AB	17,151	61.1%	10,925	38.9%	28,076	100.0%
BC	53,104	70.4%	22,298	29.6%	75,402	100.0%
Total	178,119	48.3%	190,598	51.7%	368,717	100.0%

Quebec stands out as having the most independent schools *without* a religious identity (67 percent) and the most students attending non-religious independent schools.⁶ With regard to students in provinces other than Quebec, anywhere from one-third to all of the independent school students in each province attended a religiously oriented independent school in 2013/14.

6. Still, we have concerns over the reliability of our coding of Catholic schools in Quebec, as discussed further in Appendix A. Many schools still bear names enshrining their long Catholic histories but, apart from their names and heritage, no direct evidence could be found to classify them as having an active religious orientation in their instructional or other official activities. This appears consistent with the secularization of education and society in Quebec in recent times. In the absence of other direct evidence these schools were consequently classified as Not Religiously Affiliated by default, but this may have underestimated the numbers of Catholic, and thus religiously oriented schools overall, in Quebec.

In Quebec, schools classified as religiously affiliated enrolled 27.7 percent of all independent school students, but this may underrepresent the true picture (see footnote 6). Overall, in six of ten provinces more than half of all independent school students attend a religiously oriented school and in two others more than a third attend religious schools. Student distributions are particularly striking in the West where, in each province except Alberta, the proportion of independent school students attending religious independent schools is more than double that of those attending non-religious schools.⁷

Consider, as well, just the independent schools that are religiously oriented (**table 6**.) Fully 940 Canadian independent schools operating in 2013/14 were classified as religiously oriented. They were attended by 178,119 students. Four out of five of these independent schools were Catholic or other Christian (79.3 percent), with 17.3 percent Catholic and 62 percent other Christian. About one in ten was Islamic (10.1 percent) and similarly about one in ten was Jewish (9.4 percent), with 1.2 percent coded as being affiliated with another religious orientation.

Table 6
Distribution of independent schools with religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Catholic		Other Christian		Islamic		Jewish		Other		Total
	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count
NL	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3
NS	1	8.3%	10	83.3%	1	8.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12
PE	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2
NB	2	13.3%	13	86.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	15
QC	40	42.6%	10	10.6%	11	11.7%	33	35.1%	0	0.0%	94
ON	15	3.3%	325	71.1%	69	15.1%	44	9.6%	4	0.9%	457
MB	17	27.4%	40	64.5%	2	3.2%	2	3.2%	1	1.6%	62
SK	3	8.3%	30	83.3%	3	8.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	36
AB	4	5.6%	58	81.7%	4	5.6%	3	4.2%	2	2.8%	71
BC	79	42.0%	94	50.0%	5	2.7%	6	3.2%	4	2.1%	188
Total	163	17.3%	583	62.0%	95	10.1%	88	9.4%	11	1.2%	940

In terms of enrolment, approximately a third of students attending religious independent schools attended schools identified as Catholic (31.6 percent), 45.2 percent attended Other Christian schools, 9.1 percent Islamic schools, 10.8 percent Jewish schools, and 3.3 percent schools defined by other religions (**table 7**).

Outside of the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Manitoba, and British Columbia had the highest attendance at independent Catholic schools, in conformity with the absence of fully-funded Catholic Separate schools, as discussed previously. In this respect, it should be noted that each of the provinces that do

7. This is at least partly explained by Alberta's provisions for religiously defined, alternative, fully funded public schools.

Table 7
Distribution of enrolments in independent schools with religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Catholic		Other Christian		Islamic		Jewish		Other		Total
	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count	Dist.	Count
NL	472	94.0%	30	6.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	502
NS	467	39.1%	542	45.4%	185	15.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1,194
PE	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	209
NB	97	14.3%	579	85.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	676
QC	24,612	72.2%	1,018	3.0%	2,265	6.6%	6,178	18.1%	0	0.0%	34,073
ON	3,496	6.3%	29,843	53.5%	10,023	18.0%	11,233	20.1%	1,211	2.2%	55,806
MB	5,022	40.9%	6,365	51.8%	250	2.0%	573	4.7%	72	0.6%	12,282
SK	501	16.0%	2,105	67.4%	516	16.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3,122
AB	541	3.2%	13,553	79.0%	2,132	12.4%	327	1.9%	598	3.5%	17,151
BC	21,060	39.7%	26,229	49.4%	921	1.7%	842	1.6%	4,052	7.6%	53,104
Total	56,268	31.6%	80,473	45.2%	16,292	9.1%	19,153	10.8%	5,933	3.3%	178,119

have government funded and managed separate schools also have independent Catholic schools, 15 in Ontario, four in Alberta, and three in Saskatchewan.

In all provinces other than Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec, half or more of the religiously oriented independent schools were classified as Other Christian. In the five westernmost provinces (Ontario to British Columbia), anywhere from half (49.4 percent in British Columbia) to 79 percent (in Alberta) of students who attended an independent religious school in 2013/14 attended a Christian school other than a Catholic school. The pattern in the Atlantic provinces is more varied, ranging from a single non-Catholic Christian independent school enrolling just six percent of the students attending religious independent schools in Newfoundland and Labrador, through 45.4 percent and 85.7 percent respectively of independent school students attending non-Catholic Christian schools in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, to Prince Edward Island, where all independent school students attend a non-Catholic Christian independent school.

Several additional points can be noted. First, the proportion of enrolments that are Catholic is higher than the proportion of schools that are Catholic, implying larger schools in this sector on the religiously oriented landscape. Second, variations in grade levels, school size, and urban/rural locations by religious and non-religious independent schools may also be of interest. Please see Appendix B, tables B7–B18 for religion and grade level, tables B19–B24 for religion and school size, and tables B25–B30 for religion and urbanicity.

In all, it is clear that the religiously oriented schools on the independent school landscape in Canada provide a wide diversity of educational opportunities that are not otherwise available in the government schools. They constitute about half of all independent schools in the country and about half of all enrolments in independent schools. They serve diverse communities within each major religious sector and this pattern is replicated in almost every province.

Distribution of independent schools by specialty emphasis

The diversity of purposes that independent schools address extends beyond factors such as religious orientation, and often into aspects of curriculum and/or pedagogy. Many schools exist to address specific curricular or teaching and learning emphases.

A total of 581 schools—three in ten independent schools—operating in Canada in 2013/14 were classified as schools declaring a special program emphasis. These special emphasis schools included Montessori schools, Waldorf schools, schools emphasizing Arts, Sports, or STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math), Special Education schools, Distributed Learning schools, and Other special emphases, including schools emphasizing specific languages and cultures (table 8). 18 schools were classified as emphasizing more than one of these specialties and categorized as Mixed

Table 8
Distribution of independent schools by specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori		Waldorf		Arts, Sports, or STEM		Distributed learning		Special education	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	1	3.2%	1	3.2%	2	6.5%	0	0.0%	4	12.9%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	5.0%
QC	8	2.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	25	8.8%
ON	129	13.5%	8	0.8%	13	1.4%	11	1.2%	45	4.7%
MB	5	5.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%
SK	4	7.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	10	18.2%
AB	4	2.8%	2	1.4%	5	3.4%	2	1.4%	18	12.4%
BC	28	8.2%	9	2.6%	1	0.3%	9	2.6%	15	4.4%
Total	179	9.3%	20	1.0%	21	1.1%	23	1.2%	119	6.1%

	Other special emphasis		Mixed specialty		Total specialty schools		Not a specialty school		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	100.0%	6	100.0%
NS	2	6.5%	0	0.0%	10	32.3%	21	67.7%	31	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
NB	1	5.0%	0	0.0%	2	10.0%	18	90.0%	20	100.0%
QC	93	32.6%	0	0.0%	126	44.2%	159	55.8%	285	100.0%
ON	93	9.7%	16	1.7%	315	33.0%	639	67.0%	954	100.0%
MB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	6.2%	91	93.8%	97	100.0%
SK	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	16	29.1%	39	70.9%	55	100.0%
AB	7	4.8%	0	0.0%	38	26.2%	107	73.8%	145	100.0%
BC	4	1.2%	2	0.6%	68	20.0%	272	80.0%	340	100.0%
Total	201	10.4%	18	0.9%	581	30.0%	1,354	70.0%	1,935	100.0%

Specialty. With almost 100,000 students attending these specialty schools, about one of every four independent school students in Canada (27 percent) attended such a school in 2013/14 (**table 9**).

The highest concentration of these special focus schools was in Quebec, where 44.2 percent of all independent schools were classified as special emphasis, the great majority declaring a focus on language and culture, including French and German language schools as well as the more numerous English language schools. Overall, 43.3 percent of independent school students in Quebec attended a school classified as providing as special emphasis program. Ontario had the second highest proportion of specialty schools overall, with a third (33 percent) of all independent schools in the province classified as a specialty school. A quarter of all independent school students in Ontario (25.6 percent) attended an independent school classified into one or more of the specialty categories.

