DEFYING THE ODDS

Similarity and Difference in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education

By

Jennifer M. Wallner

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

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Defying the Odds: Similarity and Difference in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education

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PhD. Thesis
Department of Political Science
University of Toronto
2009

Abstract:
This dissertation explains why and how, in the absence of direct federal participation, the Canadian provinces invest at comparable levels, achieve similar outcomes, and produce similar policies while simultaneously maintaining distinctive policy particularities in the elementary and secondary education sector. Given the limited national direction and the extensive autonomy afforded the Canadian provinces, for both students of federalism and education policy, the significant interprovincial similarities appearing across the subnational education sectors are a puzzle to be explained. I develop this analysis by exploring my puzzle in two comparative contexts: cross-nationally and longitudinally.

To account for patterns of educational policy similarity and difference, the dissertation points to the movement of policy ideas across the provinces in response to their increasing legal, economic, organizational, and cultural interconnectedness. My dissertation argues that as interconnections among the provinces increased, the movement of policy ideas across the provinces intensified. As policy ideas moved, provincial governments would determine whether a policy from another jurisdiction could be suitable in their own. The subsequent decision to adopt the policy of another turned critically on both the existing relations between the jurisdictions and viability of the new idea within the internal policy context of the receiving jurisdiction. The basic conclusion of my work is that despite Canada’s highly decentralized federalism, there is a remarkable degree of convergence and similarity among the education sectors of the Canadian provinces.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is safe to say that graduate school is often characterized by endless hours alone in dusty, windowless, libraries. While my experience included such hours, I was also fortunate to be surrounded by an amazing group of people that made my graduate school experience far from one of solitude.

The opening pass of gratitude is dedicated to the members of my dissertation committee. Without a doubt, I had the most amazing and supportive people behind me. Richard Simeon, Grace Skogstad, and Linda White saw this process through from start to finish, and their assistance was invaluable. I feel that words cannot capture the depths of my gratitude; nevertheless, I will try. Your patience and guidance through the various iterations of my project(s) enabled me to complete this program. Your enthusiasm for my work gave me the perseverance to carry on. Each of you provided me with incredible mentorship that helped me evolve as a scholar, both in the confines of my thesis and in our countless other initiatives beyond. I aspire to be like each of you and hope to continue to pass your knowledge on to a new generation of future scholars.

I would also like to thank Rod Haddow and Kathryn Harrison, who came in at later stages in the project. Your comments and questions will help me move my thesis into new territories. Beyond those directly involved with my thesis, I also learned many things through conversations and work with other faculty members. Specifically, Joe Wong, Graham White, Rob Vipond, Phil Triadafilopoulos, Susan Solomon, David Rayside, Neil Nevitte, Jeff Kopstein, Ran Hirschl, and David Cameron, provided me with additional tutelage that will serve me well, wherever I end up. I am grateful for all our time spent together.

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I would not be the person I am today without the love and support from my family. When asked, “Aunt Jenn, when are you getting a job?” I can now finally give an answer! Both of my parents are my inspiration. My mom’s willingness to learn new things and taking amazing risks at any point in her life has kept me motivated throughout my studies. I hope I can face my own life with such courage and determination. My dad’s dedication and commitment to anything that he set his mind to provided me with the necessary example to stay the course with my own work. When faced with a puzzle, I frequently think, “How would Dad solve this one?” and somehow I always find an answer.

Unfortunately, my dad passed away during the course of this degree and he was not able to see my life as a graduate student come to a close. Not a day goes by that I do not think of him and wish he could be with me now. I miss him terribly and I dedicate this thesis to his memory.

The closing pass is reserved for one: Steve White. You kept me on course through my darkest times and supported me through it all. I have found my team-mate in life and cannot wait for our many adventures together. Fortune has undoubtedly smiled upon me and I continue to be elated each and everyday.
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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AIT</td>
<td>Agreement on Internal Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIP</td>
<td>Agreement in Principle</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATA</td>
<td>Alberta Teachers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACDE</td>
<td>Association of Canadian Deans of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>APEF</td>
<td>Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCCT</td>
<td>British Columbia College of Teachers</td>
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<td>BCSTA</td>
<td>British Columbia School Trustees Association</td>
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<td>BCTF</td>
<td>British Columbia Teachers Federation</td>
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<td>CAP</td>
<td>Canada Assistance Plan</td>
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<td>CHST</td>
<td>Canada Health and Social Transfer</td>
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<td>CHT</td>
<td>Canada Health Transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNEA</td>
<td>Canada and Newfoundland Education Association</td>
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<td>CEA</td>
<td>Canadian Education Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CICS</td>
<td>Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSBA</td>
<td>Canadian School Boards Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSTA</td>
<td>Canadian School Trustees’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CST</td>
<td>Canadian Social Transfer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTF</td>
<td>Canadian Teachers Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERI</td>
<td>Centre for Educational Research and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEGEP</td>
<td>Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSE</td>
<td>Conseil supérieur de l’éducation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMET</td>
<td>Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training</td>
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<td>CMP</td>
<td>Council of Maritime Premiers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMEC</td>
<td>Council of Ministers of Education Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>DNA</td>
<td>Det norske Arbeiderparti</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEA</td>
<td>Dominion Education Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQAO</td>
<td>Education Quality and Accountability Office</td>
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<td>ESEA</td>
<td>Elementary and Secondary Education Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPF</td>
<td>Established Program Financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>MPEF</td>
<td>Maritime Provinces Education Foundation</td>
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<td>MTS</td>
<td>Manitoba Teachers’ Society</td>
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<td>NACER</td>
<td>National Advisory Committee on Educational Research</td>
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<td>NEP</td>
<td>National Energy Program</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>New Democratic Party</td>
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<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
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<td>NCLB</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
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<td>OCT</td>
<td>Ontario College of Teachers</td>
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<td>OISE</td>
<td>Ontario Institute for Studies in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>OEEC</td>
<td>Organization for European Economic Co-operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBE</td>
<td>Outcomes-based education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCAP</td>
<td>Pan-Canadian Assessment Program</td>
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<td>PEI</td>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>STF</td>
<td>Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAIP</td>
<td>School Achievement Indicators Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUFA</td>
<td>Social Union Framework Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVTA</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>WCP</td>
<td>Western Canadian Protocol</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Defying the Odds: Similarity and Difference in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education

In 1976, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) completed a major review of elementary and secondary education in Canada. It marked the first time that all 10 provincial education systems were assessed simultaneously, and the evaluation was less than glowing. The final report stated:

The fact that there is, and apparently can be, no Federal Department of Education has created a kind of vacuum in education policy at the higher federal decision-making level . . . there is to date no sign of a coherent Federal policy for education emerging, nor much evidence of success in ironing out inconsistencies and even outright contradictions among various parts of the total federal effort in education.\(^1\)

The reviewers concluded their assessment by decrying the lack of national goals and issued a clear warning to educational authorities in the country:

The lack of generally binding propositions concerning the socio-political goals of education has the effect of producing a damaging uncertainty about the meaning and purpose of the vast Canadian educational enterprise. This uncertainty may be noted in other countries too, but probably nowhere as openly evident and unchallenged as in Canada . . . If those responsible for education policy are not promptly able to base the development of school and education on a firm goal-oriented footing, then they risk being pushed to the side in the general political competition for resources (emphasis in original).\(^2\)

The OECD reviewers offered a bleak picture to Canadians. The clear implication of their assessment was that the lack of federal involvement translated into significant inter-provincial differences and inconsistencies in the policy sector. The reviewers were no less blunt in their prescribed remedy – a national department of education

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\(^2\) Ibid, 102.
involving the federal government empowered with binding authority to standardize provincial policy choices.\textsuperscript{3}

Looking at Canadian elementary and secondary education today, in contrast to this image of inconsistencies and uncertainties, there is evidence of extensive policy similarities across the 10 jurisdictions. Provincial governments continue to employ their own unique strategies and educational programming, but in the main, the education sectors are similarly configured across the country. Provinces invest in elementary and secondary education at comparable levels, and demonstrate less inter-regional variation than their other more apparently centralized counterparts. On international tests, not only do Canadian students perform remarkably well, consistently ranked near the top of the scale, Canada receives top marks on inter-regional and inter-school equality – meaning that school location is not an important determinant of educational achievements. Finally, in terms of public policies, educational administration is similarly configured across the provinces, the majority of the provinces use the same model to finance the sector, regional initiatives in curriculum development have become the norm, a national consensus on learning objectives in science has been ratified, a national assessment program has been successfully implemented that provides comparable data to provincial education ministries from coast to coast, and a formal agreement on teacher mobility is near. The Canadian provinces have therefore managed to find a way to develop and maintain similar policy activities without the direct (and coercive) intervention of the federal government.

These findings in Canadian elementary and secondary education confound many expectations of students of federalism and social policy. Federal systems have been fertile ground for scholars seeking to understand the impact of institutions on public policy. As a system of government, federalism divides power between a central authority and constituent political units, manifesting in a system of shared-rule and self-rule. These entrenched divisions create distinctive opportunities and constraints that shape political behaviour. While there is no scholarly consensus on the effect of federalism on the production, implementation, and coordination of government

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid, 97.
activities, there is a sense of pessimism that runs throughout much of this literature. It is generally accepted that autonomous actors do not always work well together, particularly if they lack a strong central leader. Reflecting on the Australian welfare state, Anthony Welch for one argues that: “it is hard to imagine how the current levels of social and economic infrastructure could have been achieved without conscious, large-scale and ongoing intervention by the [national] state.” The allegations are clear. Federated states, without strong national leadership, run the risk of intergovernmental bickering, preempted policy space that restricts government action, incoherent policy activities as subnational governments pursue different pathways, suboptimal policy outcomes, and a potential “race to the bottom.”

Students of education policy also view federalism and decentralized governance with suspicion and voice concerns over the achievement of policy similarity across the individual political units. Milbrey McLaughlin, explains that problems often occur at the implementation stage. According to McLaughlin, overarching policies designed by a central government in turn need to be interpreted and implemented by other actors. “Implementors, we discovered, did not always do as told (as proponents of scientific management would have it) nor did they always act to maximize policy objectives (as many economist would have it).” Local factors such as size, commitment to the broader objectives, and capacity, mold the responses to policies and influence the

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6 Anthony Welch, Australian Education: Reform or Crisis (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1996), 3.


9 Ibid, 142.
program choices that are implemented. In the face of weak goals or vague mandates, dominant coalitions or competing interests can capitalize on the opportunity to shape the policy to suit their needs and take it in a different direction than what was intended by the authors of the policy. To compensate for this potential co-optation, McLaughlin argues that policy framers must back their mandates with specific pressures to engender compliance.

Given the limited national direction and the extensive autonomy afforded the Canadian provinces, for both students of federalism and education policy, the significant interprovincial similarities appearing across the education sectors are therefore unexpected and a puzzle to be explained. How is it that Canada has developed a “national” education system without federal directives and mandates? That is the fundamental question, which this thesis seeks to answer.

By responding to this question, my research sheds light on a number of important questions for federalism and social policy scholars alike. Is a national authority a necessary condition for the achievement of policy similarity in a decentralized policy sector? How do policy ideas move among autonomous units? How do systems of coordination and cooperation emerge in decentralized policy sectors over time? And, what are the conditions that lead autonomous actors to adopt similar policies?

To answer these questions, my research is divided into two streams. First, taking a contemporary snapshot, I examine why the Canadian provinces are investing in education at similar rates and attaining similar achievements in elementary and secondary education without formal national intervention. Looking at the level of investments in education, all provinces experience similar public demands for high quality education. However, if they did not have comparable economic capacities certain provinces would be unable to devote resources to the same extent as the others. In turn, this would translate into noticeable interprovincial variations in the level of educational investment. Following Richard Simeon and Robert Miller, I argue that the federal government’s equalization program helps mitigate the differences in the fiscal
capacities of the provinces and extends them the opportunity to invest at comparable levels.  

Turning to educational achievement, similarities in results are in part related to the similar societal pressures and comparable levels of investment across the ten jurisdictions. However, looking beyond the social and financial support, all the Canadian provinces have universally embraced the commitment to de-stratify educational opportunities for their students. Destratification has in turn translated into higher educational attainments that cut across economic and social cleavages. Drawing on the insights of institutionalists, I suggest that the norms and principles embedded in the policy sector influence the subsequent policy outcomes. My account of the observed interprovincial similarities in investments and achievements therefore utilizes three explanatory contextual factors: (1) societal expectations; (2) the economic capacity of subnational governments; and (3) the nature and consistency of the norms in the policy sector across the different cases.

The second stream of my research moves to understanding how and why the provinces adopted similar policies in certain areas of education while remaining different in others. I start from the assumption that policy ideas are likely to diffuse across jurisdictional boundaries; what needs to be explained are the particular causal processes that carry policy ideas to alternative jurisdictions and the reasons behind the subsequent adoption (or non-adoption) in the alternative jurisdictions. Observers frequently argue that the diffusion of policy ideas in federal states is motivated primarily by either national coercion or intergovernmental competition. My research,

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however, reveals that in the case of Canadian education the alternative causal processes of learning and cooperation have propelled the diffusion of ideas.\footnote{This is not to deny that coercion and competition are completely absent in the diffusion of ideas in Canadian education. However, learning and cooperation have been the primary processes at work.}


Building from the work of new institutionalists, such as James March and Johan Olsen,\footnote{James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, ‘The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life’, The American Political Science Review 78, 3 (September 1984): 734-749.} we know that political decision-makers face uncertainty and therefore look to others for examples of alternative models for (among other things) the organization and execution of social policies. Policy ideas are exchanged through learning where “another’s adoption imparts information”\footnote{Elkins and Simmons, ‘On Waves, Clusters, and Diffusion’, 39.} that can be used to guide the choices of others. Political support behind certain ideas may gain momentum as increasing numbers of jurisdictions adopt similar policies that seem to generate positive results or solve pertinent problems.

Like independent states, subnational jurisdictions can establish intergovernmental organizations to facilitate ideational exchanges and policy coordination. Once established, I argue that intergovernmental organizations alter the connective links among the actors and increase the potential for interprovincial cooperation. As policy actors collaborate on particular initiatives and ratify common agreements, cooperative activities facilitate ideational exchanges among the participating jurisdictions and increase the likelihood that subnational jurisdictions will adopt similar policies.

Just because ideas move across political boundaries, however, does not mean that decision-makers will decide to implement similar policies. Once policy ideas and practices move across jurisdictional boundaries through learning or cooperation, they are mediated by the internal context of the receiving subnational jurisdiction. Each
subnational jurisdiction has existing policy legacies and its own constellation of state and non-state actors in a policy field that can either welcome or impede the new practices. As Margaret Weir and Theda Skocpol argue, when new policy ideas enter a jurisdiction, they do not encounter a *tabula rasa*. Instead, they are met by an occupied policy space with pre-existing practices, strategies, and structures. Building on Keohane and Nye, in every policy sector there is a loose set of formal and informal norms, rules, and procedures that is relevant to the system and structures the relations between state and non-state actors. Taken together, these elements constitute an educational regime that sets down an internal logic that is unique within each jurisdiction. The more compatible a new idea is with the existing legacy and regime, the more likely it will be adopted in the receiving jurisdiction, thus increasing the extent of inter-provincial policy similarity overall. Finally, characteristics of the ideas themselves also influence the probability that they will be adopted. Using Peter Hall’s notion of *viability*, the more workable and fitting the idea is within the context of the receiving province, the more likely that it will be adopted and increase the extent of inter-jurisdictional similarity in a particular policy sector.

Having set down the main puzzle and summarized the core argument of this dissertation, the remainder of this chapter proceeds in four parts. In the first section, I explain why education is a policy sector worthy of the attention of political scientists. The second section outlines the unique aspects of the Canadian case and the insights that can be made from its study. The third section presents the research methodology, including the operationalization for the key variables and a statement of the data collection methods used here. Finally, the fourth section looks ahead and lays out the overall plan of the dissertation.

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I. The Importance of Education

As a component of social policy, education remains relatively understudied by political scientists. Evaluations and assessments are frequently left in the capable hands of scholars in education faculties, psychologists, or sociologists who, for example, examine how the social conditions in which a child/family lives affects learning, ideological uses of curricula, the importance of leadership within individual schools, the exposure of schools to business interests, and the general impact of globalization on the structure and outcomes of educational systems. However, the education sector is inherently political and as Carsten Jensen recently wrote, “Although education is rarely regarded as part of the welfare state . . . this may be more a matter of convention than anything else.” The attention of political science to this vital area of social policy is long overdue.  

21 There are a number of notable political scientists who have taken education seriously. Ronald Manzer has written extensively on the topic of K-12 comparative education, particularly among the Anglo-American democracies; Matthew Hirschland and Sven Steinmo have examined the interactions between race politics and states in United States education; Michael Mintrom has assessed educational policy diffusion among the American states, focusing on reform and accountability; and there are a growing number of young political scientists who have similarly embraced the education sector including: Elisabeth King, Celine Mulhern, Patrick McGuinn, and Paul Manna. See, for example, Manzer, Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy; Matthew Hirschland and Sven Steinmo, ‘Correcting the Record: Understanding the History of Federal Intervention and Failure in Securing U.S. Educational Reform’, Educational Policy 17, 3 (2003): 343-364; Michael Mintrom and Sandra Vergari, ‘Education Reform and Accountability: Issues in an Intergovernmental Context’, Publius: The Journal of Federalism 27:2 (Spring 1997): 143-166.
24 I also look to the work of Peter Flora to further justify my inclusion of education under the auspices of the welfare state and social policy. In the words of Flora, “the welfare state does not distribute benefits only as compensatory measures for those who have less. It also interacts with the labor market so as to make it possible for those who utilize public programs to raise or maintain their social status.” For Flora and his co-authors, the “essence of the welfare state” therefore includes education. For more on this, see: Peter Flora and Arnold J. Heidenheimer ‘Introduction’ The Development of the Welfare State in Europe and America. Peter Flora and Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Eds. (New Brunswick USA: Transaction Books, 1981), 5-16.
For over 100 years, governments have taken an increasingly active role in the education of their citizenry. In part, we can attribute this interest to three ends that education can achieve. First, under Platonic thinking, education is recognized as a means to develop critical thinking skills that enable individuals to think objectively about the situations around them. Second, Rousseau observed that education is a means to develop the individual person, which assists us to recognize ourselves as independent beings capable of achieving our own goals and aspirations. And finally, the third end of education is to prepare people to participate in the society and economy that surround them. In this context, education is seen as an agent of socialization that transmits shared values and norms of society to each new generation and prepares individuals for their entry into the workforce.

