



NEWS RELEASE

More than one-in-eight B.C. students now enrolled in independent schools; highest in Canada

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For Immediate Release

VANCOUVER—Enrolment at independent schools (as a share of total enrolment) in British Columbia has increased from 8.7 per cent to 13.2 per cent—or nearly one-in-eight students—over a recent 19-year period, according to a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“For their children’s education, parents in British Columbia are increasingly choosing options outside the government school system,” said Michael Zwaagstra, senior fellow with the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Where Our Students Are Educated: Measuring Student Enrolment in Canada, 2022*.

The study finds that as a share of all K-12 students, enrolment in independent schools increased in all provinces and decreased for public schools everywhere from 2000/01 to 2019/20, the most recent year of available comparable data.

In B.C., 13.2 per cent—again, nearly one-in-eight—of all K-12 students in B.C. were enrolled in independent schools in 2019/20—the highest percentage in the country. (Quebec has the second-highest rate at 11.7 per cent.)

B.C.—along with Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec—partially funds the operating costs of independent schools. The other provinces provide no funding for independent schools, but all ten permit independent schools.

“While education is funded and delivered differently across the provinces, the evidence is clear—parents in B.C. are increasingly looking to independent schools for more choice in how their children are educated,” said Zwaagstra.

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