Table 9
Distribution of independent school enrolments by specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori		Waldorf		Arts, Sports, or STEM		Distributed learning		Special education	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	45	1.3%	64	1.8%	182	5.2%	0	0.0%	249	7.1%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	0.7%
QC	868	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3,958	3.2%
ON	15,543	13.3%	1,040	0.9%	690	0.6%	1,108	0.9%	2,196	1.9%
MB	237	1.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	75	0.5%
SK	212	4.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	88	2.0%	320	7.4%
AB	356	1.3%	359	1.3%	426	1.5%	1,321	4.7%	2,240	8.0%
BC	1,621	2.1%	995	1.3%	68	0.1%	5,804	7.7%	855	1.1%
Total	18,882	5.1%	2,458	0.7%	1,366	0.4%	8,321	2.3%	9,900	2.7%

	Other special emphasis		Mixed specialty		Total specialty schools		Not a specialty school		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	957	100.0%	957	100.0%
NS	116	3.3%	0	0.0%	656	18.8%	2,832	81.2%	3,488	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	209	100.0%
NB	31	3.0%	0	0.0%	38	3.7%	994	96.3%	1,032	100.0%
QC	48,471	39.4%	0	0.0%	53,297	43.3%	69,864	56.7%	123,161	100.0%
ON	7,761	6.6%	377	0.3%	28,715	24.6%	88,109	75.4%	116,824	100.0%
MB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	312	2.0%	14,948	98.0%	15,260	100.0%
SK	41	1.0%	0	0.0%	661	15.3%	3,647	84.7%	4,308	100.0%
AB	719	2.6%	0	0.0%	5,421	19.3%	22,655	80.7%	28,076	100.0%
BC	882	1.2%	289	0.4%	10,514	13.9%	64,888	86.1%	75,402	100.0%
Total	58,021	15.7%	666	0.2%	99,614	27.0%	269,103	73.0%	368,717	100.0%

Overall, almost one tenth (9.3 percent) of all Canadian independent schools in 2013/14 were classified as Montessori schools, although only a third or so of these schools appeared to claim some form of independent accreditation. Ontario had by far the greatest share of Montessori schools (72 percent), enrolling 82 percent of all students attending Montessori schools in the country, and 54 percent of all students enrolled in specialty schools in the province. As would be expected, Montessori schools were concentrated at the elementary-only level, where they constituted 19 percent of all elementary-only independent schools in Canada.

Waldorf, Arts, Sports, STEM, and distributed learning schools were the least frequently occurring specialty schools, representing slightly more than one percent of independent schools nationwide. Distributed learning schools, also called e-learning schools, have a notably high profile in British Columbia, where they account for 7.7 percent of all independent school students in the province.

Special education schools accounted for 6.1 percent of Canadian independent schools and 2.7 percent of Canadian independent school enrolments in 2013/14. The largest proportional enrolments in special education independent schools in Canada were in Nova Scotia (7.1 percent), Saskatchewan (7.4 percent), and Alberta (8 percent).

Variations in grade levels, school size and urban/rural locations by specialty and non-specialty independent schools are also of interest. Please see Appendix B, tables B31–B36 for specialty type and grade level, tables B37–B42 for specialty type and school size, and tables B43–B48 for specialty type and urbanicity.

Fully 30 percent of independent schools in Canada are specialty schools, schools with a special emphasis that offer diversity on the school landscape that is not offered in the same way by government schools. More than a quarter (27 percent) of all independent school enrolments are in specialty schools. While four provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Manitoba) host proportionally fewer or no such schools, the rest of the provinces show 20 to 45 percent of their independent schools as being specialty schools. Thus the national distribution is mirrored in the majority of the provinces.

Traditional full-program independent schools

A prevailing perception of independent schools is the view that they are all traditional, elite, university-preparatory focused schools that often offer boarding school as well as day school options. We initially intended to include such schools within our specialty types, but decided not to report our findings at this time because of reliability concerns in the identification of these kinds of schools.

One reason is that many independent schools that represent themselves as university-preparatory schools on their websites appear to be primarily concerned with recruiting and providing accommodation for foreign students. There are grounds to anticipate that many of these schools are successful in preparing their graduates for entry into Canadian and American universities, especially as they often feature integrated English as a second language programs and personalized application counseling. Yet, while such schools qualify as university preparatory schools for special client groups, they do not comfortably equate with the longer-established, more traditional types of independent schools underlying the popular image of the “prep school.” Furthermore, there are also independent schools with high university placement rates that do not specifically or implicitly present themselves as being primarily concerned with preparing their graduates for university. These include well-established independent schools dedicated to preparing their graduates to live lives informed by the philosophical, religious, and academic values undergirding the school’s identity, as well as more newly established schools pursuing innovative programs. Many, even all, graduates of such schools may well enter university, with a high proportion gaining entry to their university of choice, but that cannot be taken as establishing the defining purpose of the school. In short, we concluded that the concept of university-prep schools was insufficiently clear to allow for reliable identification at this time, although we do intend to refine our approach with a view to considering this type of independent school in future reports.

Even so, independent schools that are likely to be viewed as matching the popular stereotype of the traditional preparatory school may be reasonably expected to exhibit more objectively rooted distinguishing features, including membership in organizations which embody one or more features of the popular image, such as the Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS) association, the US-based National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS), and the National Coalition of Girls’ Schools (NCGS). Thus, we undertook a closer examination of these schools.⁸

We are not attempting to equate CAIS membership with prep school status. To the contrary, CAIS schools are distinguished more by their distinctive, independent identities. Still, the names of many CAIS schools will likely be

8. Schools claiming membership in these organizations on their websites were coded as such and their membership checked against the directories maintained by these organizations on their websites. In total, 87 Canadian schools were listed on the CAIS site, 57 were listed as NAIS subscribers, 26 as TABS members, and 19 as NCGS members. We concentrate solely on CAIS members in this report because all Canadian members of TABS and NCGS were also members of CAIS, there was considerable overlap between NAIS and CAIS members, and NAIS does not accredit schools outside of the USA.

recognized by many Canadians as premier private schools. All CAIS members have satisfied the twelve national standards established by the association, and have committed to continual improvement (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools, 2016). As stated on the association’s website, “[p]arents of CAIS schools can expect the best.”⁹ How do these schools compare to other Canadian independent schools on the measures used in this study?

Table 10 shows the distribution of CAIS schools and enrolments across the country. In addition to the 87 member schools currently identified on the CAIS website, 3 additional schools that claimed membership on their school websites have been included.¹⁰

Table 10
Distribution of CAIS member schools and enrolments

	CAIS schools			CAIS enrolments		
	Count	Distribution	As % of independent schools	Count	Distribution	As % of independent school enrolment
NL	1	1.10%	16.70%	183	0.40%	19.10%
NS	4	4.40%	12.90%	1,490	3.30%	42.70%
NB	1	1.10%	5.00%	275	0.60%	26.60%
QC	17	18.90%	6.00%	6,066	13.60%	4.90%
ON	37	41.10%	3.90%	19,996	44.80%	17.10%
MB	3	3.30%	3.10%	1,754	3.90%	11.50%
SK	2	2.20%	3.60%	734	1.60%	17.00%
AB	7	7.80%	4.80%	3,418	7.70%	12.20%
BC	18	20.20%	5.30%	10,680	23.90%	14.20%
Total	90*	100.00%	4.70%	44,596	100.00%	12.10%

* Includes three schools claiming CAIS membership on their websites which were not listed in the CAIS directory.

Eighty percent of CAIS schools are located in the three provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, with almost half of the total in

9. <<https://www.cais.ca/about-cais>>

10. The 87 schools are as listed on the Association’s website as of May 2016. The additional three schools may have been listed during 2013/14. It is possible that some of the currently listed schools were not accredited members during 2013/14. Membership nonetheless appears relatively stable. Given that our main concern was to build a representative image of CAIS schools that could be compared to other Canadian independent schools, we decided to opt for inclusiveness rather than precision when identifying the CAIS schools considered.

Ontario. Still, at least one CAIS school is located in each province except Prince Edward Island. When the proportion of CAIS schools to all independent schools in a province is considered, the Atlantic provinces, with their smaller numbers of independent schools, have a higher ratio of CAIS schools. Nova Scotia's four CAIS schools are particularly noteworthy in this respect, accounting for some 13 percent of that province's independent schools and no less than 42.7 percent of independent school enrolments. Quebec's relatively high profile is maintained when total CAIS enrolments are considered, but drops to the lowest level of all provinces (4.8 percent) when considered as a proportion of total independent school enrolment in the province. Comparative proportions for Ontario and the Western provinces range from a low of 11.5 percent of independent school enrolments in Manitoba to 17 percent in Ontario and Saskatchewan.