While at times these three goals may conflict with one another, each is present to varying degrees and at varying times in the educational policies and programs of countries around the world. The three goals help to explain why the state incrementally claimed schooling from religious and voluntary organizations to gain control over the governance and content of the schooling of their citizens. Moreover, the priority of education has exponentially increased since the post WWII period. Scholars like T.H. Marshall identified education as a keystone of egalitarian policies and the foundation for social citizenship. The recognized connection between education and the knowledge economy unquestionably contributed to the expansion of the scope of educational programming in the industrialized and developing worlds. Organizations such as the OECD and the United Nations (UN) have further promoted the importance of education for the economic success of countries. Governments are no longer content to simply provide the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic; public schools now offer a more extensive and wider array of curricular choices designed to prepare

children for their entry into the labour market and contribute as active members of society.

Despite the prominence of the state in education, the involvement of public decision-makers did not proceed without conflicts. The education sector involves intense political negotiations among state officials, educators themselves, client groups, and the public. Impassioned debates occurred and continue today over every aspect of education: the legitimacy of requiring all children to attend schools; the content of the curriculum taught within the system; the role of organized religion in public education; the financing of public and private schools; the form of teacher education; and even the means of transporting students to and from the schools. To quote Ronald Manzer, public schools are:

> stakes in struggles for political power. Educational politics and policy-making are rent by conflicting political, economic, and cultural interests that seek to organize schools to fit particular conceptions of a good community and a good life and to teach knowledge skills serving particular interests.\(^{28}\)

The conflicts over education policy therefore provide a window into the battles within a political community between interests and ideas, as these are mediated through institutions, which are central questions for political scientists.

Going beyond the political nature of education policy, the field itself offers new opportunities to researchers. Many studies on public policies in federated states assess redistributive policies. Redistributive policies, according to Paul Peterson, are those that serve to reallocate or restructure resources within a given population or across regions.\(^{29}\) Most common among them are related to individuals through the welfare state, including social assistance, employment insurance, and family benefits packages. Health insurance regimes designed to ensure a minimal standard of care available to all citizens are a similar example of a redistributive policy targeting individuals, while equalization programs designed to move money between regions are an example of collective redistribution. The unifying characteristic of redistributive policies therefore

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is “the transfer of wealth from the taxpaying rich to the dependent poor,”\textsuperscript{30} or “from the ‘haves’ to the ‘have nots’.”\textsuperscript{31} Consequently, Peterson argues, constituent states have an incentive to shun redistributive policies and make sure that they are less generous than their neighbours to avoid attracting poorer populations.\textsuperscript{32} In turn, these incentives can generate a vicious race to the bottom, as governments ratchet down their spending to remain competitive.

However, redistributive policies are only one form of state action. Governments also engage in developmental policies designed to enhance the overall capacity of the state and society. Rather than ameliorating resource discrepancies among the population or across regions, developmental policies are investments in the general wellbeing of the community. To use Peterson’s conceptualization, developmental policies explicitly “provide the physical and social infrastructure necessary to facilitate a country’s economic growth,”\textsuperscript{33} – they are the bricks and mortar of the state - and include the institutions to educate the population. Clearly, education can have redistributive implications by equalizing opportunities across populations regardless of individual wealth.\textsuperscript{34} Common education opportunities provide people from lower economic classes with the prospect of increasing their economic standing; education nevertheless plays a role in strengthening the overall well-being of the community and thus has a role to play in developing the capacities of the state.

By focusing on education, I therefore have the opportunity to explore whether or not different incentives and mechanisms are at play in a field of developmental policy in a federated state. While governments may have incentives to avoid


\textsuperscript{31} Paul Peterson, \textit{The Price of Federalism}, 30.

\textsuperscript{32} We find a poignant example of this mechanism in action in Alberta during the 1990s. The provincial government retrenched its welfare regime, reducing spending and tightening the eligibility requirements for a number of policies. Neighbouring provinces reported seeing a spike in the number of displaced Albertans moving to their jurisdictions to receive the more generous benefits that were available. Anecdotal claims also implied that the Alberta government was facilitating the movement of welfare recipients by issuing one-way bus tickets to destinations outside of the province. As a result, neighbouring provinces felt pressure to reduce their own welfare benefits to better synchronize with the policies of the Alberta government. For more on this, see Margaret Phillip, ‘Alberta driving out welfare recipient’, \textit{The Globe and Mail} (Toronto: 9 February 1995): A10.

\textsuperscript{33} Peterson, \textit{The Price of Federalism}, 17; see also, Paul E. Peterson, Barry G. Rabe and Kenneth Wong, \textit{When Federalism Works} (Washington: Brookings Institute: 1986), Chapter One.

\textsuperscript{34} Marshall, ‘Citizenship and Social Class’.
redistributive policies and undercut one another’s programs and benefit policies – potentially generating a race to the bottom – governments have stronger incentives to engage in developmental policies, which could potentially generate a race to the top, or at least encourage the causal processes of learning and emulation over competition and coercion.

Finally, all states (but particularly federations) need to deal with the problem of externalities or spillover effects that generate unintended consequences either in other policy sectors or in other jurisdictions. Most often, externalities are viewed in a negative light. Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal, for example, assess externalities that negatively affect the welfare of another state. They find a clear example of negative externalities in the environmental sector. Governments can choose to develop strict environmental regulations designed to target polluters and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Governments, however, cannot control global climate patterns or erect impermeable barriers to keep pollution contained in their own territory or prevent the contaminants of other states from crossing their borders. Therefore, lax environmental regulations of one jurisdiction can increase the pollutants in another jurisdiction, even if that state has adopted a rigorous approach to environmental regulation.

Externalities can also be viewed as a potentially positive force, serving to benefit neighbouring jurisdictions. Strong environmental regulations, for instance, reduce the level of pollutants generated by one jurisdiction, thus enhancing the environmental conditions of others regardless of their activities. Following a similar

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36 Further evidence of negative externalities is found in the areas of health policy and product regulations. Studies in epidemiology demonstrate that health inequalities among societies can contribute to the spread of infectious diseases generating global epidemics that compromise the wellbeing of populations around the world. The SARS crisis of 2003, for example, stretched from Asia to North America, with significant consequences for not only the health of infected communities but also reduced the economic strength of affected areas. The World Travel and Tourism Council estimated that up to three million people worldwide lost their jobs and that tourism to Asia fell by more than 70 percent. In the area of product regulations, weak standards or corruption among producers can also generate negative spillovers. In 2007, scientists discovered a Chinese drug manufacturing plant was exporting cough syrup made with diethylene glycol – commonly known as anti-freeze. Despite a US ban on the product, poorer countries such as Cuba and Haiti continued to import the poisonous syrup resulting in a number of deaths, particularly among children. For more on this, see: Bob McKercher and Kaye Chon, ‘The Over-Reaction to SARS and the Collapse of Asian Tourism’, *Annals of Tourism Research* 31, 3 (July 2004): 716-719; Walt Bogdanich and Jake Hooker, ‘From China to Panama, the Trail of Poisoned Medicine’, *The New York Times* (May 6, 2007).
rationale, a jurisdiction that invests in medical programs can prevent the spread of infectious diseases to other communities thereby adding to the wellbeing of peripheral populations.

Education policy likewise has the potential to generate both negative and positive spillover effects. A well-educated population increases the economic potential and stability of a society. From an economic standpoint, those who acquire knowledge generally earn more over their lifetimes, achieve higher levels of employment, and enjoy more satisfying careers. Education also enables people to appreciate literature and culture, learn about the history of their community, and be more informed and socially involved citizens. It is therefore clear that the benefits of education spread significantly beyond the individual and his/her family into the public domain.

However, education policy can also generate negative externalities. If people from certain regions receive systematically poorer educations and then choose to move to another jurisdiction, the receiving jurisdiction will need to contend with increased training costs or resign itself to maintaining a less productive population base. Furthermore, the principle of equality will be compromised if there are significant inconsistencies between the educational programs of different regions. As people can move freely throughout a country, it is critical that they receive a common education so they are not disadvantaged when they change jurisdictions. The children of parents who change jobs should not need to be held back a grade simply because their first school taught a completely different curriculum from others. Finally, if citizens receive unequal or dissimilar education, the overall social cohesion of the country could be compromised.

Externalities thus play a significant role in the dynamics of education policy making. These effects are amplified within a federated polity where control over

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education is vested in the sub-national governments. Sub-national governments need to determine an effective means to respond to policy externalities and devise arrangements to co-ordinate their actions in the policy field. How they chose to coordinate, and the types of organizational arrangements they fashion, on the one hand reflect the types of problems political actors are trying to solve, and on the other hand, have an important impact on their future capacity to work together.

Taken together, the complexities and characteristics of the education sector and the expanding government role in the field provide a powerful reason for political scientists to study this policy sector. It is now important to explain the logic behind the selection of the Canadian case.

II. Why Canada?

Scholars of Canadian federalism describe Canada’s federation as one of the most decentralized in the world and the provincial governments enjoy greater autonomy than their sub-national counterparts in other countries. Observers of education policy classify Canadian education as one of the most decentralized policy sectors where, aside from a few limitations discussed below, the sub-national governments exercise complete legal, administrative, and financial responsibility for elementary and secondary education. Furthermore, like other federations, coordination in various policy areas among the different governments is often difficult to achieve. In many sectors, conflict, competition, and acrimony have often characterized intergovernmental relations both vertically between the national and provincial


governments and horizontally among the provincial governments. The result has been substantial inter-provincial differences in certain policy fields.  

The majority of studies that assess policy-making in federated countries tend to focus on areas of *de jure* or *de facto* concurrent jurisdiction between the two levels of government. Examples include the environmental sector, the health care sector, and the labour market sector. This strategy has allowed scholars to target the areas where federalism is most likely to influence public policy. However, it ignores how sub-national governments interact with one another in the absence of national intervention, thus potentially missing unique dynamics in federated states. The Canadian education sector provides such a venue to examine intergovernmental dynamics in the absence of hierarchical coordination.

Under Sections 92 and 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the Canadian provinces have the legal, administrative, and financial responsibility for education. During the negotiations leading up to Confederation, early listings of federal powers included the power to enforce uniformity in education. When the powers were finally enumerated, however, control of education was given exclusively to the provincial legislatures, save for the rights and privileges of existing Protestant and Catholic minority denominational systems operating at the time when Confederation was enacted. In

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41 Labour market training and welfare benefits, for example, are areas where studies have revealed salient inter-provincial differences in both the structure and delivery of programs, and in the benefits provided by the provinces. Gerard Boychuck for one argues that in the area of social assistance regimes, the differences stem from historical context and particular constellations of political forces each individual province. Certain forms of assistance regimes were institutionalized in the various provinces that proved remarkably resilient and fashioned long-lasting policy legacies that continue to influence contemporary policies. See: Gerard Boychuck, *Patchworks of Purposes: The Development of Social Assistance Regimes in Canada* (Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998). For studies of alternative policy sectors, please see: Tom McIntosh (Ed.) *Federalism, Democracy, and Labour Market Policy in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000); Kathryn Harrison (Ed.) *Racing to the Bottom? Provincial Interdependence in the Canadian Federation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Rodney Haddow and Thomas Klassen, *Partisanship, Globalization, and Canadian Labour Market Policy: Four Provinces in Comparative Perspective* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).


44 During the legislative debates, political leaders focused on the legitimacy of preserving sectarianism in Canadian education, and not on the issue of whether provinces should control the education sector
large part, the allocation of education to the provinces reflected the practical reality that colonial governments had already legislated in the field and that elementary education systems were in place before the conferences leading up to Confederation. Moreover, the attempt to create a common education system in a unified Canada between 1840 and 1866 was an instructive lesson in the need to give education to the provinces.\textsuperscript{45} Each of the parties in the early negotiations already had its own unique schooling arrangements and did not wish to have a common system unilaterally imposed from above. Politically, therefore, any leaders who wished to centralize education under the federal government faced stiff opposition. Furthermore, education also has a powerful cultural component; hence control of education was of special importance to French speaking and Catholic Quebec, as well as religious minorities in the other colonies. For these reasons, the Fathers of Confederation ultimately placed education under provincial control.

Unlike other federations, Canada does not maintain an authoritative national body capable of imposing overarching standards in the field.\textsuperscript{46} A voluntary body, the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC), was created in 1967 to provide a forum for inter-provincial discourse and action in education. The CMEC’s mandate is quite simple: to facilitate and enhance discussions among education ministers and bureaucratic officials from the ten provinces and three territories. Coordination and cooperation among the sub-national governments is a goal of the Council, and the CMEC accomplishes this without intervention from the federal government.\textsuperscript{47} Moreover, provincial and territorial autonomy is both recognized and guarded by the

\textsuperscript{45} Garth Stevenson, \textit{Unfulfilled Union: Canadian Federalism and National Unity Revised Edition} (Toronto: Gage Publishing Limited, 1982), 28-34.

\textsuperscript{46} This institutional anomaly does not go unnoticed on the international stage. During an interview, one representative of the CMEC noted that, “When I travel abroad, international leaders are frequently flabbergasted by the institutional framework of Canadian education. In Russia, for example, education officials were shocked when I told them that there are 18 ministers responsible for education in the Canada” (personal interview, December 20th 2007).

\textsuperscript{47} When the CMEC meets to discuss issues of post-secondary education, representatives from the federal government usually participate due to their long-standing fiscal contributions to colleges and universities in the country. However, for the elementary and secondary sectors, the federal government is excluded from the process.
CMEC as agreements reached among the parties are of a non-binding nature and are therefore unenforceable by the Council.

The organization of Canadian elementary and secondary education can be readily contrasted with experiences in other federations. In the United States, education likewise falls under the constitutional purview of the state governments; however, the US federal government has a substantial record of influencing education policy. Initially piecemeal, throughout the latter half of the Twentieth Century, Washington increasingly gathered strength in the education sector. The first major accomplishment was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. Among other elements, the ESEA committed the federal government to provide financial aid for schools and school districts with low-income families. By 1979, then-President Jimmy Carter signed into law the Department of Education Organization Act and created the national department of education. It was tasked with monitoring the ESEA, compiling research and statistics, as well as generating policy prescriptions to influence the quality of education in the country. Studies commissioned by the US federal government have also had a substantial impact on state education policy. Perhaps most notable among them was the National Commission on Excellence in Education’s 1983 report, *A Nation At Risk*, which triggered major educational reforms across the American states. Finally, the most recent example of federal penetration in the education sector is the Bush Administration’s *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) enacted in 2001. With the stated objective of improving the equality of American education by ensuring that rich and poor students alike are given the opportunity to succeed, the policy imposes national standards designed to stimulate student achievement. NCLB has therefore reinforced and expanded the role of the federal government in the American education sector.

The Australian federation demonstrates a similar pattern of national intervention in the states’ educational affairs. Education is a state responsibility, but since early in Australia’s history, the national government has provided strong

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48 For an excellent overview and analysis of the penetration of the US national government into the educational affairs of the states see: Paul Manna, *School’s In: Federalism and the National Education Agenda* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006).

guidance in the development and direction of schooling across the country.\textsuperscript{50} And, in the early 1990s, the Australian Commonwealth government established a national curriculum for elementary and secondary education that the state governments are responsible for implementing.\textsuperscript{51} There are also a number of federal departments, including the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), which not only enjoy the authority to provide national leadership and work in collaboration with the states and territories, but can also develop educational policies with a national scope that state governments are required to enforce. Like the US states, the autonomy of Australian sub-national governments in the elementary and secondary education domain is constrained by national politicians and policymakers.

The institutional exceptionalism of Canadian education is one of the reasons why Canada provides an interesting case to assess the determinants of policy similarity and difference. However, institutional autonomy and the capacity to act independently do not immediately mean that provincial educational policies will diverge or remain different. Additionally, the Canadian provinces demonstrate significant diversity on factors such as political economy, demographics, and political culture, which are implicated by both public policy scholars and education policy scholars as critical elements that influence the shape and form of government policies.\textsuperscript{52}

Education scholars frequently argue that how society produces and reproduces the conditions for material existence influences the shape and scope of educational programming. By tracing the “interconnections among such factors as the prevalent goods and services which are produced and consumed, major patterns of trade and finance, the structure and composition of the labour force, patterns of class and social

\textsuperscript{50} By 1967, the Australian Commonwealth government had staked a major role in education, diminishing the autonomy of the state governments in the policy area. [Alan Barcan, \textit{A History of Australian Education}. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980); Australian Government, \textit{Country Education Profile: Australia} Paris: OECD, 2006].

\textsuperscript{51} In his review of the establishment of national curricula, Anthony Welch observes that federalism often complicated the process as the state governments resented the Commonwealth-led agenda. The states’ misgivings were eventually alleviated as they were given the autonomy to pursue curriculum implementation. [Anthony Welch, \textit{Australian Education: Reform or Crisis}? (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1996) Chapter 4].

conflict, and the types of individuals, groups, and institutions which prevail in that society”, we can understand the “context within which schooling is situated and to which schooling contributes.”

Provincially rooted differences in economic relations should therefore produce measurable differences in government education policies. Regionally divergent economic structures reflected in the education sector could, for example, manifest themselves in different curricula, the distribution and availability of educational programming, the financial support for public schools, or in the goals of the education system itself.

Changing demographics alter the societal conditions in which school systems are embedded. Because education is an agent of political socialization, population dynamics influence the goals of education systems and the viability of the systems to achieve those goals. When the demographic characteristics of students and society change, school officials, policy makers, and politicians must reacquaint themselves with their new constituents and investigate better ways to meet the different needs of their particular populations. As an immigrant society, the Canadian provinces have seen numerous internal adjustments to their population demographics, and differ among each other on the rate and scope of change across time. Such differences could translate into significant differences in the education sectors of the provincial governments.

