



NEWS RELEASE

Non-elite independent school students outperform public school students on standardized tests in B.C.

June 26, 2018

For immediate release

VANCOUVER—Students at British Columbia’s non-elite independent schools achieve higher scores on standardized tests than their public school counterparts, even though after-tax incomes for families with children at both types of schools are the same, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Not only do B.C.’s independent schools offer parents more choice for religious and alternative teaching pedagogies, they also achieve better academic results as measured by standardized tests,” said Angela MacLeod, senior policy analyst at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Comparing the Standardized Test Scores of British Columbia’s Public and Independent Schools*.

The study builds on previous research that found after-tax incomes for families with children at B.C.’s non-elite independent schools (\$78,894) were essentially the same as families with children in the province’s public schools (\$77,396).

The new analysis finds that from 2011/12 to 2015/16, students at non-elite independent schools averaged statistically significant higher scores than public students in 10 of the province’s 11 standardized tests in both elementary and secondary schools. (They also outperformed public school students on Grade 12 English, but the higher score was not statistically significant.)

For example, in the Grade 7 Writing Foundation Skills Assessment, non-elite independent school students averaged 18.9 per cent higher grades than public school students.

Likewise at the secondary school level, non-elite independent school students averaged 72 per cent on the Grade 10 science exam, compared to 68.7 per cent for public school students.

“The evidence is compelling—even though students in non-elite independent schools have the same family income levels as students in public schools, they have averaged higher scores on the province’s standardized tests,” MacLeod said.

“This important finding is a valuable addition to the ongoing discussion surrounding school choice.”

The study also found students at B.C.’s elite independent schools, which make up just 8.2 per cent of all independent schools in the province, scored higher than students at both non-elite and public schools in all 11 tests.

(30)

MEDIA CONTACT:

Angela MacLeod, Senior Policy Analyst
Fraser Institute

To arrange media interviews, or for more information, please contact:

Bryn Weese
Media Relations Specialist, Fraser Institute
Office: (604) 688-0221 ext. 589
Cell: (604) 250-8076
bryn.weese@fraserinstitute.org

Follow the Fraser Institute on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

The Fraser Institute is an independent Canadian public policy research and educational organization with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal and ties to a global network of think-tanks in 87 countries. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Canadians, their families and future generations by studying, measuring and broadly communicating the effects of government policies, entrepreneurship and choice on their well-being. To protect the Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research. Visit www.fraserinstitute.org