Overall, CAIS schools comprised 4.7 percent of all Canadian independent schools and enrolled 12.1 percent of all Canadian independent school students in 2013/14.

Summary and conclusions

Summary

The 1,935 independent schools identified as operating in Canada in 2013/14 were distributed across the country. Together they enrolled 368,717 students, 6.8 percent of total independent and public school enrolments. Parents of more than one of every 15 enrolled students in Canada are choosing independent schools for their children.

Independent schools in Canada are organized around a diversity of religious orientations and specialty types. Almost a half (48.6 percent) of all independent schools in Canada have a religious orientation, and about a third (30 percent) have a special curriculum or pedagogical emphasis. Independent schools across Canada varied in urban/rural location, grade level distribution, and school size. This diversity was replicated in almost every province. Our findings point to something other than a confirmation that independent schools exist to serve the wealthy in pursuit of some sort of elite purposes for their children. Contrary to the typical stereotype of private schools, there is evidence that more than 95 percent of independent schools serve a wide diversity of religious or teaching and learning goals that parents in all provinces have for their children.

The distribution of enrolments in independent schools roughly matches the population distribution across the country. A third attended independent schools in Quebec (33.4 percent), almost as many in Ontario (31.4 percent). A fifth (20.4 percent) were in British Columbia, and 7.6 percent in Alberta.

Although Canada is overwhelmingly urban (over 80 percent of the population lives in urban areas), 37.1 percent of all independent schools were located outside of large urban areas. 22.1 percent were in rural areas and 15 percent in small or medium-sized centres.

Almost half (48.6 percent) of independent schools in Canada had a religious orientation. Almost a third (30.1 percent) of all independent schools were Christian non-Catholic, 8.4 percent were Catholic, 4.9 percent Islamic, and 4.5 percent Jewish. Together, religious independent schools enrolled 48.3 percent of all independent school students. Of these 178,119 students, 45.2 percent attended Christian non-Catholic schools, 31.6 percent independent

Catholic schools, 10.8 percent Jewish schools, 9.1 Islamic schools and 3.3 percent attended schools defined by other religions.

A total of 581 schools (30 percent of independent schools) were classified as specialty schools. These schools declared a special emphasis in the curriculum (e.g., arts, athletics, language, or science/technology/engineering/math), distinct approaches to teaching and learning (e.g., Montessori or Waldorf), or an emphasis on serving specific student populations (e.g., students with special needs or distributed learners). In 2013/14, specialty schools enrolled 27 percent of all independent school students in Canada (99,614 students).

Perhaps surprisingly, traditional full-program independent schools—the ones many observers might equate with a traditional image of private schools—accounted for only 90 schools in Canada (4.7 percent of independent schools). With 44,596 students, they enrolled 12.1 percent of all independent school students in 2013/14.

In terms of grade-level variation, about two-fifths were elementary-only (44.3 percent), two-fifths (37.3 percent) secondary-only, and about a fifth (18.4 percent) combined elementary and secondary schools

In terms of variation in school size, almost half (47.2 percent) of the students attended schools with over 500 students, and 65 percent of independent schools had fewer than 150 students.

Funding status of independent schools also varies across Canada, mostly, but not entirely, in accordance with whether the province offers partial government funding for independent schools (as is the case in five of the provinces). In all, at least 60.6 percent of independent schools in Canada receive no government funding. In terms of enrolments, at least 41.1 percent of all independent school students are enrolled in independent schools that receive no government funding.

Conclusions

Canadian independent schools are distributed across the country. They serve religious communities and curricular or teaching variations not addressed or offered by the public school systems. The variety they offer brings more choice to education than provided in government schools.

Independent schools in Canada vary greatly. They vary in size. They vary in location and can be found in both rural and urban areas, with far more than expected located outside of urban centres. The grade levels they span also vary, with a fifth of them spanning both elementary and secondary grades.

The split between religious and non-religious independent schools was close to equal and the proportion of specialty schools (30 percent of all independent schools) points to important roles independent schools play in

the educational landscape in Canada. Independent schools most evidently matching the stereotypical image of the traditional type of private school are considerably less common than might be anticipated. When membership in the Canadian Accredited Independent Schools was used as a proxy for such schools, they constituted less than 5 percent of independent schools.

These details and the other features of Canada's independent school landscape reported in this paper became available as a result of the pioneering collection, aggregation, and analysis of data undertaken. This approach will also provide opportunities for comparisons between the numbers, variety, and organizational characteristics of independent schools in Canada and the USA. More data are needed to develop comparisons between government and independent schools and track changes over time.

We anticipate continuing these lines of inquiry in future work which will explore additional features of Canadian independent schools, including the range of fees charged and indicators of performance and other organizational aspects. In the meantime, this study captures, in the first work of its kind, the distribution of schools and enrolments across the independent school landscape in Canada, and gives insight into some of the features and distinct characteristics of the schools. It is clear that significant numbers of Canadians make important, significant, voluntary investments in educational milieu and content for their children.

This snapshot reveals a landscape of diversity and undermines the assertion that independent schools are of one dominant sort that exist exclusively to serve enclaves of the elite. This paper prepares the way for more focused and detailed analysis and comparisons in the future.

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Appendix A: Methodology

Data sources, classification, and coding

Our goal was to identify all independent schools operating in Canada during the most recent academic year for which complete data were available, and classify each school by organizational characteristics, accreditation and memberships, identity, location, and funding status. After determining that Statistics Canada does not collect disaggregated independent school data (personal correspondence, 17 December, 2015), each provincial Ministry or Department of Education was asked to provide an electronic file of independent schools operating in the province during the 2013–14 academic year. The request asked for the name of each school, its official identification/registration number, grade by grade enrolment, total headcount enrolment, curriculum levels offered, school postal code, web addresses, and, if available, year of establishment or first operation, and any declared affiliations or memberships on record. The authors wish to express their sincere appreciation for the assistance provided by the officials fulfilling these requests.

The initial lists were reviewed to ensure schools had students enrolled within the K–12 range and were not publicly operated First Nations or other government-operated schools. The remaining 1,935 schools were accepted as officially designated independent schools operating in Canada during the 2013–14 academic year.

Please note that our reported enrolment for Ontario in table 1 differs from the total of 117,154 in the data file provided by the Ontario ministry, as a result of adjustments made to the enrolments of individual schools to compensate for suppressed values in the original file. As supplied, the original data file contained the entry “SP” in the total enrolment variable for 174 schools, thus suppressing the actual enrolments for 18 percent of all independent schools operating throughout 2013–14. For 81 of the schools with suppressed total enrolments, numerical values were given for some individual grades, but suppressed for others by use of the entry “<10”. The 93 remaining schools with suppressed total enrolments had one or more <10 entries in the grade-by-grade variables and no entries for the other grades.

As we were primarily interested in the characteristics of individual schools, especially total and grade-level enrolments, we applied a series of adjustments to substitute conservative estimates of actual values for the suppressed values, as follows:

- 1 For the 81 schools that had some grade-by-grade enrolment numbers, these values were summed and accepted as the total enrolments for those schools. This obviously under-estimates true enrolment by ignoring the actual values hidden behind the <10 entries, but was nonetheless considered preferable to assigning uninformed estimates for the suppressed grade-level data.
- 2 For the 30 schools with <10 in only one grade and missing data in all others, total enrolment was set as 5 on the grounds that the definition of a private school under the Ontario Education Act requires a minimum of 5 pupils. Once more this underestimates the true picture, as in reality some of these single grade schools would have had higher enrolments.
- 3 For schools with two <10 entries, total enrolment was set as 6. For schools with three <10 entries, total enrolment was set at 7. For schools with four <10 entries, total enrolment was set at 8. For schools with five or more <10 entries, total enrolment was set at 9.
- 4 In sum, a total of 51 schools with previously suppressed enrolments had their total enrolments set in the 6–9 range.

These adjustments provided total enrolment numbers for all schools, 18 percent of which were estimated using the conservative procedures described. In consequence, the grand total enrolment for all Ontario independent schools in the adjusted database (116,824) is 330 students fewer than the comparable sum supplied with the original data (117,154), which was presumably calculated using the undisclosed real values in place of the <10 entries. Overall the adjustments underestimate actual provincial enrolment by 0.28 percent. These adjustments can be anticipated to have only a small effect on the overall enrolment distribution of schools, which will be concentrated in schools with the smallest enrolments. There is an effect on calculated values. The mean enrolment for the 780 schools with valid entries in the original data was 137.3, but for the 954 schools in the adjusted data the mean is 122.5.