Culturally, the Canadian state demonstrates heterogeneity along a number of lines. Canada is a multinational state linguistically divided between the two official languages of English and French. In assessments of sub-national autonomy in federated states, scholars such as Jan Erk have attributed Canada’s relative decentralization to the sociological divisions in the Canadian polity.

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54 The 2001 census reports that 10 percent of the total school-age population was immigrants and a growing proportion of them have a non-official home language. Cultural diversity among the school-age population has generally increased in Canada due to changing immigration policies. Effects were particularly felt by education planners in Toronto and Vancouver where over 25 percent of the school-aged population in 2001 were immigrants, and of them, approximately 20 percent had a home language other than English or French.
heterogeneity of Canadian society is reflected in the way public policies function, with clear divisions between Québec and the rest of Canada. In his examination of the education field, Erk argues that while the nine English-speaking provinces may collaborate, Québec remains “an outlier” to such initiatives. Therefore, the cultural diversities between Québec and the rest of Canada may encourage significant policy variations in the education field.

Beyond the French/English divide, provincial and regional identities also play an important role in the dynamics of Canadian politics. Federal institutions have preserved distinctive loyalties, different value-patterns, political orientations, and policy prescriptions among the different provinces. Regional characteristics are at times discernible, albeit with marked inconsistencies and unsystematic variations. Cultural heterogeneity could nevertheless support patterned variations in education policy occurring regularly among the provinces, particularly given that education is often deployed as a tool to foster and develop distinct identities.

Given Canada’s economic, demographic, social and institutional diversity, and the institutional decentralization of the education sector, it seems reasonable to predict that the Canadian education policy sector would exhibit significant inter-provincial differences. The conditions of diversity, combined with the recognized differences in other policy sectors, lead one to anticipate that wide inter-provincial variations in education investments, achievements, and public policies should be the norm. However, evidence from the Canadian case defies these expectations. Understanding the achievement of these results in Canadian education will therefore enhance our

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ability to uncover the drivers and mechanisms that contribute to substantive subnational similarity without a coercive authority.

III. Research Design

Following Robert Bates, my approach is problem driven, not theory driven; the motivation for this study comes from the substantive interest on my part to understand what took place among the provinces and to determine how they became similar in certain areas of elementary and secondary education while remaining different in others. This dissertation thus seeks to understand how these results in elementary and secondary education were achieved. To address this puzzle, my research focuses on three empirical questions:

1) What is the extent of inter-provincial similarity and difference in education investments and achievements?
2) What is the extent of inter-provincial similarity and difference in education policies?
3) How were inter-provincial similarities and differences in education investments, achievements, and policies achieved?

Based on these questions, two central tasks need to be completed. First, I need to determine the extent of subnational similarities and differences in educational investments and achievements and build an explanation to account for these findings. Second, I need to understand how ideas on education policy move among the provinces and what led the subnational jurisdictions to adopt similar policies. This involves understanding the dynamics of social policy making in a federal country by taking a focused assessment of a single policy sector and identifying the causal mechanisms and

61 It is important to note that my purpose in this dissertation is not to evaluate the substantive effectiveness of Canadian education policy; that task is best left to education policy scholars trained in creating pedagogical benchmarks and assessing particular policy outcomes. It nevertheless engages the issue of outcomes in terms of measuring the level of difference among the provinces in terms of achievements on international tests and graduate rates.
conditions through which the observed outcomes are brought into being. As Wesley Salmon states, “Causal processes, causal interactions, and causal laws provide the mechanisms by which the world works; to understand why certain things happen, we need to show how they are produced by these mechanisms.”  

Therefore, the core of this dissertation explores how policy ideas spread between jurisdictions and why certain ideas from one jurisdiction are adopted in another, increasing the extent of policy similarity among the different units in the elementary and secondary education sector.

I focus on context and processes using narrative techniques to create a model of action and theorize about the relations among the actors and institutions that are a constituent part of this phenomenon. The purpose is to uncover the basic causal mechanisms at work through a detailed and textured account of the environmental conditions, the choices made, and the manner in which decisions were taken across the 10 provinces overtime to understand the pathways of policy evolution in Canadian education. The nature of this study suggests that no single causal mechanism or pathway can account for the entire findings reported here. As the evidence will show, multiple pathways and drivers impact the course of policy evolution in each area of education and subnational jurisdiction. Indeed, to understand Canadian elementary and secondary education, we must accept the idea of equifinality (the idea that different causal pathways can lead to the same outcome) and recognize that context (institutional, cultural, and temporal) matters. Moreover, my approach to identify patterns of causation adheres to the logic of probabilism where I attempt to find causes or conditions that are usually or likely to be necessary or sufficient in the explanation.

To gain further leverage over this puzzle, I have adapted the tradition of comparative public policy. This strategy affords a number of advantages by increasing the number of observations in a structured format. Inspired by the Policy Sector Approach, this method is grounded on two propositions: (1) the style of policy making

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64 James Mahoney, ‘Strategies of Causal Assessment’, 344.
and the nature of political conflicts vary from sector to sector; and (2) policy making in a particular sector will exhibit similarities, whatever its differing contexts.\textsuperscript{65} Rather than comparing sectors, however, I have broken the elementary and secondary education sector into five domains: educational administration, finance, curriculum, assessment, and the teaching profession. Education policy scholars also examine education through these multiple streams, thus externally confirming the validity of my grouping.\textsuperscript{66} Moreover, in the Canadian context, each unit is administered by different sets of people within each province thus institutionally confirming the appropriateness of this strategy and addressing the propositions of the Policy Sector Approach. Finally, these five domains constitute the substantive heart of the education sector. In each domain, policymakers are faced with a myriad of potential goals and instruments to choose from, and meaningful debates among politicians, experts, professionals, and officials occur around these choices. Given the universe of options and the autonomy exercised by the 10 provinces over each component, we would expect to find significant policy variation across the jurisdictions.

The central goal of this dissertation is to explain how interprovincial similarities in investments, achievements, and policies in elementary and secondary education were achieved in the absence of national standards. Similarity is defined as an aspect or trait that resembles the characteristic of another, and therefore implicitly involves an assessment of two or more units. Here, the universe of cases involves the 10 provinces and tracks the relative absence of differences in: (a) the level of investments in elementary and secondary education; (b) the level of achievements in elementary and secondary education; and (c) the policies implemented in the five domains of education.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{66} Mulhern, \textit{Globalization and the Selective Permeability of Public Policy-making}.
\textsuperscript{67} Before proceeding, it is important to address an element that is missing here: this dissertation does not include the three territorial governments. The rationale for their exclusion is straightforward. First, the territorial government in Nunavut was only formed in 1999 and thus provides limited opportunity to compare it with the provinces. Second, until recently, federal officials overwhelmingly dominated the territorial governments. Therefore, the administrations lacked the autonomy and capacity to pursue their own objectives; these restrictions were not a factor for the provinces that were free to follow their own unique pathways. And finally, the territories are economically weaker than their provincial counterparts. As a result, the territorial governments lack the fiscal independence required to exercise political
Taking a narrow definition, similarity could involve the complete absence of difference thus setting a high threshold for empirical evidence. However, it seems unreasonable and unfruitful to set such a high standard, as the complete absence of difference among jurisdictions would be difficult (if not impossible) to find. Therefore, building from the idea of resemblance, I take a broader interpretation of similarity and seek to find affinities and likenesses in the education sectors of the Canadian provinces. More fully operationalized in the subsequent chapters, similarities are assessed in the levels of investments; levels of achievements; the structure of educational administration; the level of financing education; the means of financing education; the structure of curriculum; the types of assessments; the arrangements for teacher education and certification; and, formal interprovincial agreements that have been ratified.

In tandem with the concept of similarity, this dissertation also employs the concepts of convergence and harmonization. Conventionally understood as the tendency of societies to grow increasingly alike,\footnote{Clark Kerr, \textit{The Future of Industrial Societies: Convergence of Continuing Diversity} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 3.} convergence refers to the increasing similarities of policy goals, content, instruments, outcomes, and styles, both within and among political communities. Convergence therefore calls attention to an outcome, either intentional or unintentional, where there are lesser differences between two or more political communities than there were from a previous point of reference.\footnote{Christopher Knill, ‘Introduction: Cross-national policy convergence: concepts, approaches and explanatory factors’, \textit{Journal of European Public Policy} 12, 5 (2005): 766.} Harmonization is the process by which independent jurisdictions adopt the same laws, formally align their public policies, or adhere to the same regulations. In contrast to convergence, which can emerge by chance, harmonization inherently involves \textit{intentional} coordination between two or more jurisdictions.

Inspired by the works of scholars such as Margaret Weir, John Campbell, and Peter Hall,\footnote{Margaret Weir, ‘Ideas and the politics of bounded innovation’, \textit{Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis} Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, Eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 188-216; John L. Campbell, ‘Ideas, Politics, and Public Policy’, \textit{Annual Review of Sociology} 28 (2002): 21-38; Peter Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning} I make a distinction between three types of ideas that can be exchanged autonomy. Therefore, for my purposes it is necessary to exclude the northern governments from this dissertation.
among actors. First, ideas can take the form of goals or objectives that actors wish to pursue. In part related to the problems that actors sometimes arbitrarily identify, policy goals may involve targets, the solutions to be accomplished, and the desired outcomes that a particular group wishes to achieve. Second, ideas can involve views on the instruments, or the means by which actors decide to achieve their goals. Instrumental (or programmatic) ideas take the form of the precise guidelines about how programs may be organized, the tools that may be used, and the strategies by which they may be implemented given the existing configuration of the policy sector. Finally, on the widest spectrum, we find paradigmatic ideas. Often residing in the background of policy debates, paradigmatic ideas are:

- a framework of ideas and standards that specifies not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing. Like a Gestalt, this framework is embedded in the very terminology through which policymakers communicate about their work.

Paradigmatic ideas are inherently broad concepts that tap values and principles and may be represented in symbols and rhetoric.

Why is it necessary to distinguish between different types of ideas? First and foremost it allows us to more accurately determine the extent of similarities and differences among the provinces. For instance, all the provinces may have similar goals but use different instruments to achieve them. All the provinces may adhere to a similar policy paradigm but rank the various goals in alternative orders. Finally, similar instruments may be deployed under different interpretive frameworks. Therefore, the distinction between types of policy ideas allows us to capture a sharper image of interprovincial similarity and difference.

This interpretation of similarity in Canada begs the question of similar relative to what? To demonstrate similarity in provincial education, I put Canadian education in

74 Hall, ‘Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State’: 279.
two comparative contexts: cross-nationally and temporally. First, taking a snapshot of current conditions, I situate Canadian investments and achievements in a cross-national comparison with other OECD countries and find that, relative to other countries with national standards, Canada demonstrates a high degree of sub-national similarity in the field. Outlined in further detail in the subsequent chapter, indicators of investments include level of educational spending and teacher/student ratios while indicators of achievements include results on international tests and graduation rates. These findings suggest that national standards are not a necessary condition for the achievement of inter-provincial similarity in policy inputs and policy outcomes.

Second, to understand how policy ideas have moved and the factors that encourage the adoption of similar policies, I use the techniques of historical analysis and process tracing to explore whether inter-provincial similarity in Canada was always the norm or if it has varied over time. These techniques will allow me to uncover whether or not any systematic relations emerge between the changing connectivity between the provinces, policy diffusion, and the implementation of similar education policies in the subnational jurisdictions. Historical analysis involves “a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualized comparison.” Process tracing “consists of analyzing a case into a sequence (or several concatenating sequences) of events and showing how those events are plausibly linked given the interests and situations faced by groups or individual actors.” The approach does not assume that all actions bring about their intended consequences, but that actions are “understandable in terms of the knowledge, intent, and circumstances that prevailed at the time decisions were made.”

These approaches offer a number of advantages that are pertinent here. By taking history seriously, I can uncover deep and enduring patterns that have shaped and influenced the evolution of Canadian education. The historical approach allows me to examine changes in the context of interconnectivity over time and determine how these changes, both among and within the provinces, affected the diffusion, penetration, and

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77 Ibid, 47-48.
subsequent adoption of policy ideas. Process tracing, moreover, is a powerful tool for explaining deviant cases. As I have demonstrated, the observed similarities in Canadian elementary and secondary education defy theoretically grounded expectations. By understanding the factors that contributed to the evolution of policy similarity in Canada I can work towards enriching the theories on federalism and public policy. Furthermore, as Alexander George and Andrew Bennett argue, process tracing is an “indispensable tool . . . not only because it generates numerous observations within a case, but because these observations must be linked in particular ways to constitute an explanation of the case.” Through process tracing it becomes possible to uncover evidence of the role that certain variables systematically played in the evolution of Canadian education and distill the general elements to contribute to broader theory development.

To use these two approaches, I break Canadian educational development into four periods: the Foundation and Consolidation of Education (1840-1945); the Universalization of Education (1945-1967); the Individualization of Education (1967-1982); and the Standardization of Education (1982-2008). In each period I establish the policy climate, the general policy trends that occurred, and the provinces that deviated from common policy trajectories.

When parceling Canadian education into four periods, I have adhered to Richard Simeon’s cautionary statement that any “division into distinct time periods is inherently arbitrary. There are few sharp breaks and discontinuities and the edges are often blurred.” Margaret Weir also notes that elements “from an earlier period can affect” other elements “at a later time.” Periods were identified on the basis of two criteria. First, in each period there were notable changes in the context of connectivity among the provinces. Second, each period can also be distinguished by transformations in the dominant educational paradigms. New goals, instruments, and priorities took hold of the education sector that acted as catalysts for policy change. To paraphrase

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79 George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science*, 207.
80 Richard Simeon, *Political Science and Federalism: Seven Decades of Scholarly Engagement* (Kingston, ON: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations School, Queen’s University, 2002), 8.
Weber’s dictum, these educational paradigms that have been created by ideas can, “like switchmen,” influence “the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest.”

Taken together, the context of connectivity and the dominant ideas fashion the overarching policy climate within which policy actors are situated. By looking at each of these periods, I am able to determine how changes in the policy climate influenced or altered the causal processes of diffusion and the probability of policy convergence leading to interprovincial similarities in the policy field.

While there is a clear trend towards increasing convergence in investments and achievements over time, in each period we find mixed empirical evidence of growing similarities and continued differences in the education policies of the ten provinces. In contrast to a straight line, the extent of similarities and differences in education policies among the provinces appears to undulate throughout the four periods. What explains the adoption of similar policies across provinces in each period? Why did the provinces converge on some policies, but not on others?

The explanation for policy similarity turns on three components presented in further detail in Chapter 3. First, I argue that decisions over education policy in one province are not made in isolation but in consideration of decisions made in other provinces. Captured by the ideas of interdependence and connectivity, political leaders, education officials and education professionals are connected together through both formal and informal channels and the policy choices of one jurisdiction influence the policy choices of others. The nature and intensity of interdependence and connectivity sets the context in which ideas move among jurisdictions. Second, while ideational diffusion among jurisdictions is virtually inevitable, the causal processes and potential outcomes are contextually contingent. The causal processes of diffusion may be altered when the context of connectivity is changed.

However, the movement of ideas across territorial borders does not necessarily translate into the implementation of similar policies. Therefore, the third component of my argument recognizes that the implementation of similar policies is influenced by the internal context of each jurisdiction. Specifically, the existing policy legacies and

the active educational regime influence the likelihood that similar policies may be accepted. Furthermore, adapting Peter Hall’s notion of “viability”, the probability that a policy idea will be adopted turns on its relevance to an identified problem, its compatibility with the existing administration, and the political promise it demonstrates in the receiving jurisdiction.

Data used for this study include documents and interviews of key informants in the education sector. The primary sources used to chronicle the historical establishment of the institutional and policy frameworks in each dimension of Canadian education are drawn from:

- Hansard records of the provincial legislative houses
- Reports of committees, commissions, and task forces struck to study educational issues
- Statistical and Annual Reports issued by relevant ministries, agencies, and boards (e.g. the provincial departments of education and Statistics Canada)
- Non-government education stakeholders and policy community reports (e.g. the Canadian Education Association, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation)
- Archival materials
- Government press releases, statements, and speeches
- Bills, Acts, and Regulations

These primary sources were in turn bolstered by secondary assessments, including a broad array of books and articles on Canadian educational history, as well as items from the popular presses.

When dealing with the contemporary period in the different dimensions of Canadian education, key informants were sought out. In the course of my research, I conducted 70 semi-structured, open-ended interviews to gain insights on the motivating factors behind certain policy developments, understand the factors that helped and or hinder inter-provincial policy activities, and clear up any gaps that arose from the documents. Respondents included former ministers of education, active and retired

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83 Hall, ‘Conclusions’, 369-375.
provincial ministry officials, stakeholder representatives (teachers, superintendents, principals, trustees, union representatives, and members of interest groups), and individuals from intergovernmental organizations, namely the CMEC and the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF). Respondents were not systematically selected to gain a representative sample from all provinces, as the key data source here is the primary documents. Unless otherwise indicated, interviews were granted on the condition that no expressed views would be attributed to individuals. Respondents supplied invaluable information on the internal dynamics at work within the different provinces and helped me to gain an overall sense of the issues and interplay involved.

**IV. Looking Forward – The Plan of the Thesis**

In the next chapter, I situate current Canadian investments and achievements in elementary and secondary education in a comparative context. The chapter demonstrates that national standards are not a necessary condition for the achievement of similarity in policy inputs and outcomes. Instead, I argue that common societal expectations, the particular configuration of fiscal federalism, and the embedded values of the education sector account for inter-provincial similarities in investments and achievements in elementary and secondary education.

The second chapter turns towards the substantive policies for elementary and secondary education and assesses the current state of inter-provincial similarity in policy outputs. This chapter breaks the education sector down into the five dimensions of educational administration, finance, curriculum, evaluation, and the teaching profession (teacher education and certification), and summarizes some of the major policy debates that occur in each area. My description of the sector demonstrates that decision-makers face a myriad of options and can fashion dramatically different education sectors depending on the choices that they make. I then examine the current policies of the 10 provinces and find that despite the potential for significant differences in policy outputs, the provinces largely use similar policies across the five dimensions of the education sector. Therefore, the evidence demonstrates that national standards are not a necessary condition for the achievement of inter-provincial similarity in policy outputs.
In Chapter Three I build an explanatory framework to understand how and why there is inter-provincial similarity in policy outputs. After briefly considering globalization as the primary explanation, I use the insights of the diffusion and convergence literatures. I argue that the context of interdependence and connectivity (in which state and non-state actors are embedded) and the internal conditions of the ten jurisdictions, influences the processes of policy diffusion and the likelihood of convergence on common policies.

