

# NEWS RELEASE

## Constitutional protection of Catholic education in Ontario not an impediment to reform

December 20, 2016  
For immediate release

**TORONTO**—Ontario’s Catholic school system can be part of education reform, despite public misperceptions about the nature of its protection in the Constitution, finds a new study by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“For far too long, genuine discussion about education reform in Ontario has been stymied by a misconception regarding the nature of constitutional protection afforded Catholic education,” said Deani Van Pelt, director of the Barbara Mitchell Centre for Improvement in Education at the Fraser Institute.

The study, *Does Constitutional Protection Prevent Education Reform in Ontario?*, finds that amending constitutional provisions that only apply to one province is not as onerous as changing nationwide provisions and require a simple vote in the legislature of the affected province, and recognition by the federal Parliament.

Initially, the constitutional provisions for minority denominational education in Quebec and Ontario were designed to protect the Protestant and Catholic minorities respectively in the two newly-created provinces.

Two other provinces, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador, have already introduced education reform by passing such amendments.

“There are many different education models across Canada and around the world that achieve better student results and offer parents more choice for religious and alternative teaching pedagogies,” Van Pelt said.

“Understanding that education reform is possible in Ontario allows families and policymakers to consider these alternatives to the status quo.”

(30)

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Deani Van Pelt, Director of the Barbara Mitchell Centre for Improvement in Education  
Fraser Institute

*For interviews with Deani Van Pelt, or for more information, please contact:*

Bryn Weese  
Media Relations Specialist, Fraser Institute  
Office: (604) 688-0221 ext. 589  
[bryn.weese@fraserinstitute.org](mailto: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](http://www.fraserinstitute.org)