In effect, the adjustments made visible smaller schools that were previously invisible. And by providing enrolments for the 18 percent of Ontario independent schools for which they were missing in the original data set, the adjustments as described above must be seen as providing a more accurate image of Ontario's independent school landscape.

Five sets of additional variables were generated for each school.

- 1 Organizational characteristics.** (a) *School size*: total headcount enrolments provided by the provinces were accepted as a measure of school size. (b) *Size category*: Schools were classified according to the size categories used in the United States' National Center for Educational Statistics Private School Universe Survey (Broughman and Swaim, 2013). These are (i) less than 50 students, (ii) 50–149, (iii) 150–299, (iv) 300–499, (v) 500–749, or (vi) 750 or more. (c) *Level*: Program levels were determined with reference to the NCES classification rules but adapted for Canadian application. A school was classified as Elementary if it had enrolments in one or more of grades K–8 and no enrolments in grades higher than 8, as Secondary if it had enrolments in one or more of grades 9–12 and no grades lower than 9, and Combined if it had enrolments in one or more of grades K–8 and enrolments in one or more of grades 9–12.
- 2 Affiliations and memberships.** Websites of organizations accrediting and/or representing and providing support and services to Canadian independent schools were reviewed to identify individual schools with memberships in these associations. Organizations consulted included Canadian Accredited Independent Schools, National Association of Independent Schools (US but extends membership to 23 affiliated schools in Canada), Conference of Independent Schools of Ontario, La Fédération des établissements d'enseignement privés, Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators, and others. Membership directories of organizations providing support to religious schools were also reviewed. These included the Association of Christian Schools International, League of Canadian Reformed School Societies, the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, Canadian Catholic School Trustees Association, and others. The websites of the International Baccalaureate and the College Board were also consulted to identify and code Canadian independent schools recognized as IB World Schools and those offering Advance Placement courses.
- 3 Identity.** Information concerning the goals and purpose of each school was collected from their websites, from any descriptions provided by the organizations of which they were members, and from other reports and descriptions located through web searches. A total of 1,651 (85.3 percent) of the schools had valid websites. Most of the pertinent information was collected from the sections of these sites entitled “About,” “Mission,” “History,” or similar. This information was used to classify schools by religious affiliation and special program emphasis as follows:
 - (a) *Religious affiliation.* Each school was classified as either Non-Religious or as Catholic, Other Christian, Islamic, Jewish, or Other religion.

Religious identity was usually a self-evident aspect of a school's website but whenever possible religious affiliation was cross-checked with membership in an appropriate religious membership or support organization as noted above, or through other sources of information located on the internet. In the absence of acceptable information clearly identifying a religious affiliation, schools were coded as non-religious.

(b) *Special emphasis*. Schools were classified as belonging to one or more of the following specialty types: Montessori, Waldorf, Arts/Sports/STEM,¹⁰ Distributed learning, Special education, Other special emphasis, or Mixed emphasis; or they were designated as belonging to none of these specialty types. Again, special emphases were readily evident from schools' websites, but care was again taken to cross-check against other sources of information when possible. In the absence of clear identifying information, schools were not assigned to one of the identified specialty types, and were coded as a school which was not a designated specialty school.

The 284 (14.7 percent) schools that did not have a valid websites were classified using other sources of information. Almost three quarters (73.1 percent) of the schools lacking a valid website were eventually classified as having a religious affiliation, almost two thirds (65.1 percent) of the total being classified as other Christian partially or wholly on the basis of a distinctive word in the school's name. No fewer than 59 school names, for instance, contained the word "Christian." The most frequently occurring indicator found in school names was "Parochial." This term occasionally occurred in school names also containing "Amish" or "Mennonite," but in 65 instances it occurred in conjunction with just a place name, as in "Lone Pine Parochial School" (fictitious example). References to some of these schools were found in various web-based histories of Anabaptist settlements (e.g., <http://www.mennoniteheritageportrait.ca>), confirming that this usage of "Parochial" could reasonably be accepted as referring to Amish and Mennonite colony schools. Schools with names conforming to the structure of Lone Pine Parochial School were subsequently coded as other Christian.

Fifteen (2.6 percent) of the schools that did not have a valid website were classified as special program emphasis schools, either on the basis of distinctive terms in their names or as a result of other information located via web searches. Five names, for instance, contained the word "Montessori."

We do not claim perfect accuracy for either the religious affiliation or specialty type classifications but are confident they do not distort or misrepresent the general situation. Wherever possible, classifications were based on multiple sources of information, including membership in representative and accreditation organizations collected as described under heading #2 above. Moreover, schools were not classified as having either a religious affiliation

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or a special program emphasis in the absence of positive information to that effect. By adopting this default condition, errors in our classifications can be expected to have the effect of underestimating numbers of religious and specialty independent schools.

We acknowledge, nonetheless, that this default approach may have led us to underestimate the numbers of Catholic independent schools active in Quebec. Many independent schools in Quebec were originally established by religious orders but have since become secular, while retaining their original names and some traditions. It was often difficult to ascertain whether such schools should properly be classified as Catholic or non-religious schools. Schools were classified as Catholic when there was evidence of a Catholic component to the curriculum and in the life of the school, but the default non-religious status was retained in the absence of information to this effect on the school's website or in independent sources.

- 4 Location.** Statistics Canada's (2014) Postal Code Conversion File Plus (PCCF+) was used to assign schools to standard geographic areas used in the 2011 census. This study draws on locations of schools within Census Metropolitan Areas and in Statistics Canada's (2011) typology of population centres which recognizes (i) rural areas, (ii) small population centres (population between 1,000 and 29,999), (iii) medium population centres (population between 30,000 and 99,999), and (iv) large urban population centre (population 100,000 or more).
- 5 Funding.** Government funding levels are reported in terms of per-pupil funding received by independent schools expressed as a percentage of per-pupil operational funding in the public system. Data for this measure were derived from the funding categories for schools and related information provided on ministry websites, or through ministry sources. Schools were categorized into one of the following eight funding categories: (i) 0%; (ii) 35%; (iii) 50%; (iv) 60%; (v) 70%; (vi) 80%; (vii) Other; and (viii) Unknown. The category "Other" primarily consists of some special education schools in Nova Scotia, and Distributed Learning and First Nations schools in BC. The "Unknown" category includes schools for which we were unable to obtain clear information.

Appendix B: Detailed tables

Program levels

Program levels were determined with reference to the NCES classification rules but adapted for Canadian application. A school was classified as Elementary if it had enrolments in one or more of grades K–8 and no enrolments in grades higher than 8, as Secondary if it had enrolments in one or more of grades 9–12 and no grades lower than 9, and Combined if it had enrolments in one or more of grades K–8 and enrolments in one or more of grades 9–12.

As shown in [table B1](#), a little more than two of every five (44.3 percent) Canadian independent schools operating in 2013/14 were classified as elementary schools. Almost one in five (18.4 percent) Canadian independent schools was classified as a secondary school, and almost two of every five (37.3 percent) Canadian independent schools span elementary and secondary grades. Interestingly, fully 55.7 percent of all Canadian independent schools include secondary grades. A total of 81.6 percent of independent schools included elementary grades. Overall, the division between elementary and secondary levels appears less pronounced than might be expected for government schools.

Table B1
Distribution of independent schools by program level, 2013–14

	Elementary		Secondary		Combined		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	5	83.3%	6	100.0%
NS	5	16.1%	1	3.2%	25	80.6%	31	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
NB	5	25.0%	0	0.0%	15	75.0%	20	100.0%
QC	111	38.9%	114	40.0%	60	21.1%	285	100.0%
ON	511	53.6%	193	20.2%	250	26.2%	954	100.0%
MB	32	33.0%	5	5.2%	60	61.9%	97	100.0%
SK	10	18.2%	7	12.7%	38	69.1%	55	100.0%
AB	25	17.2%	19	13.1%	101	69.7%	145	100.0%
BC	158	46.5%	17	5.0%	165	48.5%	340	100.0%
Total	857	44.3%	357	18.4%	721	37.3%	1935	100.0%

This is magnified by student enrolment patterns as shown in [table B2](#). Almost half (48.3 percent) of students enrolled in independent schools in 2013/14 attended a school that featured some combination of both elementary and secondary grades. Although they may not be in high school themselves, almost three-quarters (71.8 percent) of all independent school students in Canada attended a school that included secondary grades. Similarly, although they may not necessarily be in an elementary grade, just over three-quarters (76.5 percent) of all Canadian independent school students attended a school that included elementary grades. Thus a notable proportion of Canadian independent school students are educated in a broader school community which includes higher and lower grade levels, and thus older and younger students.