Chapters Four through Seven constitute the empirical heart of this dissertation. They track the historical evolution of provincial education policies to assess general policy trends, the penetration of policy ideas, and the impact that changes in the context of connectivity among the provincial governments had on the causal processes of diffusion. Chapter Four focuses on the foundation and consolidation of elementary and secondary education in Canada, and spans from 1840 to 1945. Chapter Five examines the post-WWII period up through the 1960s when governments and education experts sought to universalize the educational opportunities for Canadians. Chapter Six assesses the 1967-1982 period wherein the goals shifted from universalizing to individualizing Canadian education. Finally, Chapter Seven commences in 1982 and runs to the contemporary period. It tracks the change to standardizing education in the country.

In the conclusion, I summarize the central analysis, outline certain limitations of the project, present the major implications of my research, and discuss the possible avenues for the next phase of work in the field.
CHAPTER ONE

An Unexpected Outcome, Part I
Investments and Achievements in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education

Federalism as a system of government is intended to foster conditions of shared-rule and self-rule. The formal division of powers between a central government and constituent units affords territorially based groups the room for autonomous decision-making, while providing an institutional context to enable the pooling of resources and interdependent decision-making overseen by a national government. A keystone of federalism is therefore the preservation of diversity by allowing distinct populations with unique identities to pursue alternative pathways from a national agenda. A fundamental objective of the welfare state is to enhance equal social rights for all citizens. Manifested under the logic of social citizenship, the welfare state (and the social policies that constitute it) should provide similar access to comparable programs and benefits to all citizens within a given state. In other words, uniformity and consistency are underlying principles of the welfare state. “Federalism and the welfare state,” write Herbert Obinger, Frances Castles, and Stephen Leibfried, “thus seem to be at opposite ends of the diversity-uniformity continuum.”

The tension between federalism and the welfare state is straightforward. According to Keith Banting, the “promise of social citizenship is the equality of treatment of citizens, to be achieved through common social benefits,” but “the promise of federalism is regional diversity in public policies, reflecting the preferences of regional communities and cultures.” The risk is that the logic of diversity will overpower the logic of social citizenship and compromise the achievement of inter-

regional similarity in a federation with constituent governments pursuing divergent policy pathways that undermine social cohesion in a state. Put starkly, for federal pessimists, the image is one of systematic regional divergence and discrepancies permitted by the division of powers and responsibilities over different areas of social policy. There is a concern, moreover, that social policy sectors will suffer from chronic under funding as the institutional fragmentation retards substantive investments and induces fiscal competition among the subnational jurisdictions.

To reconcile the tension between federalism and the welfare state, scholars and practitioners often implicate the central state as a necessary condition to achieve comprehensive subnational consistency in social policy. National governments, endowed with legitimate authority to mandate overarching standards, are seen as a critical agent to create and maintain the conditions for social citizenship. Through instruments such as its regulatory and spending powers, the central state can uphold the logic of social citizenship to ensure that all citizens, regardless of residence, receive comparable levels of programming and benefits. Using its regulatory powers, the national government can mandate the constituent governments to adopt common policies, provide comparable fiscal resources, and similar levels of benefits to standardize the welfare state across a country. Moreover, using its spending power, the central government can potentially intervene in areas beyond its formal jurisdiction and ensure that all subnational governments deploy comparable programs by offering conditional grants in various policy areas.

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However, this proclivity towards the central state begs the question: Is a national authority a necessary condition for similarity in investments and achievements in a federal state? To answer this question, in this chapter I take a closer look at the Canadian elementary and secondary education sector. Following T.H. Marshall, education is one of the sectors at the core of social policy as it plays a vital role in the “modern drive towards social equality.”\(^9\) And, as Marius Busemeyer demonstrates, control over education is frequently decentralized to the regional level and there tends to be a “greater variety in terms of the quality and general levels of spending.”\(^9\) The structure and organization of Canadian education is unique in the world as subnational governments maintain the complete legal, fiscal, and administrative responsibility in the field. Unlike other federal countries, Canada lacks a national department of education capable of developing and enforcing certain basic minimum standards applicable to all provinces. It therefore provides a crucial case to interrogate the traditional assumptions that national authority and centralization are the critical means to achieve similar investments and achievements in a vital area of social policy.

This chapter asks two questions. First, relative to other countries, does Canada under-invest and under-perform in elementary and secondary education? Second, relative to other countries, does Canada exhibit greater subnational variation in investments and achievements in elementary and secondary education?

The findings presented here are both unexpected and interesting. While Canada seems to invest slightly less in education than other advanced industrial nations, its educational attainments are strong, with high marks on international tests and elevated rates of completion in secondary and tertiary education. Without a national authority, moreover, the Canadian provinces have fashioned highly similar elementary and secondary education sectors supported by comparable levels of investment. Canadian students, moreover, achieve equally high scores on international tests and on measures

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of equality in educational outcomes developed by the OECD. It therefore suggests that the fragmentation of federalism does not necessarily translate into ineffective or strikingly dissimilar policy investments and achievements across the subnational jurisdictions. These findings thus demonstrate that national authority is not a necessary condition for substantive inter-regional similarity in an area of social policy.

The chapter proceeds in four sections. The first section sets the context by briefly reviewing the federalism literature and distilling two sets of expectations regarding the impact of shared-rule and self-rule for education in Canada that guide the subsequent empirical inquiry. The second section examines the impact of federalism on the investments made in public education, assessing the level of education spending and the student-teacher ratios in Canada compared to other OECD countries, and the interprovincial similarities in education spending compared with a selection of other countries. In the third section, attention shifts to outcomes in education and the educational achievements of the Canadian provinces. Specifically, I examine graduation rates, tertiary education attainments, and results from the PISA international tests compared with other OECD and non-OECD countries. The fourth section offers an explanation for these findings, and highlights the significance of three contextual factors: societal pressures, fiscal federalism, and the rules and norms that are embedded within the sector. By combining these three factors we can better understand how the potential for systematic differences can be overcome in a critical area of social policy.

Before proceeding, an important caveat needs to be made about my research design. Ideally, provincial level data from Canada would be systematically compared with other subnational level data from other countries. These comparisons would permit an effective demonstration of whether or not Canada demonstrates elevated inter-regional variations compared with other countries. Unfortunately, a series of data limitations has restricted the potential universe of cases and undermined any attempt at systematic comparison. Obtaining clearly comparable data at the national level is in itself a challenge, despite notable advances made by the OECD and the UN. Gathering

92 Student-teacher ratios broken down to the regional level, for example, are not published by Australia or the United States. In Australia, state-level spending is only provided as dollar-value expenditures, not according to per-pupil allocations or as percentages of Gross State Product. [Ian Bates, National Information and Referral Service Australian Bureau of Statistics, email exchange, Friday May 9 2008].
consistent data at the regional or subnational level is further compromised by the fact that every country adheres to its own methods of data collection and publication. Therefore, the comparison of internal results within Canada with those of other countries is relatively unstructured here. Despite the limitations, the unstructured comparisons provide certain benchmarks and touchstones by which to assess the extent of internal variations in education investments and achievements across the Canadian provinces relative to other cases.

1.1 Setting the Context

Federalism and Social Policy

Scanning the federalism literature, there are numerous debates regarding the impact of shared-rule and self-rule on investments and achievements in social policy. However, as Richard Simeon writes, “If there is any consensus in the literature on the policy consequences of federalism it is this: that the size of government, and the commitment to social spending is lower in federal countries than in non-federal countries.” Researchers from all the primary explanatory theories agree that social spending was delayed in federal countries and continues to be depressed. Macro-quantitative assessments demonstrate that federations delayed introducing numerous policy components of the welfare state and recorded chronic under-funding of the initiatives once they were launched. David Cameron, for example, determined that

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federalism was the key explanatory factor to account for variations in welfare spending, and Duane Swank asserts that the combination of federalism and bicameralism has an undeniable negative impact on state investments in social policy.

Systematic underinvestment in social policy does not necessarily translate into embedded dissimilarity within federations. The logic is straightforward: if all constituent governments under-invest equally in a policy sector, no portion of the population will receive uneven treatment. The problem is that resources are not evenly distributed across a country. Some governments that have superior resources at their disposal may choose to invest more than others and provide a greater range of policies than those of their neighbours. “The critical issue,” according to Keith Banting, “is whether social benefits are available to all citizens on equal terms.” In his study of K-12 education in the US, for example, Mark Carl Rom determined that the more wealthy states were increasing investments in a race to the top, while the less wealthy states were becoming increasingly miserly in a race to the bottom. Residents of economically weaker states consequently receive dissimilar treatment in the educational investments compared with residents in economically stronger states.

Tangentially related to policy investments are the policy outcomes in federal countries. The underlying concern of federal critics is that uneven investment will lead to discrepancies in policy outcomes, thus compromising the logic of social citizenship and undermining the achievement of social cohesion throughout the national population. If certain subnational governments are unable or unwilling to provide effective programs, their populations will not receive comparable benefits and may suffer from, among other things, greater health problems, lower educational outcomes, and higher rates of poverty.

achievement, and poorer economic performance.\textsuperscript{102} It is therefore important to consider not only the levels of investments made to social programs but also the subsequent achievements that result from government policies.

To reconcile the tension between federalism/diversity and social policy/similarity, scholars and practitioners frequently turn to the power of the central state.\textsuperscript{103} There is a clear bias favouring national level intervention to facilitate subnational consistency through national standards, targeted funding, and overarching priorities in pertinent policy fields. Indeed, arguments supporting national involvement in education have frequently resonated in Canada. J.A. Corry once argued:

\begin{quote}
If there is indeed a nation to be spoken for and protected, then the federal government must speak for the nation, take steps to ensure its survival, and nourish its growth . . . if there are national needs and objectives that require concerted educational policy in two, several or all provinces, no provincial legislature is itself competent in the matter, and judicial interpretation on other comparable aspects of the distribution of powers under the British North America Act makes it clear that Parliament is competent. . .
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{104}

Similar arguments have been raised in other policy areas and underpin, for example, the federal government’s health care standards in the Canada Health Act. But what is the state of education in Canada? Does the federal government maintain standards in the field? What are the mechanisms to secure comparable programs across the provinces? It is to these questions that I now turn.


\textsuperscript{103} See, for example, K.C. Wheare, \textit{Federal Government}, 2nd Edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1951); Fritz W. Scharpf, ‘The Joint-Decision Trap: Lessons from German Federalism and European Integration’, \textit{Public Administration} 66 (1988): 239-278. However, not all scholars support the view that centralization is necessary to encourage similar standards or high investments. See, for example, Noël, ‘Is Decentralization Conservative?’ 1999.

Education in Canada

As outlined in the Introduction, under Sections 92 and 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867, the provinces of Canada have the legal, administrative, and financial responsibility for education. Unlike other industrialized countries, Canada does not maintain an authoritative national body capable of imposing overarching standards in the field.\textsuperscript{105} A voluntary body, the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) was created in 1967 to provide a forum for inter-provincial discourse and action in education. The CMEC’s mandate is quite simple: to facilitate and enhance discussions among education ministers and bureaucratic officials from the ten provinces and three territories. Coordination and cooperation among the sub-national governments are goals of the Council, and the CMEC functions without intervention or participation from the federal government.\textsuperscript{106} Provincial and territorial autonomy is recognized and guarded by the CMEC as agreements reached among the parties are non-binding and unenforceable by the Council. The success of initiatives turns entirely on the willingness of each of the provinces as sovereign entities.

The institutional exceptionalism of subnational authority for elementary and secondary education is one reason why Canada provides an interesting case to examine the potential tensions between federalism and similarity in social policy. However, institutional autonomy and the capacity to act independently do not immediately mean that provincial educational policies will diverge. Additionally, the Canadian provinces demonstrate noticeable diversity on factors such as political economy, demographics, and political culture, which are implicated by both public policy scholars and education policy scholars as critical elements that influence the shape and form of government policies.\textsuperscript{107} Given these important variations in the policy context, it is reasonable to expect that there will be significant variation in the investments and achievements of

\textsuperscript{106} When the Council meets to discuss issues of post-secondary education, representatives from the federal government usually participate due to Ottawa’s long-standing fiscal contributions to colleges and universities in the country. However, for the elementary and secondary sectors, the federal government is largely excluded from the processes barring an explicit invitation from the CMEC Chair to make a presentation on a specific issue.
\textsuperscript{107} Terry Wotherspoon, (Ed.) \textit{The Political Economy of Canadian Schooling} (Toronto: Methuen, 1987); Amy Klauke, ‘Coping with Changing Demographics’, ERIC Digest Series EA45 ERIC Identifier ED315865, 1989. \url{http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9214/coping.htm} (accessed on February 27, 2008).
the different provinces. Put simply, subnational diversity should be the norm in Canadian education.

From this discussion of the federalism literature and the outline of the structural and contextual features of the Canadian education sector, it becomes possible to distil two groups of propositions to guide this empirical investigation of elementary and secondary education in Canada. First, based on the decentralization of the policy sector and the extensive autonomy afforded the provincial governments, I anticipate that Canada will under-invest in elementary and secondary education and that there will be greater subnational variation in the levels of investments compared to other OECD countries. Second, given the institutional fragmentation of Canadian education, I anticipate that there will be under-performance in education and that there will be greater unevenness in subnational educational outcomes compared to other OECD countries.

1.2 Investments in Canadian Education

I use two sets of indicators to measure the level of investment in Canadian education and situate it in a comparative context. The first set focuses on spending: average annual expenditures per pupil and educational spending as a proportion of GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Data on national level per pupil spending and as a proportion of GDP are taken from the OECD. Per pupil spending provides one indicator of government generosity in education. Per pupil expenditures, however, are heavily influenced by contextual conditions, including the presence of right-wing parties, internal population demographics, power of teachers’ unions to press for higher salaries, transportation costs to bring students to schools, and other general overhead costs. To reinforce the measure of spending, I also examine educational expenditures as a proportion of GDP. This allows me to assess the relative importance of education spending next to the overall fiscal capacity of the state. The second set of indicators addresses a different measure of inputs: student-teacher ratios. Borrowing from Mark

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Carl Rom and James Garand, this indicator assumes that the smaller the class size, the more generous the education policy. OECD and Statistics Canada data are used for student-teacher ratios.

To measure the extent of dissimilarity in Canadian education I look at the differences in the levels of investments of the provincial governments. The data on spending and student-teacher ratios are therefore broken down to see whether or not significant variations appear among the provinces. Ideally, all regional level data would be systematically compared with a number of other countries to see if greater internal variations appear in the Canadian case. However, as noted earlier, data limitations have restricted the potential for such a comprehensive assessment. As a result, I can only compare regional variations in the rate of per-pupil spending between Canada and a selection of other jurisdictions, specifically, the United States, England, and Germany. Moreover, spending is reported in domestic dollar values which further weaken the comparable validity. However, the data nevertheless provide a valuable touchstone to determine if greater internal variations appear in the Canadian case than in other polities with national departments of education.

Does Canada under-invest in education relative to other OECD countries? The picture is a bit mixed. The data presented in Table 1.1 demonstrate that per-pupil spending is lower in Canada, thus seeming to confirm with the general consensus that institutional fragmentation can depress social spending in a federation. In fact, of the twelve countries sampled, only New Zealand falls below Canada. However, other federations record higher per pupil spending, indicating that federalism does not necessarily contribute to less investment in social programs. It simply seems that Canada spends less than other OECD countries for reasons beyond institutional decentralization. Looking at spending as a proportion of GDP, Canada falls slightly below the OECD average with only Germany and Japan investing less than Canada.

110 Beyond the practical consideration of data availability, these three jurisdictions offer a useful touchstone to assess the importance of national standards. All three jurisdictions have a national department dedicated to educational affairs, but the influence of Germany’s national department is the weakest. The US and Germany are formally federal while England is a constituent unit of the United Kingdom that governs its own educational affairs.
Therefore, the impact of federalism and decentralization on educational spending as a percentage of GDP is not consistent. This finding calls into question the general consensus that institutional fragmentation leads to underinvestment in social programs. Institutional decentralization cannot be implicated as the key explanatory factor.

Table 1.1: Annual Expenditures on educational institutions, per student for all services, selected countries, and as a percentage of GDP (2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Primary</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>P/S and post-secondary non-tertiary education – as GDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5 226</td>
<td>7 408</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>6 064</td>
<td>6 978</td>
<td>8 740</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>4 488</td>
<td>5 949</td>
<td>7 419</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada¹,²</td>
<td>x(3)</td>
<td>x(3)</td>
<td>6 317</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3 582</td>
<td>4 684</td>
<td>6 516</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4 615</td>
<td>4 805</td>
<td>8 419</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4 838</td>
<td>4 599</td>
<td>7 133</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5 743</td>
<td>6 916</td>
<td>7 453</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3 316</td>
<td>5 590</td>
<td>6 411</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>4 147</td>
<td>4 614</td>
<td>5 458</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>7 112</td>
<td>5 818</td>
<td>7 249</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>7 755</td>
<td>8 305</td>
<td>9 590</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5 166 ³</td>
<td>5 713 ³</td>
<td>7 343 ³</td>
<td>3.90 ⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Public institutions only
2. Year of reference, 2002
3. Average from only selected countries chosen by the author, author’s calculation.
4. OECD average is for all countries, not just those selected.

N/A = missing value


Turning to our alternative measure of investments, as a national average, Canada’s student-teacher ratio is aligned with OECD averages (see Table 1.2). Canadian class sizes are therefore comparable to international averages. Based on the aforementioned assumption that class size indicates generosity, it suggests that Canada
is no more or less generous in this measure of education policy than other more centralized education systems in the world.

Table 1.2: Ratio of students to teaching staff in educational institutions, 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada¹</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD Average</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU19 Average</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ – Canadian data combines both elementary and secondary student-teacher ratios together and they cannot be disaggregated.


Are there significant inter-provincial variations in the levels of educational investments? Looking at the results presented in Table 1.3, provincial governments
invest at similar levels, both in terms of spending per pupil and as a percentage of GDP. In 2001, for example, per-pupil spending ranged from a high in Manitoba at $8,432.00, to a low in Prince Edward Island of $6,239.00.\textsuperscript{111} Student-teacher ratios are similarly aligned with limited variations appearing across the provinces.

Table1.3: Canadian and Provincial Investments in Education, 1999-2000 \textsuperscript{1}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-elementary, elementary, secondary \textsuperscript{2}</th>
<th>Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP</th>
<th>Student-Teacher Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7,758</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>6,503</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>6,239</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>7,072</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>7,239</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>7,333</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>8,130</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>8,432</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>7,293</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>7,401</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>7,905</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>677.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{1} – in 2001 constant dollars
\textsuperscript{2} – Public and private expenditures on education per student (based on full-time equivalents)

Sources: Statistics Canada, Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program, 2003. Table B1.4, Table B1.6, Table C3.1.

I can better appreciate the extent of inter-regional consistency in Canadian educational investments by looking at the consistency in per-pupil spending in other polities. Here figures from England, Germany, and the United States provide a rough comparative touchstone to ascertain whether the internal variations in Canada are high (Table 1.4).\textsuperscript{112} Relative to these other cases, the internal standard deviation as a percentage of the mean across the provinces is only slightly higher than regional variations in England, below that of Germany, and significantly less than the US. Focusing on the US, in 2005, state per-pupil spending ranged from a high in New


\textsuperscript{112} All figures were taken in domestic monetary values as reported by the individual cases. Because the spending is measured in national currency, the standard deviations are not comparable without some kind of standardization. The easiest way to standardize is to take the standard deviation as a percentage of the mean. In other words, the standard deviation of per pupil spending across regions in each case is standardized to a 0 to 100 scale, and is then comparable. Calculations were done by the author.
Hampshire at $13, 740.00 to a low in Utah at $5,574.00. What do these figures tell us? Despite the greater decentralization and potential for systematic variations in Canadian education, the internal variation in educational spending is no greater than in other cases, and in fact less than in Germany and the US.

Table 1.4: Subnational Variations in Per-Pupil Spending, Selected Countries, Standard Deviation as a Percentage of the Mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation as a % of the Mean</td>
<td>8.55</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>11.77</td>
<td>22.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To summarize, while Canadian provinces spend less per pupil and less as a percentage of GDP than other OECD countries, in teacher/pupil ratios Canadian education is on par with the averages reported in other OECD countries. Moreover, when looking within Canada, the provinces match each other’s educational investments. Canadian variation is on par with unitary England and considerably less than its federal counterparts, the US and Germany, even though these are more considered more centralized federations than Canada. It therefore seems that federalism and decentralization have not undermined the provinces’ abilities to achieve inter-provincial similarity in educational investments.

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1.3 Achievements in Canadian Education

To measure the levels of educational achievement in Canada, I start with national results on international tests. Specifically, I look at Canada’s results in the three rounds of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). These tests give some indication of how Canada performs as a whole compared with other countries. These tests, however, are not without some controversy as some education scholars contest the ability (and appropriateness) to accurately assess the knowledge of students in different countries. In addition to the test scores, I also review high school and tertiary completion rates to compare educational achievements in different countries. This measure assumes that countries with higher completion rates have stronger educational attainments overall. Tertiary completion is included on the assumption that if secondary education is poor, tertiary completion rates should also be compromised.

Results from the PISA tests demonstrate that Canadian students achieve high marks and consistently come in near the top of the scale across the three subject areas (Table 1.5). In the most recent round of PISA, for example, only two countries (Finland and Hong Kong) received higher scores on the science assessment. Therefore, at the national level, the country is performing well in these international assessments.

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116 PISA is an OECD-led project designed to provide international indicators of the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in the subject domains of reading, mathematics, and science. In 2006, fifty-seven countries participated in the PISA science assessment, including all 30 OECD countries. In most countries, the sample ranges from 4,500 to 10,000. In Canada, approximately 22,000 students from 1,000 schools wrote the assessments to ensure that information could be provided at both the Canadian and provincial levels. Some countries, with the notable exception of the US, also maintain large enough sample sizes to permit inter-regional differences in performance outcomes, although the publication of this data is inconsistent. Here, Canadian data will be compared with results from Germany on the basis that Germany maintains a national committee for educational affairs that can impose de facto standards and should thus ostensibly demonstrate less internal variations than Canada. Scholars such as Jan Erk have suggested that German education officials develop their programs with a stronger sense of a “national” or “German” priorities to secure minimum uniformity of the educational system. For more on this, see: Erk, ‘Federal Germany and Its Non-Federal Society’, 303-313.


118 Measuring up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study – The Performance of Canada’s Youth in Science, Reading and Mathematics – 2006 First Results for Canadians Aged 15.
Table 1.5: Top Ten Performing Countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment, 2000-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000 (Reading)</th>
<th>2003 (Mathematics)</th>
<th>2006 (Science)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canada</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td><strong>Canada</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td></td>
<td>Korea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Liechtenstein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td></td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Canada</strong></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td></td>
<td>Macao – China</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td></td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Korea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High school graduation rates are also comparably higher in Canada, with Canada ranked fourth among OECD countries. In the 25-34 year-old age bracket, 91 percent of Canadian students have completed upper secondary education compared with the OECD average of 77 percent. And at the tertiary level, in 2004, Canada was ranked first among OECD countries, with 45 percent of the population aged 25 to 64 holding some form of higher education degree, compared with the OECD average of 25 percent. Looking only at 25-34 year-olds, the completion rate increases to 53 percent compared with the OECD average of 31 percent.

Have these positive national results been evenly distributed across the country? Looking at secondary graduation, some variations appear in high school completion rates (Table 1.6). At 66 percent, Alberta’s graduation rate is significantly lower than the national average of 78 percent. Students in Atlantic Canada and Québec, with the exception of Nova Scotia, generally complete high school at a higher rate than the

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120 OECD, Education at a Glance 2006, Table A1.2a, p. 38.
121 OECD, Education at a Glance, Table A1.3a, p. 39.
national average. There is a simple economic explanation for this variation, however.\footnote{122}{Daniel I. Rees and H. Naci Mocan, ‘Labor Market Conditions and the High School Dropout Rate: Evidence from New York State’, \textit{Economics of Education Review} 16, 2 (1997): 103-109.}\footnote{123}{Sources: \textit{Measuring Up: The performance of Canada’s youth in reading, mathematics and science.} OECD PISA Study – First Results for Canadians aged 15, Complete Reports, 2000, 2003, 2006.} Research confirms that when an economy is booming (as it has been in Alberta), students tend to prematurely end their studies to enter the workforce, whereas when the economy is depressed (as in Atlantic Canada), students stay within the school system and delay their entry into the workforce. Provincial graduation rates simply replicate these well-documented patterns and do not necessarily reflect the quality of education provided by the different jurisdictions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CANADA</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>534 (2)</td>
<td>532 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>517 (8)</td>
<td>517 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>517 (8)</td>
<td>500 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>521 (8)</td>
<td>515 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>501 (15)</td>
<td>512 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Québec</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>536 (2)</td>
<td>537 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>533 (3)</td>
<td>530 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>529 (3)</td>
<td>528 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>529 (3)</td>
<td>516 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>550 (1)</td>
<td>549 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>538 (2)</td>
<td>538 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 – Ranking is according to position on the international level, not within Canada

Turning to the PISA results across the country (Table 1.6), differences in assessment outcomes appear among the Canadian provinces. In all three rounds of the assessments, Alberta consistently received the highest results while New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island lagged behind. However, despite the variations, all the Canadian provinces exceeded the OECD average of 500 points. These data indicate positive educational outcomes across all 10 jurisdictions.
The internal consistency in the Canadian results can be better appreciated by comparing it with the differences in subnational results in another case. Here I draw from German data (Table 1.7). In PISA 2003, Germany was ranked 20th of 41 participating countries with significant variations appearing among the länder. Bavaria, the second largest state by numbers of students, received a score of 533, putting it in the top five performers internationally. The largest state, North Rhein-Westphalia, received a score of 486, putting it in the 35th slot, while the city-state of Bremen received the poorest results, achieving a score of 471 that put it in 39th place. Overall, six states scored below 493, five states scored between 493 and 500, and five states scored over 500. Therefore, despite the presence of a national department of education maintained by the German legislature and the supposed drive by policy actors to secure a national system of education, inter-regional similarities in German educational achievements are slightly below those of Canada.

Table 1.7: Canada and Germany Programme for International Student Assessment Scores, 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Germany</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Average</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Province/ Länder</td>
<td>Alberta (549)</td>
<td>Bavaria (533)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Province/Länder</td>
<td>New Brunswick (500)</td>
<td>Breman (471)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interregional Variation</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through PISA, the OECD has also developed a measure of internal educational equality, ranking countries according to the impact of socio-economic and locational variables (referred to as between-school variation) on educational outcomes. According to the system, socio-economic status only marginally influences student achievement in Canada (Chart 1.8). Furthermore, between-school variance in Canada is

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126 Germany’s results from PISA 2003 are from: Elisabeth Muhlenberg, ‘East is East and West is West: Institutions, Politics, and Educational Performance in the Germany Laender’, Unpublished Paper, June 2006, p. 31.
around one-tenth of the OECD average meaning that performance is largely unrelated to the schools in which students are enrolled. To quote from the 2006 PISA report,

It is noteworthy that Canada . . . performs close to or above the OECD average level. Parents . . . can be less concerned about school choice in order to enhance their children’s performance, and can be confident of high and consistent performance standards across schools in the entire education system.¹²⁷

Chart 1.8. Variance in student performance between schools and within schools on the mathematics scale (Expressed as a percentage of the average variance in student performance in OECD countries)

Source: OECD PISA 2003 database, Table 4.1a.
Canada’s results in inter-provincial similarity in education achievements thus meet or exceed those of other education systems where the national government maintains stronger oversight in the field. According to OECD data, for example, in countries such as Austria, Belgium, Germany, and Italy the proportion of between-school variance is one-and-a-half times that of the OECD average.\textsuperscript{128} Moreover, in Belgium and Germany, socio-economic backgrounds have a major impact on assessment outcomes. These discrepancies appear despite the fact that, in all cases, the national governments maintain central departments of education capable of issuing some directives to the subnational governments.

To summarize, at the national level, Canada records high marks on international assessments and maintains an elevated high school and tertiary completion rate relative to other OECD and non-OECD countries. Looking within Canada, some variation in provincial achievements appears both in graduation rates and assessment results. However, when compared with subnational variations exhibited in other countries, the differences in Canada are either on par or even slightly smaller. Finally, according to OECD data, the importance of socio-economic variables as determinants of educational outcomes is highly limited in Canada, and between-school variation is minimal. Taken together, these results suggest that national standards are not a necessary condition for the realization of inter-jurisdictional similarity in education achievements.

1.4 Defying the Odds

These findings on Canadian education are puzzling. What explains these interesting results in Canadian elementary and secondary education? Decentralization and institutional fragmentation have not compromised the achievement of comprehensive similarity in educational investments and achievements. To develop an explanation, I turn to three contextual factors: societal pressures, fiscal federalism, and the rules and norms that are embedded in the policy sector.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.
**Societal Pressures**

From a society-centred perspective, the explanation for inter-regional consistencies in the social policies of federated states begins with the people. Citizens have similar expectations when it comes to government programs and thus place comparable demands on their regional governments.\(^{129}\) Stakeholders such as teachers also place comparable demands on public officials. The closer proximity of regional governments makes them more responsive to public pressures.\(^{130}\) And so, while particular policies and strategies within education may vary between the provinces, the governments are highly motivated to maintain comparable levels of investments and achievements with the other jurisdictions in the federation because that is what citizens expect.

To be sure, for some scholars, this assertion is counter-intuitive. Federalism and decentralized decision-making are often justified as a means to permit regional governments to tailor policies to local needs and interests, thus preserving policy diversity.\(^{131}\) However, as Keith Banting argues: “regional political autonomy is driven less by different policy preferences than by the politics of ethno-linguistic diversity and distinctive conceptions of political community and identity.”\(^{132}\) Just because federal publics may desire the preservation of subnational policy autonomy to reflect internal ethno-linguistic heterogeneity, it neither means that their substantive policy preferences will vary greatly, nor that regional differences in investments and achievements will become the norm.

This pattern is clearly seen in the Canadian education sector. Citizens from coast to coast consistently demand and expect high quality education programming from their governments. During provincial elections, education is always a main item and frequently appears at the top of voters’ priority lists. When surveyed, with the


notable exception of Québécois, provincial residents often request federal intervention in the policy field. This puts additional pressure on the provincial governments to provide quality and equitable programs to maintain their autonomy over the sector.\textsuperscript{133} One Director-General of the CMEC put it this way: “When I say I work for the CMEC, people get confused and ask ‘Don’t we have a federal minister for that?’ Which is why when we do polls on jurisdictional issues, Canadians couldn’t care less. All they want is quality education.”\textsuperscript{134}

This analysis clearly helps us understand why federations achieve degrees of inter-regional similarity in social policy despite the fragmentation of authority in various policy fields. Societal pressures, however, do not allow us to account for observed differences in subnational consistencies within other countries, including those that quickly appeared between Canada and the US in educational investments. Resting only on a societal explanation, we would need to accept the claim that some citizens in other countries are more willing to accept educational discrepancies and do not demand comparable programs and benefits from their governments. Given that this is highly unlikely, I therefore turn towards the organization of fiscal federalism deployed by the state to augment the explanation.

\textit{Fiscal Federalism}

As noted above, federalism enhances policy responsiveness by giving powers to governments that are closer to the people. However, responsiveness is only possible if the governments have the capacity to use the powers at their disposal. Legislative and administrative jurisdiction, as Richard Simeon and Christina Murray point out, is meaningless without the fiscal resources to sustain policy action.\textsuperscript{135} But fiscal resources are never equitably distributed within a state. Therefore, economists emphasize the critical importance of the central state as an agent of economic redistribution to ensure

\textsuperscript{133} In the 2000 Canadian Elections Study, the survey asked “Which level of government do you think should have the primary responsibility for health, education and social welfare” – 57.5 of those surveyed indicated that they thought the federal government should have primary responsibility. Moreover, in a Public Opinion Trends Series, researchers surveyed from across the country over time and asked which level of government should have the primary responsibility for education, and significant numbers in each region indicated that they supported some role for the federal government in education.

\textsuperscript{134} Personal Interview, December 20\textsuperscript{th} 2007.

that regional governments have comparable levels of fiscal capacity to act in the areas of their jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{136}

The constant feature of all federations is therefore the reality of fiscal imbalances between among the sub-national jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{137} To correct these imbalances, national governments deploy their spending power, developing schemes of financial transfers. As one would expect, the financial schemes vary from country to country. A brief comparison between Canada and the US is instructive. The United States relies on a model of conditional grants where 100 percent of federal transfers have conditions attached to them.\textsuperscript{138} Washington earmarks all of its funds for specific programs to influence how states allocate the monies. Moreover, the lion’s share of revenue-raising powers rests in federal hands, thus restricting the autonomy of the states from national interference.\textsuperscript{139} Finally, the US federal government does not maintain a system of equalization to redistribute wealth across the subnational jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{140}

Canada, in contrast, has developed a transfer system that scholars regard at most as semi-conditional, or more commonly as unconditional, through the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) now know as the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and the Canada Social Tranfer (CST).\textsuperscript{141} Canadian provinces also retain greater independent taxation powers than their US subnational counterparts. A broad federally funded equalization program to adjust for the different revenue raising capacities of the provinces in turn supplements federal programmatic transfers in an effort to level the provincial playing field.\textsuperscript{142}


\textsuperscript{138} Ronald L. Watts, \textit{The Spending Power in Federal Systems: A Comparative Study} (Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen’s University, 1999), 56.


\textsuperscript{140} Théret, ‘Regionalism and Federalism’ 1999.

\textsuperscript{141} Watts, \textit{The Spending Power in Federal Systems}.

Consequently, American fiscal federalism is highly centralized, with strong levers afforded to Washington to impose national policy prescriptions and limit the autonomy of state governments. Canadian fiscal federalism, alternatively, is highly decentralized in nature, providing extensive financial independence to the provincial governments. So why has this contributed to similarity in Canadian education?

The Canadian system of fiscal federalism affords the necessary capacity to provincial governments to spend in areas of their choosing; equalization and unconditional grants give the subnational governments the flexibility to allocate the funds where necessary. Moreover, the system serves to ameliorate fiscal discrepancies among the provinces and ensure that they are able to provide comparable programs and services, regardless of their variations in economic strength. Indeed, this was precisely the rationale that underpinned the authors of the influential Rowell-Sirois Report. When rejecting the proposal for the federal government to directly involve itself in setting standards in education, the commissioners stated:

> Our financial proposals aim at placing every province in a position to discharge its responsibilities for education (on a scale that is within the means of the people of Canada) if it chooses to do so. Once this position is established it seems to us best that education, like every other form of welfare service in a democratic community, should have to fight for its life, and that a generous provision for the education of the children of the nation should depend, not on any arbitrary constitutional provision, but on the persistent conviction of the mass of the people that they must be ready to deny themselves some of the good things of life in order to deal fairly by their children.\(^{143}\)

Under the US model of fiscal federalism, the extensive conditionality obligates states to spend in areas that the national government dictates. Since they cannot cut funds from federal programs, when faced with economic downturns, state governments are forced to trim from areas where the federal government does not spend.\(^{144}\) Therefore, scholars such as Mark Carl Rom have identified divergent patterns in educational spending that appear among the US states.


\(^{144}\) Rom, ‘Policy Races in the American States’.
The US, moreover, does not maintain an equalization program comparable to that of the Canadian government. Using figures from 1994, for example, the U.S Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations’ Representative Tax System found that the range in revenue-raising capacities measured between 141 in Nevada to 71 in Mississippi.\(^{145}\) The strongest state, therefore, had two times the fiscal capacity of the weakest. Canada demonstrates similar discrepancies where fiscal capacities in 1996-97 ranged from 143.4 in Alberta to 64.8 in Newfoundland.\(^{146}\) Equalization serves to ameliorate the impact of this disparity.