Table B2

Distribution of enrolments in independent schools by program level, 2013–14

	Elementary		Secondary		Combined		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	138	14.4%	819	85.6%	957	100.0%
NS	232	6.7%	41	1.2%	3,215	92.2%	3,488	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	209	100.0%
NB	166	16.1%	0	0.0%	866	83.9%	1,032	100.0%
QC	25,879	21.0%	66,591	54.1%	30,691	24.9%	123,161	100.0%
ON	48,848	41.8%	14,314	12.3%	53,662	45.9%	116,824	100.0%
MB	4,107	26.9%	1,432	9.4%	9,721	63.7%	15,260	100.0%
SK	373	8.7%	1,091	25.3%	2,844	66.0%	4,308	100.0%
AB	2,399	8.5%	1,110	4.0%	24,567	87.5%	28,076	100.0%
BC	22,010	29.2%	2,028	2.7%	51,364	68.1%	75,402	100.0%
Total	104,014	28.2%	86,745	23.5%	177,958	48.3%	368,717	100.0%

School size

While comparisons of school size between the government and independent sector are beyond the scope of this study, it is important to highlight the great diversity in school size within the independent school sector. As **table B3** shows, the majority of independent schools (65 percent) had fewer than 150 students. In addition, over 90 percent of Canadian independent schools had fewer than 500 students. This is common across the country with the exception of Quebec, which tended to have schools more evenly distributed among the various school sizes.

Table B3
Distribution of independent schools by school size categories, 2013–14

	Less than 50		50–149		150–299		300–499		500–749	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	1	16.7%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%	1	16.7%	0	0.0%
NS	12	38.7%	11	35.5%	6	19.4%	1	3.2%	1	3.2%
PE	0	0.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	14	70.0%	5	25.0%	1	5.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	24	8.4%	60	21.1%	69	24.2%	46	16.1%	31	10.9%
ON	470	49.3%	274	28.7%	119	12.5%	43	4.5%	25	2.6%
MB	41	42.3%	21	21.6%	20	20.6%	4	4.1%	9	9.3%
SK	38	69.1%	8	14.5%	5	9.1%	4	7.3%	0	0.0%
AB	50	34.5%	40	27.6%	32	22.1%	12	8.3%	3	2.1%
BC	87	25.6%	98	28.8%	86	25.3%	35	10.3%	16	4.7%
Total	737	38.1%	522	27.0%	339	17.5%	146	7.5%	85	4.4%

	750 or more		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
NS	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
NB	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
QC	55	19.3%	285	100.0%
ON	23	2.4%	954	100.0%
MB	2	2.1%	97	100.0%
SK	0	0.0%	55	100.0%
AB	8	5.5%	145	100.0%
BC	18	5.3%	340	100.0%
Total	106	5.5%	1,935	100.0%

When enrolment patterns are considered, the distributions are slightly different, but nonetheless, variety in enrolments in schools of different sizes exist. As can be seen in **table B4**, over half (52.8 percent) of all independent school students attended a school with fewer than 500 students in 2013/14. This is again consistent across the country save for Quebec in which two-thirds of all independent school students attended schools with more than 500 students (67.8 percent).

Table B4

Distribution of enrolment in independent schools by school size categories, 2013–14

	Less than 50		50–149		150–299		300–499		500–749	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	30	3.1%	406	42.4%	183	19.1%	338	35.3%	0	0.0%
NS	275	7.9%	932	26.7%	1,308	37.5%	467	13.4%	506	14.5%
PE	0	0.0%	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	278	26.9%	479	46.4%	275	26.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	590	0.5%	5,781	4.7%	15,218	12.4%	18,044	14.7%	18,708	15.2%
ON	10,557	9.0%	24,746	21.2%	24,849	21.3%	16,793	14.4%	15,511	13.3%
MB	917	6.0%	1,740	11.4%	4,382	28.7%	1,377	9.0%	5,158	33.8%
SK	910	21.1%	764	17.7%	1,162	27.0%	1,472	34.2%	0	0.0%
AB	1,102	3.9%	3,636	13.0%	7,004	24.9%	4,484	16.0%	1,844	6.6%
BC	2,409	3.2%	9,505	12.6%	18,370	24.4%	13,703	18.2%	9,521	12.6%
Total	17,068	4.6%	48,198	13.1%	72,751	19.7%	56,678	15.4%	51,248	13.9%

	750 or more		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	957	100.0%
NS	0	0.0%	3,488	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	209	100.0%
NB	0	0.0%	1,032	100.0%
QC	64,820	52.6%	123,161	100.0%
ON	24,368	20.9%	116,824	100.0%
MB	1,686	11.0%	15,260	100.0%
SK	0	0.0%	4,308	100.0%
AB	10,006	35.6%	28,076	100.0%
BC	21,894	29.0%	75,402	100.0%
Total	122,774	33.3%	368,717	100.0%

Funding status

Five provinces in Canada make provision for funding qualifying independent schools. These are Quebec and the four western provinces: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. There are several funding anomalies in the other five provinces, such as Nova Scotia's special arrangement with several independent schools to serve special needs students, but in general independent schools in all Atlantic provinces and Ontario are not eligible for government funding.

Funding percentages vary across the five funding provinces. None offer funding toward the purchase or construction of capital assets. Funding is generally calculated as a percentage of the amount given to the local school district for the operational (recurrent) expenses of educating a student. Funding is generally paid directly to the independent school on a per-student basis. British Columbia has two main funded categories, 35 percent and 50 percent, although group 1 distance learning schools qualify for 63 percent support (of the per-pupil operational amount awarded to local government schools). Alberta has two main funding categories—60 percent and 70 percent. Primarily because of historical reasons, Saskatchewan has the greatest range of categories extending from the most common level of 50 percent, through 70 percent, and 80 percent for associate schools, where the funds are funneled through partner public boards. Manitoba funds its eligible independent schools at 50 percent of the per-pupil operational amount awarded to the local government schools. In all five provinces, independent schools raise additional finances through fundraising, philanthropy, and tuition fees (Alberta Education, 2015: 34; British Columbia, 2016; Manitoba, 2012; Quebec, 2015; Saskatchewan, 2015: 40; Saskatchewan, 2012a: 6; Saskatchewan, 2012b: 526, 715; Saskatchewan, 2012c: 52).

In the five provinces that offer financial support to their independent schools, more than three-fifths of the independent schools take advantage of the funding opportunity (Quebec, 77.9 percent; Manitoba, 60.8 percent; Saskatchewan, 72.7 percent; Alberta, at least 78.6 percent; British Columbia, at least 87.9 percent).¹¹ Higher proportions of students benefit from government funding, with 79.4 percent of Quebec students attending independent schools that receive government funds, and more than 90 percent of the students attending independent schools in the four western provinces benefiting from government funding (91.3 percent in Manitoba, 91.6 in Saskatchewan, at least 92.1 percent in British Columbia, and 92.7 percent in Alberta).

11. In the case of Alberta, the response to our request had still not been received at the time of publication. Funding categorization was then assigned based on the best information available to us.

This directs attention to the dominant categories in **tables B5** and **B6**, those identifying independent schools receiving no government funding. Note that 163 of the independent schools receiving no government funding were located in provinces which do offer financial support to non-government schools. Proportionally, 17.7 percent of independent schools in the five provinces that offer funding chose not to seek or accept even the minimal level of financial support available. These schools accounted for 12 percent of independent school enrolments in those provinces in 2013/14. The most notable instance is Quebec, where no less than 22.1 percent of the schools enrolling 20.6 percent of independent school students were identified as unfunded.