By considering the system of fiscal federalism deployed in different countries, we gain a powerful means to account for internal variations in educational investments. However, while economic factors help us understand why investments may vary across subnational governments, they cannot clearly account for the presence or absence of internal variations in educational achievements. Results from the Canadian case suggest that a direct link between more investments and elevated performance cannot be definitely made. Canadian results demonstrate that higher levels of investment are not necessarily correlated with higher educational achievements. Therefore, to account for elevated performance, we need to turn to the third factor: the rules and norms embedded within the sector itself.

**The Configuration of the Sector**

For institutionalists, my initial focus on the institutional framework of federalism offers a useful starting point to uncover the reasons behind the interesting outcomes in Canadian education. However, some institutionalists would encourage researchers to push beyond the level of the nation-state, to examine the rules and norms that support the policy sector and understand how they shape and influence both the outcomes that result from individual action and the relations between authoritative actors.

Sociological institutionalists start from the premise that institutions should be seen as “culturally-specific practices akin to the myths and ceremonies devised by


many societies and assimilated into organizations.”¹⁴⁷ Where others see institutions as a means to achieve efficient decision-making and rationalize human interactions by structuring and constraining behaviour,¹⁴⁸ for sociologists, institutions take on a different meaning and emphasize “social and cognitive features.”¹⁴⁹ Institutions do not simply maximize the abilities of agents to achieve pre-existing preferences but maintain a mutually-constitutive dynamic that shapes the preferences and behaviour of individual action. In the words of Hall and Taylor, “institutions influence behaviour by providing the cognitive scripts, categories and models that are indispensable for action, not least because without them the world and the behaviour of others cannot be interpreted.”¹⁵⁰

The insights from sociological institutionalists for this puzzle can be separated into two levels: within the policy sector and within intergovernmental relations. First, looking within the education sector itself, the norms and practices of the structure of public schooling have implications for educational outcomes. There is a clear international commitment to universal education at the elementary level, and it has generated an international convergence in educational achievements at the end of childhood.¹⁵¹ This consensus, however, breaks down as we advance through the teenaged years into secondary education. While all countries are committed to providing some form of secondary instruction for their citizens, the delivery of these programs varies, with significant implications for overall achievements.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Hall and Taylor ‘Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms’, 948; See also Friedrich Kratochwil, Rules, Norms, and Decisions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
Some education systems are highly stratified with students grouped at an early age into general, vocational, and academic streams that prepare students for particular career pathways. Due to this specialization, once a student has been allocated to a stream, transferring between streams can be extremely complicated if not virtually impossible. Other education systems operate on different principles. Rather than emphasizing subject specialization, an alternative model delays any form of streaming for as long as possible and leaves escape hatches in place in case a student wishes to change his or her options after starting down a particular path. Known as comprehensive or multilateral schooling, the system privileges inclusiveness and flexibility over the subject specialization and targeted labour market training.\textsuperscript{153}

German education, like many continental European systems, personifies the former model of secondary school. Highly stratified and elitist, students are streamed at an early age with little opportunity to change pathways once following a particular stream. According to scholars such as Ludger Wöessmann, the consequence of this system is that pre-existing socio-economic conditions are often replicated, and children end up in the same occupations as their parents. Recent reports from Germany implicate the structure of secondary education as a key factor explaining the persistent between-school and between länder variations in educational achievements.\textsuperscript{154}

Canadian high schools embody the principles of comprehensive (or composite) schooling. Across the provinces, secondary education is underpinned by a commitment to extend flexibility to students and afford them considerable time to determine where their strengths and skills lie before being set down a particular path.\textsuperscript{155} Often critiqued in popular presses for watering down the quality of education and reducing the preparedness of students for the workforce,\textsuperscript{156} comprehensive schooling nevertheless

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{153} Ronald Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Educational Policy in Historical Perspective}. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).
\textsuperscript{155} Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, 189.
\textsuperscript{156} Hilda Neatby, \textit{So Little for the Mind} (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1953); Andrew Nikiforuk, \textit{School’s Out: The Catastrophe in Public Education and What We Can Do About It} (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walters, and Ross, 1993).
\end{footnotesize}
allows students the opportunity to reconsider their options and thus potentially increase their likelihood of successfully completing the initial stages of education.

Moving to the level of intergovernmental dynamics, sociological institutionalists would ask us to consider how the allocation of powers affects the relations among the constituent governments. Admittedly impossible to demonstrate conclusively here, it is possible that the lack of coercive authority in Canadian education better enables cooperation and information sharing among the provincial governments. Acrimonious relations and jealous turf guarding by both orders of government often characterize federal-provincial tables in areas such as health and the environment. Relatively unencumbered by the threat of federal incursions in the education sector, however, the provinces are freer to interact with one another without the potential for unilateral action or edicts from Ottawa. Instead of being socialized into hierarchical roles and positions of dominance or subservience, as the case may be in other areas where the federal government is formally involved, the provinces maintain relations on a relatively equal plain. To be sure, larger provinces could try to overwhelm the interests of the smaller provinces, but the CMEC preserves the principle of provincial autonomy through the conventions of voluntary participation and consensus decision-making. Workable relations among the subnational jurisdictions in turn facilitate the realization of inter-provincial similarities in educational investments and achievements, and thus help to account for the counter-intuitive findings presented here.

**Conclusion**

There are a number of important implications from these findings. First, a national coercive authority directly engaged in a policy field is clearly not a necessary condition for the achievement of subnational consistency in public policy. It was the Commissioners of the Rowell Sirois report who sagely declared:

> It must be emphasized again that collective action through the agency of democratic government implies a common purpose and an agreed method of achieving it. If the common endeavour is one with respect to which deep impulses in the community

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157 Personal Interview, May 15th 2008; Phone Interview, May 16th 2008.
around have differing conceptions, it is likely to break down and the consequent
disharmony will embarrass all the common enterprises which have been entrusted to
the government. A population of common origin and traditions, deeply habituated to
think alike on fundamental issues, may be readily able to maintain the agreement
necessary for collective action affecting the whole range of community life. Canada
lacks that homogeneity and this, in turn, limits the extent of collective endeavours
which can be effectively organized under Dominion control.

That is why Canada is a federal state and must remain so. Deep underlying
differences cannot be permanently overcome by coercion . . .

However, this does not mean that the national government is not an important factor in
the mitigation of differences among subnational jurisdictions. Indeed, my argument
suggests that the relatively unrestricted equalization program operated by the federal
government in Canada is a crucial factor giving provinces the necessary fiscal capacity
to invest at comparable levels in areas of social policy. The result is that the national
government may play a vital indirect supportive role that enables the realization of a de
facto national social policy system.

This observation generates a second implication of this research specific to the
Canadian case. Ottawa should tread cautiously when it considers reducing its
redistributive capacities in the Canadian state. Looking beyond Canada, the
implications of these findings suggest that when deciding upon arrangements of fiscal
federalism, other federal and non-federal countries should consider the potential
benefits afforded by relatively unconditional grants bolstered by a consistent
equalization program. To be sure, there is an important trade-off. Specifically, the
Canadian system privileges flexibility over the priority of accountability, as exhibited
in the American system of fiscal federalism. Decision-makers must therefore weigh the
alternatives and determine an effective balance between the different priorities.

Finally, my research also suggests that norms and principles entrenched within
a policy sector can have an important impact on policy outcomes. The Canadian
commitment to destratification in secondary education seems to have helped overcome
the entrenchment of significant between-school variations in educational achievements,

158 ‘The Sirois Commission as Historians’, Canadian Forum, November, 1940 pp. 118-119, quoted in
The Rowell Sirois Report Book One, Abridged Version. Donald V. Smiley, ed. (Toronto: McClelland
and Stewart Limited, 1963), 4.
thus contributing to similarly strong results across the provinces. Moreover, the absence of the federal government as a coercive force in the policy sector alters the traditional intergovernmental dynamics. In education, the provinces meet and interact as equals, thus socialized into alternative roles that seem to enhance positive and constructive interactions that have facilitated the establishment of collaborative pan-Canadian programs.

But these findings generate a second set of questions. Do these results in investments and achievements also indicate a high degree of interprovincial similarity in the content of education policies across the provinces? If there is a high degree of substantive similarity among the provinces, how was this achieved without a national coercive authority mandating common standards in the field? How, for example, did the interprovincial consensus to destratify secondary school emerge? It is to these questions that I now turn.
CHAPTER TWO

An Unexpected Outcome, Part II
Public Policies in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education

The previous chapter demonstrated that a national authority is not a necessary condition for subnational similarities in investments and achievements in a policy sector. The evidence that I presented revealed that the 10 Canadian provinces exhibit notable parities in their educational investments and achievements without direction from the national government. I suggested that societal pressures, Canada’s system of fiscal federalism, and the norms embedded in the education sector help the provinces to defy the odds and maintain parallel practices despite the absence of central coordination.

This chapter addresses a different question. Do the provinces deploy similar policies in the various dimensions of elementary and secondary education? Based on the propositions from theories of federalism and social policy outlined in Chapter One, it would be reasonable to anticipate that variations in provincial education policies should be the norm. In each dimension of education, there are multitudes of options available to policy actors engaged in the policy process. Moreover, the differences in demographics and political economies that demarcate the subnational jurisdictions from each other could encourage policy actors to select alternative pathways in the education sector. And, given that “social policy represents a tangible manifestation of the existence of a political community,”\(^\text{159}\) the ingrained cultural differences among the provinces further buttress the logic of diversity in opposition to the logic of social citizenship. However, rather than uncovering a sector riddled with major policy variations, I find that there is an unexpected degree of interprovincial similarity in Canadian elementary and secondary education. This is not to suggest that the policies of all 10 provinces are perfectly uniform; indeed, important idiosyncrasies remain across the subnational jurisdictions. But, in contrast to the expectations of students of

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federalism and social policy, the 10 provincial governments have developed what amounts to a national system of education in the absence of central direction.

The purposes of this chapter are two-fold. First, rather than attempting to provide a meticulous cross-national comparison of subnational similarities and differences in education policies, I map out the five dimensions of the education sector and highlight some of the major policy debates in each area. This description helps establish that policy actors face a myriad of options and have the potential to pursue alternative educational tracks. The portrayal therefore testifies to the fact that provincial decision-makers and members of the policy community could fashion distinctive elementary and secondary education systems.

My second objective is to provide a snapshot of the current education policies of the 10 jurisdictions. The snapshot demonstrates that despite some noteworthy differences, there are many parallels across the provincial education policies. These policy similarities have emerged despite the lack of national standards, central coordination, or direction from the federal government. This chapter therefore sets out the empirical puzzle that will be examined throughout the remainder of this dissertation: In the absence of direct national participation or coercion, how did the Canadian provinces establish similar elementary and secondary education sectors from coast to coast?

2.1 The Five Dimensions of Education

To facilitate this study and better understand the extent of similarity and difference across the provincial elementary and secondary education systems, I have broken down the education sector into five policy dimensions: educational administration, finance, curriculum, evaluation, and the teaching profession. Throughout the course of this section I outline each dimension in turn, summarize the prevailing policy options, and present some of the preponderant debates that resonate throughout the policy community and the public.

Educational Administration

The first dimension of education policy involves the policies that set down the organizational structures and managerial parameters of the sector, from the
management of local schools up through the central authority that oversees the system. The configuration of educational administration engages poignant debates on the relations between the state and society. State control over education is an attribute of the modern nation-state, but the ascension of public control did not occur without dispute. Until the 1800s, private enterprises had been providing educational opportunities for those who were willing to pay. Many of these groups were reticent to see authority over education meted to the central state. Local community leaders often opposed the penetration of a central authority into their educational affairs. Proponents of public education therefore needed to fashion a number of options for the administrative infrastructure of the education sector to pacify the conflicting interests.

One option sees the complete centralization of educational administration into the hands of the state. While local schools are responsible for the delivery of educational programming, all decision-making authority remains at the national level and policy changes cannot be made without the approval of the central government. The French Education Ministry, with its historical hierarchical modes of decision-making, is the hallmark of this model. A second option extends authority to subnational bodies. In most federal states, like Australia, Austria, Switzerland, and the United States, subnational governments play a role in the administration of education in conjunction with the central state. Or, as is the case in Canada, the subnational governments may have complete authority over education. Below the subnational level, policy actors can create regional educational authorities referred to as local districts or school boards, which act as an intermediary level of administration providing a bridge between individual educational institutions and the central authority. Lastly, individual schools can act as the fourth unit in educational administration as the direct deliverers of education.

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162 Subnational educational administrations, however, are not only a characteristic of federal countries. Formally unitary countries, such as the United Kingdom, have afforded administrative authority to subnational regions. In fact, in the case of the United Kingdom, regional authority over education pre-dated the more recent processes of devolution.
Policy actors can choose among, and even skip, any of these four levels when devising the administrative infrastructure of the education sector. In Australia, for example, the subnational governments gradually eliminated local school boards in favour of dividing administrative authority between the national and subnational governments alone. In 1989, following the recommendations of the reports *Administering for Excellence* and *Tomorrow’s Schools*, the New Zealand government “reduced the staff of the central Ministry of Education, abolished the regional level of administration entirely, and shifted the responsibility for budget allocation, staff employment, and educational decisionmaking to individual schools.” My description of these four levels, moreover, presents the administration of education as a separate infrastructure. However, policy actors can combine the administration of education with other political bodies. In the Czech Republic, for example, education falls under the purview of municipal and regional governments rather than operating as an isolated entity. Consequently, policy actors can choose among numerous alternatives when crafting the overall structure of educational administration.

Scholars of education policy have long investigated questions of educational administration. Researchers have examined how the structure of decision-making and the allocation of authority influence efficiency and effectiveness in the arena. Much of this work tends to focus on the intermediary and local levels of educational administration by scrutinizing the role of school districts and individual schools in the delivery of education policy.

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A key point of interest in this research is the degree of centralization and decentralization in the education sector with studies examining the structural relations between central administrators, local school boards, and individual schools. Researchers assess this characteristic by ascertaining the extent of autonomy and capacity that is enjoyed by the different levels of education administration from each other. Autonomy zooms in on the degree to which school boards and individual school administrators are allowed to act independently from central overseers. Capacity draws attention to the extent to which actors are able to carry out their assigned roles and responsibilities without assistance from an alternative level.\textsuperscript{168}

Under any administrative system, policy actors need to determine the allocation of different responsibilities among the various levels. In fully centralized systems, this discussion will be quite limited as the central state retains the formal authority over all aspects of the education sector. However, in systems with local boards or individual schools, policy actors need to determine how different responsibilities will be allocated. Curriculum development, assessments, teacher certification, and the power to dismiss local administrations should the need arise, are all pertinent responsibilities that need to be divvied up among the various levels in the administrative system. At issue is the extent of autonomy that local boards and/or schools should have from the central administrators. If boards or schools gain too much autonomy from the central administration, there is a fear that the education system will become too fragmented and compromise the achievement of intra-systemic cohesion among the different boards and individual schools. Conversely, if the autonomy of boards is heavily


circumscribed or individual schools lack any ability to make decisions free from central approval, local representation will be minimized and it will be impossible to tailor general programs to fit local needs and interests.

When developing a system of educational administration, one important consideration is the relative size of the potential levels. In fully centralized systems where the central state maintains all the powers and responsibilities, departments may become monolithic and incapable of responding to local needs and interests. In systems with local boards, if a school board is too small, it may not be able to provide for the educational needs of its community as it is likely to “lack the resources needed to provide the specialized teaching, broader curricula, and resources of support services.” If a school board is too large, the system may become unmanageable and the idea of local representation becomes meaningless. The contention lies on the issue of capacity and assuring that administrative jurisdictions have the necessary means to complete their responsibilities in an effective fashion.

Aside from these questions of the configuration and structure of authority in the sector, additional debates have occurred among policy actors and the public over the representation of collective identities in educational administration. According to Ronald Manzer, liberal and socialist theories hold that citizens elect their representatives who in turn represent the will of the majority while protecting the rights of minorities. For adherents to these theories, no special representation should be given to minority groups in educational administration. In marked contrast, under the principles of conservative thinkers, public authorities can be partitioned “on the basis of communal group membership, such as language or religion, and seek reconciliation of their differences through elite accommodation.” Proponents of this view thus

169 Up until 1978, education in Mexico was highly centralized where, among other inefficiencies, new teachers waited more than a year for their first paycheck. [Fiske, Decentralization of Education, 17].
170 Manzer, Educational Regimes, 14.
172 Manzer, Educational Regimes, 15.
believe that representatives from collective identities, such as religious leaders or linguistic groups, should play a role in the administration of education. Because of these philosophical debates on the appropriate means of representation in administration, jurisdictions may vary in terms of the formal inclusion of minority representation in educational administration.

Focusing squarely on the level of central educational administration, the choices that policy actors face that pertain explicitly to this level remain relatively unexplored by education scholars. Instead, some political scientists have taken up the issue of the alternative means that states have used to structure the overall administration of the sector. Manzer developed a typology to describe four particular configurations of central authority that appeared among Anglo-American democracies: civic trusteeship, religious trusteeship, collective ministerial responsibility, and individual ministerial responsibility. The first model involves strong central control in the hands of a secular civic board headed by a provincial superintendent of education. The second model preserves the influence of organized religions by entrusting the responsibility for central education administration to councils run by religious officials. The latter two models embrace a liberal theory of parliamentary government and allocate the responsibility for education to elected leaders. With collective ministerial responsibility, the entire political executive (or cabinet) oversees the education sector. Finally, under individual ministerial responsibility, a single politician appointed to the cabinet takes control of the sector assisted by a bureaucracy dedicated to the education sector.

Each arrangement thus offers alternative means to lead elementary and secondary education. Under the former two models, non-governmental bodies that are not held directly accountable to the electorate at large exercise control over education. These systems offer the chance for non-state actors to authoritatively direct and manage the schooling of the public. Under the latter two models, control over education is centralized in the hands of the government and is thus directly accountable to the electorate. Under the model of individual ministerial responsibility, moreover,
the administration of education is highly concentrated into the hands of a single representative at the apex of the entire sector. Consequently, each system has important implications for the general organization and management of the education sector.

**Finance**

Education finance involves “the acquisition, allocation, and management of funds to support formal educational institutions and programs.” There are four main groups of fiscal models that are conventionally used in the education sector. First, a state could choose not to financially support education, leaving it up to the individual and his or her family to pay for schooling delivered by private organizations. Conservatives, such as Milton Friedman, advocate this course of action, suggesting that the costs of education should be borne by the individual with minimal subsidies made available for impoverished families. Businesses or charitable organizations provide the instruction of their choosing and charge tuition to cover expenses. Friedman’s position is grounded on the principles of limiting government intervention and maximizing the autonomy of the individual. Under this regime, the state exercises little influence over the education sector; rather parents and other societal interests are free to express their educational preferences and break free from the confines of political conformity.

A second option sees the central state allocating taxation powers to local authorities and requiring them to use the revenues generated from the tax resources to supply the funds for a state-regulated educational system. Under this model, both financing and administration are the direct responsibility of local authorities that are also responsible for generating sufficient funds to finance the full school program. In contrast to the first model, however, the central state gains the authority to establish the minimal educational program by mandating the basic requirements that local authorities need to maintain in return for the devolved taxation powers. For example, the state could establish attendance laws, regulate the length of the school year, and perhaps set down some minimal curricular requirements or salary schedules for

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teachers. The authority of the central state is nevertheless curbed by the fiscal independence exercised by local decision-makers who can use their taxation powers to endow educational programs at their own discretion.

The third model proffers a combination of central and local financing. Taxing powers that are most readily and most efficiently administered at the local level – typically the property tax – are assigned to local school boards. The boards then use these resources to provide basic funding for public schooling in their districts. Additional revenues are raised by the central state through tax sources such as personal income tax or retail sales taxes and allocated through a system of grants supplementing the local contributions. In effect, this third model sets down a cost-sharing framework. It recognizes that the local tax base is insufficient to guarantee the necessary resources to support the expanse of educational endeavours. By retaining a larger share of fiscal responsibilities, moreover, the central state can exercise greater influence over the education sector. It can enact more detailed regulations and policy prescriptions for the local districts to fulfill in order to qualify for the annual grants and also work to see that all jurisdictions have access to some similar base of minimum funding. This implication that stemmed from the shared-cost model did not go unnoticed by policy actors. “It naturally follows that when the Board of Education [the central education authority in New Brunswick] undertakes to pay a portion of the school budget of each county from the Provincial Equalization Fund”, wrote the authors of the New Brunswick Commission on Education in 1932, “it will establish certain minimum requirements which must be met in respect of any schools for which payment is to be received from the Equalization Fund.”

Finally, the fourth model calls for the central authority to fully fund the entire education sector. Whatever the configuration of the central authority, the state maintains the responsibility to raise all revenues for educational needs through public

taxes and financing the system directly.\textsuperscript{181} Regional administrative offices may assist in the delivery of education policies, procedures, and regulations. But these offices are under the complete fiscal control of the central authority, rather than exercising local independence. Under the precepts of this financial model, the central authority can exercise the greatest influence over the substance and direction of the education sector. The notion of local control or autonomy in education finance (and consequently administration) is absent in this model as discretion and authority remains in the hands of the central state.

There are clear connections between the financial and administrative dimensions of the education sector. The four financial models vary in terms of the centralization and decentralization of fiscal and administrative autonomy. Under the first model local autonomy is maximized, as the central state remains fiscally absent from the education sector. The influence of the private sector over schooling is maximized as individual providers and families retain total control over their educational options. Without spending on schooling, the central state can exert little influence over the educational affairs of its citizenry. In its stead, local leaders and communal groups are free to express their educational preferences.

The devolution of taxing powers to local schools boards prescribed in the second model introduces the idea that the central state can impose basic minimum standards in educational programming in return for extending fiscal resources to the providers of education. The rationale is straightforward. The establishment of a minimum uniform program that is universally available throughout a territory compensates the sacrifice made by the central state of a component of its tax base to local educational authorities.

In the latter two models, the distribution of authority decisively tips in favour of the central state. Shared-cost programs introduce the idea of conditional grants tied to individualized programs targeting specific goals set by the central state. Local receipt of money is dependent upon the satisfactory implementation of mandated policies decided upon by the central government and regular supervision by the central state.

becomes a necessary reality. Finally, under the full funding model, the central state enjoys the ability to set budgets and allocate funds to educational programs as it sees fit. This is not to deny the influence of other agents engaged in the education sector; even under full funding, the state must take care to alienate neither its electorate nor its education partners. Nevertheless, by creating a monopoly over educational finance, the central state concentrates significant power over the education sector into its own hands.

**Curriculum**

Curriculum is the set of courses or content given in the schools. It establishes the educational requirements that authorities insist students learn throughout their public education. Curriculum sets out the range of teaching and learning activities that are publicly endorsed and the substance of “what should be learned, when, and how.”

Or, in the words of Joseph Katz, curriculum is “a body of thought and activity intended to develop in children those skills and abilities deemed necessary for growth to youth and adulthood.” My focus here lies on the official curriculum as embodied in the formal course of study prescribed by governments.

Manzer argues that “the substance of educational provision requires a theory of learning . . . [b]ecause theories of learning are contested, deciding the substance of educational provision involves resolving political issues rather than simply solving public problems.” At a rudimentary level, disagreements arise both within and between political communities on the appropriate groupings of students in schools, the number of subjects to be taught, and the number of hours devoted to certain courses throughout the day.

Operating beyond these functional questions, different philosophical and pedagogical outlooks on learning inform decisions on the organization and design of curriculum. Under the tenets of a traditional approach to education, students are seen as having inherent abilities and limitations that can be identified early in their educational

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184 This is not to deny the presence and influence of the hidden or informal curriculum that permeates through schools. However, an examination of both the formal and informal curricular components falls beyond the parameters of this study.
career. Policy actors focus on the resources that are available to students with clear specifications and requirements (or inputs) for teaching and learning. Courses are separated into particular silos with specific hours allocated to each subject, mandatory textbooks are assigned that focus on classical works, and central authorities will set down some prescribed instructional activities for teachers. In the early Twentieth Century, the national Board of Education in England, for example, issued the following statement on curriculum in England:

The course should provide for instruction in the English Language and Literature, at least one Language other than English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Science and Drawing, with due provision for Manual Work and Physical Exercises, and in a girls’ school for Housewifery. Not less than 4 ½ hours per week must be allotted to English, Geography and History; not less than 3 ½ hours to the Languages where one is taken or less than 6 hours where two are taken; and not less than 7 ½ hours to Science and Mathematics, of which at least 3 must be for Science.

Formal education is seen as a preparation for university and the emphasis lies on core courses that set the foundation for the broader range of academic disciplines that prospective students will encounter in higher education. For those individuals who do not intend to continue on to the university level, the course offerings under a strict traditional approach are quite limited.

By the turn of the Twentieth Century, a new pedagogical philosophy was growing. Known as New Education, unified under the notion of “progressive” ideas, expositors based their efforts on the recognition that, as Alexander McKay in Nova Scotia put it, “in schools where only the three Rs are taught the childmind starves.” The central prescriptions involved refocusing the educational efforts away from a dedication to rigid courses of study towards a more flexible curriculum that recognized the needs of the individual child.

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The term “progressive” has come to encompass a broad range of different ideas on education. At various times throughout the Twentieth, and now into the Twenty-first century, “a progressive educator was someone associated with the industrial education movement, the scientific movement in education, the mental-testing movement, the child-centred school movement, the mental hygiene movement, or the life adjustment movement.” The most recent iteration is known as objectives education. Rather than focusing on the inputs for students and teachers, proponents of objectives education draw attention to the goals or desired ends of education authorities and the needs and interests of the individual student. Encapsulated in the debates between traditionalists and progressives, proponents of objectives curriculum argue that decision-makers must also consider the needs of their students when setting down the course goals. Formally referred to as outcomes-based education (OBE), adherents to the model specify targets to be pursued and are preoccupied with the ends of a particular course or program. It then falls to the deliverers of educational programs to determine how these outcomes will be achieved.

A major debate in curriculum focuses on the organization and purpose of secondary education. Policy actors can choose among four general models: partite, bilateral, multilateral, and composite schools. In the partite model, separate schools are constructed for each major type of secondary program. Vocational schools prepare students for careers in fields such as agriculture, industry, commerce and the domestic arts. General secondary schools provide advanced education that prepares students for university. In a pragmatic variation, bilateral schools have academic and general programs housed in the same building while adhering to the principles of streaming encapsulated in the partite system. Both systems create highly specialized programs for

191 Ibid, 4.
particular career paths, and stream students at the end of elementary school into certain choices. The streaming of students is determined by results on mandatory universal exams. The consequence of this specialization and external selection process is that once a student sets out along a particular pathway, moving to an alternative program is quite difficult.

Recognizing this shortcoming of the partite and bilateral systems, proponents of the multilateral model encourage policy actors to redirect their efforts away from the academic stream and diversify the available programs in secondary school beyond either vocational training or the classical core courses. Advocated in 1918 by the National Education Association Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education in the US, the multilateral model envisions a “four-track system” with separate academic, commercial, industrial, and general streams. Furthermore, rather than utilizing an external steam selection process via a universal exam, individual students and parents are empowered to choose their own pathway. However, students are still streamed into particular programs and moving between programs is onerous at best.

Finally, composite schools allow students the opportunity to draw from a variety of courses and move between different programs (or tracks). Program specialization is weaker in composite schools, but students have the opportunity to move laterally between the tracks should they wish to change the direction of their program. “Comprehensive schools,” according to Manzer, “attempt to provide equally broad opportunities for academic, general, and vocational education for all students without differentiating them by program.”

Beyond the organization of secondary school, decision-makers also face the choice between ratifying a national overarching curriculum and allowing subnational jurisdictions (and/or local jurisdictions) the freedom to develop their own programs. In some federal systems, such as Australia, common national standards have been ratified to provide a basic foundation for the general curriculum. In other federations, such

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194 Manzer, Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy, 320.
195 Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas, 149.
as Canada and Switzerland, subnational jurisdictions enjoy the ability to set down their own curriculum, free from direct federal interference. Moreover, central authorities must also decide the extent of local autonomy and the participation of stakeholder groups in curriculum development. In the United States, for example, there are no regional or national curriculum initiatives and significant control over curriculum development remains in the hands of local boards. In other states, such as Germany, local authorities have some power to develop limited courses, but are generally responsible for implementing the curriculum set by higher authorities.

There are two issues at the core of this debate. First, there is the tension between the desire for content tailored to local needs and the importance of maintaining uniform standards so that students from different regions are not disproportionately disadvantaged. For example, if one region introduces certain course content earlier than the others, students moving into that region will be at a disadvantage. Second, decentralizing curriculum development may enhance the potential for creativity and innovation as one jurisdiction can test a new program without risking the system as a whole. However, if the jurisdictions do not have the necessary resources and capacity that is required for effective curriculum development, such as dedicated curriculum specialists and publishers willing to supply alternative textbooks, the quality of the curriculum may be compromised and innovations less likely to occur. Decision-makers must therefore determine which curriculum arrangement is best suited to their surroundings.

**Evaluation**

The fourth dimension of education policy can be subdivided into two components: tests (or examinations) and assessments. Tests have been a permanent feature of schooling since the establishment of grades and formal curriculum. Assessments, however, are more recent creations that have become prominent features of most education systems worldwide. The important distinction between tests and assessments lies in their purpose and focus. Tests are administered to provide individual evaluations to determine a particular student’s knowledge and abilities in a particular area. They

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certify an individual’s mastery over specific curriculum and help to preserve uniform standards across the sector. Assessments are intended to evaluate the performance of the education system as a whole and monitor the quality of education that is provided.

It is hardly contentious to say that tests are part of everyday life; we take tests for driving, undergo diagnostic tests for medical reasons, and even answer skill-testing questions to claim lottery prizes. In education, tests are defined as a formal attempt to determine a student’s standing with respect to specific variables including the student’s knowledge of a specific curriculum, or his or her skills in a certain area. In a classroom setting, tests constitute a significant tool used by teachers to assess the knowledge of their students. Tests developed and implemented by individual teachers are distinguished from standardized tests. According to Ross Traub:

Generically, an achievement test is designed to assess the knowledge and understanding a student has acquired of a school subject. A standardized achievement test is further defined by its being given and scored in the same way, whenever and wherever it is used. Standardization means that the scores of all students tested can be fairly compared, one against the other . . . the essential requirements are that the conditions of administration and scoring be the same for all the students who are tested so that their scores can be compared.

Standardized tests therefore act as a form of quality assurance that certain standards are being met throughout a particular education system.

Lorna Earl defines assessments as a program that “provides policy makers with information about student achievement for reporting to the public . . . done periodically to provide an index of educational health.” Where tests end at the individual, assessments involve data collection to allow decision-makers to compare across time and between regions. The key lies in the orderly collection and collation of the results to permit systematic comparisons.

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200 Ross Traub, Standardized Testing in Canada (Toronto: Canadian Education Association), 5.
202 The lines between tests and assessments are becoming increasingly blurred as decision-makers increasingly decide to use results on standardized assessments as a component of a student’s final grade. However, for the moment, we will maintain the distinction between the two components of evaluation.
In addition to measuring the academic achievements of individual students, assessments can perform two supplementary tasks. First, assessments provide information on the performance of schools compared with others. In this sense, assessments can be used as a tool for accountability, assessing the quality of schools both within and across particular regional boundaries. Second, in a formative sense, large-scale assessments can be used to improve pedagogy and curriculum by providing diagnostic information and identifying any systematic failures in the schooling system. Decision-makers take this information to determine a future course of action to improve the system. “They work like x-rays,” explains Earl. “An x-ray does not cure cancer, it helps to locate it and determine its extent.”\textsuperscript{203} It is then up to the actors to decide what to do.

Both tests and assessments can vary in terms of the consequences that stem from the results.\textsuperscript{204} Low stakes tests and assessments are those where students or education professionals might choose to be indifferent to the outcomes with little if any consequence attached to the results. Moderate stakes occur when test or assessment results are made public and authorities make comparisons between the results of schools and jurisdictions, thus providing information on the relative performance of individual schools and regions. Finally, high stakes occur when serious consequences are attached to the results of tests and assessments and the latter can target every level of the education hierarchy – students, teachers, classrooms, schools, districts, subnational jurisdictions, and the nation as a whole. When graduation requirements hinge on successful results on mandatory exams, for example, the stakes are high for the individual students. If funding is contingent on positive school-wide assessments, the stakes are raised for individual schools. The key characteristic of high stakes tests or assessments is therefore the attachment of positive or negative consequences to the outcomes. When creating a testing or assessment regime, decision-makers must therefore determine the nature of the stakes that will be attached to the results.

The arguments against standardized tests and assessments are well documented. Smith and Rottenberg, for example, identify six negative consequences of testing: (1)

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid, 407.
reduced ordinary instruction time; (2) neglect of material not covered in the tests; (3) convergence towards a single method of instruction and assessment in the classroom that mirrors those implied in the tests; (4) limits on students’ instructional opportunities; (5) undesirable effects on teacher morale; and (6) imposition of “cruel and unusual punishment” on the students.\textsuperscript{205} Going beyond this critique, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) also observes that standardized tests are frequently limited to multiple-choice items, which limits the scope of what can be tested and disadvantages those who may not be competent in that form of testing. Furthermore, few changes are made over the years to ensure comparability, which discourages the updating of curricula, and rather than increasing accountability, standardized tests “merely shift it from teachers and school authorities to anonymous government officials or corporate bureaucrats who cannot be confronted or held accountable if tests are poorly constructed, administered, or marked.”\textsuperscript{206}

Education policy actors therefore weigh these competing issues when determining their positions on standardized testing and assessments in education. In general, for the reasons captured by the CTF, teachers’ federations typically oppose the introduction of these types of programs regarding them as a threat to their professional status.\textsuperscript{207} Many politicians and bureaucrats, however, favour standardized testing and assessments as an important tool to maintain control of the education sector and ensure some degree of accountability. An individual’s support for universal tests and assessments therefore seems influenced by his or her position in the policy community.

\textit{Teaching Profession}

The final policy dimension of the education sector is the teaching profession. This is the area of education policy that pertains to the instructors who are employed in the public sector. It sets down the rules, regulations, and qualifications that individuals must follow and obtain in order to work in the field. There are two main components to this dimension: teacher education and teacher certification.

\textsuperscript{207} Canadian Teachers’ Federation, ‘Teachers Know About Learning and Assessment’, Pamphlet. \url{http://www.ctf-fce.ca/e/programs/pd/assessment_evaluation/AssessmentBrochure_Teacher_EN_lo.pdf} (accessed on July 20, 2008).
Teacher education includes a vast array of items such as pre-service (or initial) teacher education, in-service training, supplemental courses, and professional development activities. Here I focus on initial teacher education. Initial teacher education refers to the formative training that a potential teacher receives prior to entering the classroom. Programs are generally broken down into three components: academic disciplines or subject content; pedagogy, including teaching methods and education theory; and practice teaching. The purpose of the programs is to develop a basic skill set for all teachers in the system. R.A. Yackulic and B.W. Noonan have distilled the skill set into three areas: discipline skills; psycho-pedagogical skills; and complementary skills.