Table B5**Distribution of independent schools by level of government funding, 2013–14**

	Not funded		35%		50%		60%		70%	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	6	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	27	87.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PE	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	63	22.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	222	77.9%	0	0.0%
ON	954	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
MB	38	39.2%	0	0.0%	59	60.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
SK	15	27.3%	0	0.0%	19	34.5%	0	0.0%	4	7.3%
AB	18	12.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	109	75.2%
BC	29	8.5%	41	12.1%	223	65.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	1172	60.6%	41	2.1%	301	15.6%	222	11.5%	113	5.8%

	80%		Other		Unknown		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	100.0%
NS	0	0.0%	4	12.9%	0	0.0%	31	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
NB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
QC	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	285	100.0%
ON	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	954	100.0%
MB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	97	100.0%
SK	10	18.2%	7	12.7%	0	0.0%	55	100.0%
AB	0	0.0%	5	3.4%	13	9.0%	145	100.0%
BC	0	0.0%	36	10.6%	11	3.2%	340	100.0%
Total	10	0.5%	52	2.7%	24	1.2%	1,935	100.0%

Table B6**Distribution of independent school enrolments by level of government funding, 2013–14**

	Not funded		35%		50%		60%		70%	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	957	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NS	3,239	92.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
PE	209	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
NB	1,032	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
QC	25,393	20.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	97,768	79.4%	0	0.0%
ON	116,824	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
MB	1,334	8.7%	0	0.0%	13,926	91.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
SK	362	8.4%	0	0.0%	717	16.6%	0	0.0%	871	20.2%
AB	590	2.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18,966	67.6%
BC	1,738	2.3%	12,879	17.1%	48,185	63.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	151,678	41.1%	12,879	3.5%	62,828	17.0%	97,768	26.5%	19,837	5.4%

	80%		Other		Unknown		Total	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
NL	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	957	100.0%
NS	0	0.0%	249	7.1%	0	0.0%	3,488	100.0%
PE	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	209	100.0%
NB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1,032	100.0%
QC	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	123,161	100.0%
ON	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	116,824	100.0%
MB	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	15,260	100.0%
SK	2,121	49.2%	237	5.5%	0	0.0%	4,308	100.0%
AB	0	0.0%	7,049	25.1%	1,471	5.2%	28,076	100.0%
BC	0	0.0%	8,439	11.2%	4,161	5.5%	75,402	100.0%
Total	2,121	0.6%	15,974	4.3%	5,632	1.5%	368,717	100.0%

Religion and grade level

Elementary level and schools with combined elementary and secondary levels were rather evenly distributed between schools with religious orientation and those without. When the variation in secondary-only schools was examined, the great majority (76.5 percent) had no religious orientation. See [tables B7 to B18](#) for more details, including provincial variations.

Table B7

Number of independent schools by grade level and religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	453	404	857
Secondary	85	272	357
Combined	402	319	721
Total	940	995	1,935

Table B8

Distribution of independent schools of different grade levels by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	52.9%	47.1%	100.0%
Secondary	23.8%	76.2%	100.0%
Combined	55.8%	44.2%	100.0%
Total	48.6%	51.4%	100.0%

Table B9

Distribution of religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by grade levels, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	48.2%	40.6%	44.3%
Secondary	9.0%	27.3%	18.4%
Combined	42.8%	32.1%	37.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B10**Enrolment in independent schools by grade level and religious affiliation, 2013–14**

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	58,268	45,746	104,014
Secondary	27,182	59,563	86,745
Combined	92,669	85,289	177,958
Total	178,119	190,598	368,717

Table B11**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different grade levels by religious affiliation, 2013–14**

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	56.0%	44.0%	100.0%
Secondary	31.3%	68.7%	100.0%
Combined	52.1%	47.9%	100.0%
Total	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%

Table B12**Distribution of enrolment in religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by grade level, 2013–14**

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Elementary	32.7%	24.0%	28.2%
Secondary	15.3%	31.3%	23.5%
Combined	52.0%	44.7%	48.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B13
Number of independent schools by grade level and religious affiliation,
by province, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	3	3	6
<i>Secondary</i>		1	1
<i>Combined</i>	3	2	5
NS	12	19	31
<i>Elementary</i>	1	4	5
<i>Secondary</i>		1	1
<i>Combined</i>	11	14	25
PE	2		2
<i>Combined</i>	2		2
NB	15	5	20
<i>Elementary</i>	3	2	5
<i>Combined</i>	12	3	15
QC	94	191	285
<i>Elementary</i>	34	77	111
<i>Secondary</i>	34	80	114
<i>Combined</i>	26	34	60
ON	457	497	954
<i>Elementary</i>	290	221	511
<i>Secondary</i>	42	151	193
<i>Combined</i>	125	125	250
MB	62	35	97
<i>Elementary</i>	22	10	32
<i>Secondary</i>	2	3	5
<i>Combined</i>	38	22	60
SK	36	19	55
<i>Elementary</i>	4	6	10
<i>Secondary</i>	3	4	7
<i>Combined</i>	29	9	38
AB	71	74	145
<i>Elementary</i>	8	17	25
<i>Secondary</i>	3	16	19
<i>Combined</i>	60	41	101
BC	188	152	340
<i>Elementary</i>	91	67	158
<i>Secondary</i>	1	16	17
<i>Combined</i>	96	69	165
Total	940	995	1,935

Table B14
Distribution of independent schools of different grade levels
by religious affiliation, by province, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
NS	38.7%	61.3%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	44.0%	56.0%	100.0%
PE	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
NB	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
QC	33.0%	67.0%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	30.6%	69.4%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	29.8%	70.2%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	43.3%	56.7%	100.0%
ON	47.9%	52.1%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	56.8%	43.2%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	21.8%	78.2%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
MB	63.9%	36.1%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	68.8%	31.3%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	63.3%	36.7%	100.0%
SK	65.5%	34.5%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	76.3%	23.7%	100.0%
AB	49.0%	51.0%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	15.8%	84.2%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	59.4%	40.6%	100.0%
BC	55.3%	44.7%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	57.6%	42.4%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	5.9%	94.1%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	58.2%	41.8%	100.0%
Total	48.6%	51.4%	100.0%

Table B15**Distribution of religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by grade levels, by province, 2013–14**

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	33.3%	16.7%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%	66.7%	83.3%
NS	1.3%	1.9%	1.6%
<i>Elementary</i>	8.3%	21.1%	16.1%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	5.3%	3.2%
<i>Combined</i>	91.7%	73.7%	80.6%
PE	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%		100.0%
NB	1.6%	0.5%	1.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	20.0%	40.0%	25.0%
<i>Combined</i>	80.0%	60.0%	75.0%
QC	10.0%	19.2%	14.7%
<i>Elementary</i>	36.2%	40.3%	38.9%
<i>Secondary</i>	36.2%	41.9%	40.0%
<i>Combined</i>	27.7%	17.8%	21.1%
ON	48.6%	49.9%	49.3%
<i>Elementary</i>	63.5%	44.5%	53.6%
<i>Secondary</i>	9.2%	30.4%	20.2%
<i>Combined</i>	27.4%	25.2%	26.2%
MB	6.6%	3.5%	5.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	35.5%	28.6%	33.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	3.2%	8.6%	5.2%
<i>Combined</i>	61.3%	62.9%	61.9%
SK	3.8%	1.9%	2.8%
<i>Elementary</i>	11.1%	31.6%	18.2%
<i>Secondary</i>	8.3%	21.1%	12.7%
<i>Combined</i>	80.6%	47.4%	69.1%
AB	7.6%	7.4%	7.5%
<i>Elementary</i>	11.3%	23.0%	17.2%
<i>Secondary</i>	4.2%	21.6%	13.1%
<i>Combined</i>	84.5%	55.4%	69.7%
BC	20.0%	15.3%	17.6%
<i>Elementary</i>	48.4%	44.1%	46.5%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.5%	10.5%	5.0%
<i>Combined</i>	51.1%	45.4%	48.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B16
Enrolment in independent schools by grade level and religious affiliation,
by province, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	502	455	957
<i>Secondary</i>		138	138
<i>Combined</i>	502	317	819
NS	1,194	2,294	3,488
<i>Elementary</i>	20	212	232
<i>Secondary</i>		41	41
<i>Combined</i>	1,174	2,041	3,215
PE	209		209
<i>Combined</i>	209		209
NB	676	356	1,032
<i>Elementary</i>	128	38	166
<i>Combined</i>	548	318	866
QC	34,073	89,088	123,161
<i>Elementary</i>	7,130	18,749	25,879
<i>Secondary</i>	18,497	48,094	66,591
<i>Combined</i>	8,446	22,245	30,691
ON	55,806	61,018	116,824
<i>Elementary</i>	28,842	20,006	48,848
<i>Secondary</i>	7,048	7,266	14,314
<i>Combined</i>	19,916	33,746	53,662
MB	12,282	2,978	15,260
<i>Elementary</i>	3,591	516	4,107
<i>Secondary</i>	825	607	1,432
<i>Combined</i>	7,866	1,855	9,721
SK	3,122	1,186	4,308
<i>Elementary</i>	112	261	373
<i>Secondary</i>	526	565	1,091
<i>Combined</i>	2,484	360	2,844
AB	17,151	10,925	28,076
<i>Elementary</i>	543	1,856	2,399
<i>Secondary</i>	204	906	1,110
<i>Combined</i>	16,404	8,163	24,567
BC	53,104	22,298	75,402
<i>Elementary</i>	17,902	4,108	22,010
<i>Secondary</i>	82	1,946	2,028
<i>Combined</i>	35,120	16,244	51,364
Total	178,119	190,598	368,717

Table B17

**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different grade levels
by religious affiliation, by province, 2013–14**

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	61.3%	38.7%	100.0%
NS	34.2%	65.8%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	8.6%	91.4%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	36.5%	63.5%	100.0%
PE	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
NB	65.5%	34.5%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	77.1%	22.9%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	63.3%	36.7%	100.0%
QC	27.7%	72.3%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	27.6%	72.4%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	27.8%	72.2%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	27.5%	72.5%	100.0%
ON	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	59.0%	41.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	49.2%	50.8%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	37.1%	62.9%	100.0%
MB	80.5%	19.5%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	87.4%	12.6%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	57.6%	42.4%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	80.9%	19.1%	100.0%
SK	72.5%	27.5%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	30.0%	70.0%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	48.2%	51.8%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	87.3%	12.7%	100.0%
AB	61.1%	38.9%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	22.6%	77.4%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	18.4%	81.6%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	66.8%	33.2%	100.0%
BC	70.4%	29.6%	100.0%
<i>Elementary</i>	81.3%	18.7%	100.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	4.0%	96.0%	100.0%
<i>Combined</i>	68.4%	31.6%	100.0%
Total	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%

Table B18

Distribution of enrolment in independent schools in religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by grade level, by province, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
NL	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	30.3%	14.4%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%	69.7%	85.6%
NS	0.7%	1.2%	0.9%
<i>Elementary</i>	1.7%	9.2%	6.7%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.0%	1.8%	1.2%
<i>Combined</i>	98.3%	89.0%	92.2%
PE	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
<i>Combined</i>	100.0%		100.0%
NB	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
<i>Elementary</i>	18.9%	10.7%	16.1%
<i>Combined</i>	81.1%	89.3%	83.9%
QC	19.1%	46.7%	33.4%
<i>Elementary</i>	20.9%	21.0%	21.0%
<i>Secondary</i>	54.3%	54.0%	54.1%
<i>Combined</i>	24.8%	25.0%	24.9%
ON	31.3%	32.0%	31.7%
<i>Elementary</i>	51.7%	32.8%	41.8%
<i>Secondary</i>	12.6%	11.9%	12.3%
<i>Combined</i>	35.7%	55.3%	45.9%
MB	6.9%	1.6%	4.1%
<i>Elementary</i>	29.2%	17.3%	26.9%
<i>Secondary</i>	6.7%	20.4%	9.4%
<i>Combined</i>	64.0%	62.3%	63.7%
SK	1.8%	0.6%	1.2%
<i>Elementary</i>	3.6%	22.0%	8.7%
<i>Secondary</i>	16.8%	47.6%	25.3%
<i>Combined</i>	79.6%	30.4%	66.0%
AB	9.6%	5.7%	7.6%
<i>Elementary</i>	3.2%	17.0%	8.5%
<i>Secondary</i>	1.2%	8.3%	4.0%
<i>Combined</i>	95.6%	74.7%	87.5%
BC	29.8%	11.7%	20.4%
<i>Elementary</i>	33.7%	18.4%	29.2%
<i>Secondary</i>	0.2%	8.7%	2.7%
<i>Combined</i>	66.1%	72.8%	68.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Religion and school size

Schools in the middle size categories, that is those with 150 to 499 students, were more likely to be religiously-affiliated, while schools of other sizes, the smaller and the larger groups with fewer than 50 to 149 students, and between 500 to 750 and more students, were more likely to not have a religious orientation. See **tables B19 to B24** for more details.

Table B19

Number of independent schools by school size and religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	327	410	737
50–149	246	276	522
150–299	204	135	339
300–499	82	64	146
500–749	41	44	85
750 or more	40	66	106
Total	940	995	1,935

Table B20

Distribution of independent schools of different school sizes by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
50–149	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
150–299	60.2%	39.8%	100.0%
300–499	56.2%	43.8%	100.0%
500–749	48.2%	51.8%	100.0%
750 or more	37.7%	62.3%	100.0%
Total	48.6%	51.4%	100.0%

Table B21

Distribution of religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by school size, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	34.8%	41.2%	38.1%
50–149	26.2%	27.7%	27.0%
150–299	21.7%	13.6%	17.5%
300–499	8.7%	6.4%	7.5%
500–749	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%
750 or more	4.3%	6.6%	5.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B22

Enrolment in independent schools by school size and religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	8,223	8,845	17,068
50–149	22,865	25,333	48,198
150–299	44,297	28,454	72,751
300–499	31,515	25,163	56,678
500–749	24,487	26,761	51,248
750 or more	46,732	76,042	122,774
Total	178,119	190,598	368,717

Table B23

Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different school sizes by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	48.2%	51.8%	100.0%
50–149	47.4%	52.6%	100.0%
150–299	60.9%	39.1%	100.0%
300–499	55.6%	44.4%	100.0%
500–749	47.8%	52.2%	100.0%
750 or more	38.1%	61.9%	100.0%
Total	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%

Table B24

Distribution of enrolment in religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by school size, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Less than 50	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%
50–149	12.8%	13.3%	13.1%
150–299	24.9%	14.9%	19.7%
300–499	17.7%	13.2%	15.4%
500–749	13.7%	14.0%	13.9%
750 or more	26.2%	39.9%	33.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Religion and urbanicity

Schools that were located in large urban population centres were more likely to have no religious affiliation than to have a religious affiliation (**tables B25 to B27**). Enrolment patterns matched the trends of school distribution in this analysis (**tables B28 to B30**).

Table B25

Number of independent schools by population centre / rural area classification and religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	279	148	427
Small population centre	121	53	174
Medium population centre	68	48	116
Large urban population centre	472	746	1,218
Total	940	995	1,935

Table B26

Distribution of independent schools in different types of location by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	65.3%	34.7%	100.0%
Small population centre	69.5%	30.5%	100.0%
Medium population centre	58.6%	41.4%	100.0%
Large urban population centre	38.8%	61.2%	100.0%
Total	48.6%	51.4%	100.0%

Table B27

Distribution of religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by types of location, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	29.7%	14.9%	22.1%
Small population centre	12.9%	5.3%	9.0%
Medium population centre	7.2%	4.8%	6.0%
Large urban population centre	50.2%	75.0%	62.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B28

Enrolment in independent schools by population centre / rural area classification and religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	24,875	15,067	39,942
Small population centre	16,465	8,728	25,193
Medium population centre	12,973	10,815	23,788
Large urban population centre	123,806	155,988	279,794
Total	178,119	190,598	368,717

Table B29

Distribution of enrolment in independent schools in different types of location by religious affiliation, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	62.3%	37.7%	100.0%
Small population centre	65.4%	34.6%	100.0%
Medium population centre	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%
Large urban population centre	44.2%	55.8%	100.0%
Total	48.3%	51.7%	100.0%

Table B30

Distribution of enrolment in religiously affiliated and religiously unaffiliated independent schools by types of location, 2013–14

	Religiously affiliated	No religious affiliation	Total
Rural area	14.0%	7.9%	10.8%
Small population centre	9.2%	4.6%	6.8%
Medium population centre	7.3%	5.7%	6.5%
Large urban population centre	69.5%	81.8%	75.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Specialty and level

At the elementary level, the most common type of specialty schools, as mentioned earlier, were Montessori schools. Special education schools were the most frequently occurring specialty school at the combined elementary and secondary level, constituting 8.7 percent of all combined level specialty schools. At the secondary level, “other special emphasis schools” were the most common. See [tables B31 to B36](#) for further details.

Table B31

Number of independent schools by grade level and specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	162	16	4	3	43	77	3	549	857
Secondary	2		2	6	13	78	10	246	357
Combined	15	4	15	14	63	46	5	559	721
Total	179	20	21	23	119	201	18	1,354	1,935

Table B32

Distribution of independent schools of different grade levels by specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	18.9%	1.9%	0.5%	0.4%	5.0%	9.0%	0.4%	64.1%	100.0%
Secondary	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	1.7%	3.6%	21.8%	2.8%	68.9%	100.0%
Combined	2.1%	0.6%	2.1%	1.9%	8.7%	6.4%	0.7%	77.5%	100.0%
Total	9.3%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	6.1%	10.4%	0.9%	70.0%	100.0%

Table B33

Distribution of independent schools of different specialty types by grade level, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	90.5%	80.0%	19.0%	13.0%	36.1%	38.3%	16.7%	40.5%	44.3%
Secondary	1.1%	0.0%	9.5%	26.1%	10.9%	38.8%	55.6%	18.2%	18.4%
Combined	8.4%	20.0%	71.4%	60.9%	52.9%	22.9%	27.8%	41.3%	37.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B34**Enrolment in independent schools by grade level and specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	15,343	1,510	41	380	2,183	12,721	106	71,730	104,014
Secondary	260		172	165	1,754	29,105	156	55,133	86,745
Combined	3,279	948	1,153	7,776	5,963	16,195	404	142,240	177,958
Total	18,882	2,458	1,366	8,321	9,900	58,021	666	269,103	368,717

Table B35**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different grade levels by specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	14.8%	1.5%	0.0%	0.4%	2.1%	12.2%	0.1%	69.0%	100.0%
Secondary	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	2.0%	33.6%	0.2%	63.6%	100.0%
Combined	1.8%	0.5%	0.6%	4.4%	3.4%	9.1%	0.2%	79.9%	100.0%
Total	5.1%	0.7%	0.4%	2.3%	2.7%	15.7%	0.2%	73.0%	100.0%

Table B36**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different specialty types by grade level, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Elementary	81.3%	61.4%	3.0%	4.6%	22.1%	21.9%	15.9%	26.7%	28.2%
Secondary	1.4%	0.0%	12.6%	2.0%	17.7%	50.2%	23.4%	20.5%	23.5%
Combined	17.4%	38.6%	84.4%	93.5%	60.2%	27.9%	60.7%	52.9%	48.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Specialty and school size

The vast majority of specialty schools of all types were smaller schools. In all cases, anywhere from 56.2 to 95.2 percent of schools in each specialty category had fewer than 149 students. See [tables B37 to B42](#) for further analysis.

Table B37

Number of independent schools by school size and specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	85	6	12	9	67	64	15	479	737
50–149	68	6	8	6	33	49	2	350	522
150–299	15	8		1	13	33	1	268	339
300–499	4		1	2	4	18		117	146
500–749	2			2	2	13		66	85
750 or more	5			3		24		74	106
Total	179	20	21	23	119	201	18	1,354	1,935

Table B38

Distribution of independent schools of different school sizes by specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	11.5%	0.8%	1.6%	1.2%	9.1%	8.7%	2.0%	65.0%	100.0%
50–149	13.0%	1.1%	1.5%	1.1%	6.3%	9.4%	0.4%	67.0%	100.0%
150–299	4.4%	2.4%	0.0%	0.3%	3.8%	9.7%	0.3%	79.1%	100.0%
300–499	2.7%	0.0%	0.7%	1.4%	2.7%	12.3%	0.0%	80.1%	100.0%
500–749	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	2.4%	15.3%	0.0%	77.6%	100.0%
750 or more	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	22.6%	0.0%	69.8%	100.0%
Total	9.3%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	6.1%	10.4%	0.9%	70.0%	100.0%

Table B39

Distribution of independent schools of different specialty types by school size, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	47.5%	30.0%	57.1%	39.1%	56.3%	31.8%	83.3%	35.4%	38.1%
50–149	38.0%	30.0%	38.1%	26.1%	27.7%	24.4%	11.1%	25.8%	27.0%
150–299	8.4%	40.0%	0.0%	4.3%	10.9%	16.4%	5.6%	19.8%	17.5%
300–499	2.2%	0.0%	4.8%	8.7%	3.4%	9.0%	0.0%	8.6%	7.5%
500–749	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%	1.7%	6.5%	0.0%	4.9%	4.4%
750 or more	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%	0.0%	11.9%	0.0%	5.5%	5.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B40**Enrolment in independent schools by school size and specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	2,212	237	259	129	1,502	1,235	264	11,230	17,068
50–149	6,008	624	800	593	2,845	4,319	145	32,864	48,198
150–299	3,053	1,597		258	2,585	7,210	257	57,791	72,751
300–499	1,497		307	669	1,556	7,292		45,357	56,678
500–749	1,220			1,283	1,412	7,780		39,553	51,248
750 or more	4,892			5,389		30,185		82,308	122,774
Total	18,882	2,458	1,366	8,321	9,900	58,021	666	269,103	368,717

Table B41**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different school sizes by specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	13.0%	1.4%	1.5%	0.8%	8.8%	7.2%	1.5%	65.8%	100.0%
50–149	12.5%	1.3%	1.7%	1.2%	5.9%	9.0%	0.3%	68.2%	100.0%
150–299	4.2%	2.2%	0.0%	0.4%	3.6%	9.9%	0.4%	79.4%	100.0%
300–499	2.6%	0.0%	0.5%	1.2%	2.7%	12.9%	0.0%	80.0%	100.0%
500–749	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	2.8%	15.2%	0.0%	77.2%	100.0%
750 or more	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	24.6%	0.0%	67.0%	100.0%
Total	5.1%	0.7%	0.4%	2.3%	2.7%	15.7%	0.2%	73.0%	100.0%

Table B42**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different specialty types by school size, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Less than 50	11.7%	9.6%	19.0%	1.6%	15.2%	2.1%	39.6%	4.2%	4.6%
50–149	31.8%	25.4%	58.6%	7.1%	28.7%	7.4%	21.8%	12.2%	13.1%
150–299	16.2%	65.0%	0.0%	3.1%	26.1%	12.4%	38.6%	21.5%	19.7%
300–499	7.9%	0.0%	22.5%	8.0%	15.7%	12.6%	0.0%	16.9%	15.4%
500–749	6.5%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	14.3%	13.4%	0.0%	14.7%	13.9%
750 or more	25.9%	0.0%	0.0%	64.8%	0.0%	52.0%	0.0%	30.6%	33.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Specialty and urbanicity

Fully 88.6 percent or more of each type of specialty school had an urban rather than a rural location, with enrolments reflecting this distribution. See [tables B43 to B48](#) for further analysis.

Table B43

Number of independent schools by population centre / rural area classification and specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	19	4	4	1	9	25	4	361	427
Small pop. area	9	3	1	2	6	6	1	146	174
Medium pop. area	9	1	2	1	7	12		84	116
Large urban pop. centre	142	12	14	19	97	158	13	763	1,218
Total	179	20	21	23	119	201	18	1,354	1,935

Table B44

Distribution of independent schools in different types of location by specialty type, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	4.4%	0.9%	0.9%	0.2%	2.1%	5.9%	0.9%	84.5%	100.0%
Small pop. area	5.2%	1.7%	0.6%	1.1%	3.4%	3.4%	0.6%	83.9%	100.0%
Medium pop. area	7.8%	0.9%	1.7%	0.9%	6.0%	10.3%	0.0%	72.4%	100.0%
Large urban pop. centre	11.7%	1.0%	1.1%	1.6%	8.0%	13.0%	1.1%	62.6%	100.0%
Total	9.3%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	6.1%	10.4%	0.9%	70.0%	100.0%

Table B45

Distribution of independent schools of different specialty types by types of location, 2013–14

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	10.6%	20.0%	19.0%	4.3%	7.6%	12.4%	22.2%	26.7%	22.1%
Small pop. area	5.0%	15.0%	4.8%	8.7%	5.0%	3.0%	5.6%	10.8%	9.0%
Medium pop. area	5.0%	5.0%	9.5%	4.3%	5.9%	6.0%	0.0%	6.2%	6.0%
Large urban pop. centre	79.3%	60.0%	66.7%	82.6%	81.5%	78.6%	72.2%	56.4%	62.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table B46**Enrolment in independent schools by population centre / rural area classification and specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	1,138	427	416	975	309	6,882	133	29,662	39,942
Small pop. area	381	249	45	683	265	1,257	257	22,056	25,193
Medium pop. area	370	40	134	346	129	2,880		19,889	23,788
Large urban pop. centre	16,993	1,742	771	6,317	9,197	47,002	276	197,496	279,794
Total	18,882	2,458	1,366	8,321	9,900	58,021	666	269,103	368,717

Table B47**Distribution of independent schools in different types of location by specialty type, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	2.8%	1.1%	1.0%	2.4%	0.8%	17.2%	0.3%	74.3%	100.0%
Small pop. area	1.5%	1.0%	0.2%	2.7%	1.1%	5.0%	1.0%	87.5%	100.0%
Medium pop. area	1.6%	0.2%	0.6%	1.5%	0.5%	12.1%	0.0%	83.6%	100.0%
Large urban pop. centre	6.1%	0.6%	0.3%	2.3%	3.3%	16.8%	0.1%	70.6%	100.0%
Total	5.1%	0.7%	0.4%	2.3%	2.7%	15.7%	0.2%	73.0%	100.0%

Table B48**Distribution of enrolment in independent schools of different specialty types by types of location, 2013–14**

	Montessori	Waldorf	Arts, Sports, or STEM	Distributed Learning	Special education	Other special emphasis	Mixed specialty	Not a specialty school	Total
Rural area	6.0%	17.4%	30.5%	11.7%	3.1%	11.9%	20.0%	11.0%	10.8%
Small pop. area	2.0%	10.1%	3.3%	8.2%	2.7%	2.2%	38.6%	8.2%	6.8%
Medium pop. area	2.0%	1.6%	9.8%	4.2%	1.3%	5.0%	0.0%	7.4%	6.5%
Large urban pop. centre	90.0%	70.9%	56.4%	75.9%	92.9%	81.0%	41.4%	73.4%	75.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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