Among policy actors, the principal debate in teacher education centres on the appropriate locus for initial teacher training. Historically, the traditional option for teacher education was the normal school. Modeled after institutions developed in Europe, normal schools were under the strict control of central authorities that dictated the curriculum and structure of the training program and employed experienced teachers who could transmit their knowledge to the new candidates. These institutions provided highly practical training that emphasized close contact between experienced practitioners and potential teachers. Curricular subjects were treated as “sovereign disciplines” and the emphasis lay on practical studies, such as lesson planning, classroom organization, and behaviour management. Normal schools,

211 The creation of normal schools did not go uncontested. Dr. J.G. Althouse, the Chief Director of the Department of Education of Ontario from 1944 to 1956, for example, observed that in teacher education, “provincial control, as illustrated by the normal schools, was vigorously challenged by local interests.” (J. G. Althouse, ‘One Hundred Years of Teacher Training’, Addresses by J. G. Althouse: A Selection of Addresses by the Late Chief Director of Education for Ontario, Covering the Years 1936-1956 (Toronto: W.J. Gage Limited, 1958), 292.
however, were not noted for encouraging personal growth in teachers or enabling self-reflection or personal criticism.\textsuperscript{213}

In the 1800s, an alternative locus for initial teacher education emerged: the university. Some education experts believed that university-led training would increase the subject knowledge of teachers and augment their status in society.\textsuperscript{214} Universities offered the chance for prospective teachers to develop their own critical thinking skills and enhance their understanding of subject matter.\textsuperscript{215} Moreover, by housing teacher training in universities, the occupation would receive a professional boost thus helping attract stronger candidates to the field.\textsuperscript{216} Shifting the responsibility to universities nevertheless fragments control over teacher education. Under the normal school system, the central education authority enjoys a policy monopoly over the training of teachers. Transferring the responsibility to universities, deans of education are empowered to determine their own course of action and set the program for initial teacher education. Deans of education therefore become active policy players in the sector and can influence the direction of teacher education in partnership with the central authority.\textsuperscript{217}

Teacher certification refers to the regulations surrounding the formal licensing of instructors by an authoritative body to confirm their eligibility for employment in the system. On the one hand, local authorities can set formal certification standards. In this system, parents and community leaders establish certain qualifications that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{213} F. Henry Johnson, ‘Teacher Education in Historical Perspective’, \textit{Teacher Education at the University of British Columbia} (Vancouver: The Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, 1966), 17-27.
\item \textsuperscript{214} H.P Moffatt, ‘An SOS from the Schools: Report of the Canadian Education Association’s Committee on the Status of the Teaching Profession’, (September 1949).
\item \textsuperscript{215} Bernard Keeler, ‘Influence of the Profession in Teacher Education’, \textit{Teacher Education in Alberta: The Record and the Future} (Lethbridge: University of Lethbridge, 1976), 39.
\item \textsuperscript{216} Moffatt, ‘An SOS from the Schools’.
\item \textsuperscript{217} Beyond these two forms, a third option has appeared in some education sectors. Some states, such as New Zealand, have decided to marketize teacher education and allow the training of teachers by private, corporate service providers. To date, however, this idea has not risen on the Canadian educational agenda. For more on this, please see: Luke, Luke, and Mayer, ‘Redesigning Teacher Education’; L. Gordon and G. Whitty, ‘Giving the ‘Hidden Land’ a Helping Hand? The rhetoric and reality of neoliberal education reform in England and New Zealand’, \textit{Comparative Education} 33, 1 (November 1997): 453-467.
\end{itemize}
potential teachers need to meet. On the other hand, jurisdictions can streamline control over certification, entrusting the central authorities with the power to affirm the qualifications of instructors. Local and central teacher certification thus introduces the idea of a general oversight of the profession. Both systems, however, fall in marked contrast to the supervision regimes of other professions. Unlike medicine, law, or engineering, teachers did not develop their own independent bodies capable of ensuring the quality of members. Instead, certification lies under the purview of people outside the field, curbing the autonomy of teachers and denying them full professional status. Frank McKinnon, for one, has critiqued these types of certification regimes for relegating the teaching profession as a “kind of low-drawer civil service, trained, licensed, hired, inspected and directed by the state. No other activity, institution, or profession is in this extraordinary position.”

Recently, some jurisdictions have empowered independent associations to oversee the teaching profession. Inspired by existing professional associations in law and medicine, these associations are tasked with maintaining the quality of teacher professionalism by setting down standards of professional practice. Professional associations are also empowered to discipline members found to be contravening those standards. Interestingly, some teachers’ federations/unions oppose the introduction of such professional bodies. Existing federations see the new institutions as a potential threat to their power and influence, diminishing their authority and compromising the

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219 Ibid.
220 While it is hard to imagine a time when this wasn’t the case, teacher certification was not always a given. Indeed, in many other areas of instruction formal certification is not a reality. For example, various athletics instructors, holist medical instructors, and music teachers, do not need any certification before opening up a training centre. It was only once public funds were injected into education that formalized certification became a permanent feature.
221 Nancy M. Sheehan and J. Donald Wilson, ‘From Normal School to the University to the College of Teachers: Teacher education in British Columbia in the Twentieth Century’, *Children, Teachers and Schools In the History of British Columbia* Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland and J. Donald Wilson, Eds. (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd, 1995), 311.
ability of the federations to speak for their members. Moreover, similar to the inclusion of universities in teacher education, the creation of independent professional bodies fragments control over the domain. Professional associations become yet another authoritative player in education policy and must be included in future policy negotiations on the regulations governing both teacher certification and education.

**Summary**

To summarize, in each of the five dimensions of education policy, decision-makers are faced with myriad options with significantly different implications for the overall direction of the sector. A central theme that emerges across all dimensions is the tension between centralization and decentralization in the policy field. Education decision-makers must reconcile the tension between local and stakeholder participation in educational affairs and the imperative to fashion a coherent and cohesive education sector that can effectively and efficiently function. Given the policy autonomy, capacity, and salient differences among the 10 Canadian provinces, it seems logical to anticipate that significant policy differences should occur in the education sector. In the next section, I examine the current policies at work in the provinces across the five dimensions of the education sector. The evidence demonstrates that, despite important differences, there are significant similarities in the education policies of the 10 provincial governments.

**2.2 The Contemporary Snapshot of Education in Canada**

*Education Administration*

A current snapshot of educational administration in Canada captures a picture of extensive policy similarity that stretches from coast to coast. All provinces employ a common administrative model that revolves around strong central authority vested in the hands of an individual minister of education, who heads a department devoted almost exclusively to educational affairs. Historical differences in the forms of

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225 Provinces do vary in terms of the policy scope of the departments. Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan merged K-12 and post-secondary education (PSE) under one umbrella; New Brunswick,
central educational administration that used to distinguish the provinces from each other no longer exist, as they have converged on the model of individual ministerial responsibility. Administrative powers are in turn parceled out by the provinces to local school boards (or divisions) that are made up of elected (or appointed) trustees and advised by provincially-appointed superintendents.

Since the 1980s, the provinces have opted to expand the role of local school administrations by creating local school councils consisting of parents, teachers, secondary school students, staff, and local community representatives. The responsibilities given to local councils are generally consistent across the country, and the case of Alberta is instructive. Local school councils are entrusted with: advising the principal on educational matters; consulting with the principal on achieving educational standards set by the Minister; developing a process of school-based decision-making for school policies, locally developed courses, and extra-curricular activities; and providing a formal line of communication between the school and the local community. However, despite this tacit policy of decentralization to the local level, the bulk of authority remains firmly in the hands of the provincial ministers of education. The common three-tiered model is displayed below in Figure 2.1.

Throughout the 1990s, all provinces reduced the number of school boards in their jurisdictions and justified the action as a means to improve performance and efficiency. It is important to recognize, however, that the means of implementing the policy varied among the provinces. Ontario, for example, took a top-down approach, forcibly amalgamating school boards with little input from the front-line employees. Alberta decided to allow school boards to determine their own arrangements, but gave

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Ontario, Alberta, and BC maintain separate departments for K-12 and PSE; Nova Scotia includes cultural affairs with education; Quebec includes sports; Manitoba’s contains citizenship and youth; and Newfoundland’s ministry encompasses all stages of education from early childhood through PSE and adult education.


them a tight one-year timeline to make the arrangements. Manitoba and Saskatchewan pursued yet another strategy, first allowing the boards to voluntarily establish shared arrangements with other jurisdictions on an extended timeline. After giving the boards a few years to consider their options and make some tentative arrangements, the ministers of education in both provinces enacted legislation to force the reticent boards to consolidate.\textsuperscript{229}

Figure 2.1: Educational Administration in Canada, 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education\textsuperscript{230}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- headed by a minister appointed by the premier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- assisted by a deputy minister, and assistant deputy ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- responsible for providing the overall direction for the education sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- headed by locally elected and/or provincially appointed trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- advised by a locally hired and provincially approved superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- responsible for implementing the decisions of the ministry involved in the delivery of education programs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- committees made up of parents, teachers, students, and community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- responsible for advising the principal on educational matters pertaining to the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the representation of communal groups in educational administration, some differences emerge among the provinces. During the 1980s and 1990s, all provinces expanded representation for official language minority populations and created French or English language school boards where the populations warranted it.\textsuperscript{231} Despite the uniformity in policy activity that pertained to linguistic identity, the representation of religious identities in educational administration continues to vary

\textsuperscript{229} Personal Interview, November 12\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, May 15\textsuperscript{th} 2008; Phone Interview, May 16\textsuperscript{th} 2008.

\textsuperscript{230} Exercising their authority over education, the provincial legislatures “have enacted laws establishing central authorities or departments of education. The functions of these departments may be classified as follows: to regulate and enforce minimum standards of educational opportunity and facilities, to operate directly certain kinds of schools, and to give general leadership in educational thinking, planning, and research (Newfoundland. Report of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth, 1967, 49)."

\textsuperscript{231} Provinces with larger and territorially defined minority language populations, such as Alberta, created individual French-language local school boards. Other provinces with smaller more dispersed minority language populations, such as Nova Scotia, established a French-language school board for the entire province.
among the provinces. Across most of the provinces, during the founding of public education in the late 1800s, decision-makers decided to pursue a liberal theory of representation in educational administration and secularize control over public schooling. In Newfoundland, Québec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, however, religious minorities gained some control over educational administration and these rights were protected under the terms of the Constitution Act, 1867. During the 1990s, Newfoundland and Québec secured constitutional amendments to secularize education in their jurisdictions. In Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, however, Catholic administrators continue operating separate school boards. It remains to be seen if these remaining three provinces will seek similar constitutional amendments to end the tradition of minority religious representation in local education administration.

One administrative anomaly appears in Québec. There is a permanent council known as le Conseil supérieur de l’éducation. The Conseil is a consultative institution composed of 22 members, named by the Minister of Education. Initially, the Conseil was organized in two councils, one for Catholics and the other for Protestants but in 2000, the Québec government dissolved the two councils and moved to a completely non-denominational system. While different from the other provinces, the role of the Conseil is to “advise the Minister on any education-related issues and consequently it must, at least every two years, prepare a report for the Minister on the state and needs of education.” In other words, the Conseil does not play a direct role in the administration of public education in the province, but provides a detached (and highly public) consultative arm for the Minister of Education.

Finance

The primary source of education finance in Canada is general provincial taxes (particularly income), supplemented by some local property tax. Eight provinces - British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland - have formally assumed full state funding albeit with some small differences. New Brunswick, for example, does not have local

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taxation for education purposes under its existing legislation. Boards in Québec can still impose a limited tax, up to 5 percent of the local tax rate, to finance certain administrative expenditures. Moreover, the provinces vary in terms of how full funding is distributed. In Alberta, education funds are apportioned in a series of envelopes, and school boards can transfer monies between them, while in British Columbia, boards are not allowed to move funds from their original envelopes. Nevertheless, while eight of the ten provinces can still be distinguished in terms of the specific orchestration of education finance, they have moved to centralize the responsibility for education funding at the provincial level. Even in those provinces with minimal local rates, boards no longer exercise fiscal independence from provincial decision-makers in the departments as ministry officials set the annual allocations and approve local budgets.  

The two exceptions to this trend of extensive fiscal centralization are Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The two Prairie Provinces have chosen to maintain the tradition of shared costs with local districts empowered to set and collect their own property taxes free from interference by the central state. In Manitoba, local trustees set the mill rate at any rate of their choosing, accountable only to their local electorate. Equalization grants are in turn paid out by the Province to guarantee an equal access to funds for all districts allocated according to the straightforward formula that “more (less) funding is provided to school divisions with less (more) property assessment.” The Manitoba government further compensates for sparsely populated school divisions and is responsive to the individual district’s actual expenditures vis à vis its revenue-raising capacity. Categorical grants are also allocated to provide support for specific programs such as transportation, special education, and French immersion.

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234 Marginal autonomy is afforded to school boards in some provinces with full educational funding. In British Columbia, for example, individual boards may hold a local referendum for initiatives including new or enhanced programs, added activities for students, and local capital projects in addition to those recognized by the province. For details, see: Education Finance Statistics. Public School Finance Programs of the United States and Canada, 1998-1999 [On-line publication] Available at: [http://nces.ed.gov/edfin/state_financing.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/edfin/state_financing.asp) (Accessed on October 31, 2007).
235 Both Saskatchewan and Manitoba employ the same basic formula of \( A - B = C \) where: \( A \) = the school division’s recognized expenditures; \( B \) = the school division’s recognized local revenues; \( C \) = the operating grant to be allocated to the school division.
Educational funding in Saskatchewan adheres to a comparable cost-sharing framework with local boards empowered to set and collect local property taxes and the provincial government equalizing those revenues. Foundation Operating Grant is allocated by the province to “allow school systems to provide a desirable and realistic level and range of programs and services without an unduly high tax rate, enable school systems to retain full autonomy, and provide school systems protection from circumstances beyond their control.” The largest component of this grant is calculated on the basis of a basic rate per pupil enrolled. Among other costs, the rate includes expenditures on the educational program, administration, instruction, and plant operation and maintenance. Like Manitoba, in addition to basic program costs, the province allocates funds for other costs such as specialized educational services, small school factors, and transportation.

To date, these two provinces have resisted the national trend towards full state funding. There are some signs that Manitoba may change its policy course. During the 2007 provincial election, the NDP promised to increase provincial funding for education, increasing government support to 80 percent of the recognized costs for education. However, its pre-election budget also included an increase in the education property tax credit for homeowners and renters. This seems to suggest that the provincial government is still committed to the principle of local autonomy in education finance. The consequence of this policy difference is local school boards enjoy greater autonomy from the provincial governments in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan and can exercise greater control over the implementation of education policies in the two provinces.

Curriculum

A number of interesting similarities and differences emerge in the dimension of curriculum. Starting with the philosophical framework, all 10 provinces utilize an outcomes-based model of curriculum. Rather than adhering to the tenets of traditional education that set down the number of hours per subject and the instruction methods that must be used, the ministries of education mandate the learning outcomes that they

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238 Phone Interview, November 11th 2007.
expect of students at the conclusion of a program. To demonstrate, Saskatchewan’s Grade One English Language Arts curriculum breaks down the objectives into six components – listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. Students in Ontario are similarly expected to demonstrate certain listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills by the conclusion of the Grade One Language program. However, since each province can adapt the outcomes model, Ontario has included a dimension on media literacy as a component of the language program. Consequently, while the broad model of curriculum design and orientation is consistent across all the jurisdictions, provinces experiment at the margins to tailor programs towards internally identified needs and interests.

Looking at the structure of secondary education, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, nine of the ten provinces converged on the composite model of high school. Rather than operating separate institutions for particular programs, students attend common schools and have the opportunity to transfer between programs. Students are not required to write high school entrance exams to gain access to the programs and streaming is delayed (or often completely avoided) for as long as possible.

The exception to this hegemonic model of secondary education is found in Québec. In lieu of a complete multilateral system, Québec has fashioned a hybrid approach that combines aspects of the composite and partite models. Like all provinces, students in Québec complete six years of primary school (Grades 1 through 6). However, in contrast to the other provinces, high school takes five years, running from Grade 7 to 11 rather than Grade 12. Following the completion of high school, students attend a Collège d’enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEP) that acts as a state-run bridge between secondary and post-secondary education. Most CEGEPs offer two types of programs: pre-university and technical. The pre-university program takes two years to complete and covers the subject matters to prepare students for a chosen field in university. Due to the CEGEP system, undergraduate degrees in Québec only take three years to complete, as opposed to the national norm of four years.

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years. The technical programs take three years to complete and are designed for students who wish to pursue a skilled trade. However, it is important to note that pursuing a technical program does not prevent a student from attending university afterwards. Education officials in Québec have injected flexibility into the system to ensure that graduates of technical programs can pursue further studies at a university, although they will be required to take some additional qualifying courses.²⁴²

Moving to the locus of curriculum formulation, all ten provinces moved to recentralize curriculum development. Local boards now only play a small role in curriculum design and provincial bureaucrats manage the bulk of the process. In recent years, provincial governments have undertaken ambitious regional curriculum initiatives in the Western and Eastern regions of the country. The Western provinces and territories ratified the Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education in 1993.²⁴³ The purpose of the Protocol is to pool resources in curriculum development and achieve intergovernmental cooperation in a variety of areas including: learning resources; French language; student assessment; mathematics; special education; Aboriginal Education; non-official language training; and teacher preparation and certification. The result of the Protocol has been the ratification of common learning outcomes, but each province continues to use its own curriculum, independent from the others in the group.

The Atlantic Provinces also initiated a program to facilitate common curriculum development in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies in 1994. It was “conceived as a way to improve the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of the curriculum in each province by combining expertise and input.”²⁴⁴ Exceeding the protocol in Western Canada, the result has been a comprehensive harmonization of the curriculum guides issued by the four Atlantic Provinces.²⁴⁵

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²⁴³ Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education (Kindergarten to Grade 12) [www.wncp.ca/general/wpagreement.htm](http://www.wncp.ca/general/wpagreement.htm) - accessed on September 7th, 2006.
²⁴⁴ Barry LeDrew, “Atlantic Canada Common Curriculum Development: departments of education in the Atlantic provinces work together to renew curriculum for the K to 12 system” (Newfoundland: Department of Education).
²⁴⁵ Implementation of the curriculum frameworks remains in the hands of the individual provinces; as a result, certain differences remain. For example, the common structure for senior high school courses assumes that 110 hours will be spent on each course over the year. At one point, New Brunswick shifted
provinces in Atlantic Canada are using the same curriculum and continue to develop it collectively.

Collaborations in curriculum have even emerged at the pan-Canadian level. In 1993, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada approved the Victoria Declaration, “which outlined a plan for future directions in Canadian education.” The Declaration included a statement of shared beliefs on education held among the Ministers: education is a lifelong learning process; the future of Canadian society depends on educated citizens; and all citizens should have a “fair and equitable opportunity in whatever educational and training endeavours they may pursue.” In February 1995, the CMEC adopted the Pan-Canadian Protocol for Collaboration on School Curriculum, which culminated in the ratification of the Common framework of science learning outcomes K to 12. The purpose of the framework is to “set out a vision and foundation statements for scientific literacy in Canada . . . and may result in more consistency in the learning outcomes for science across jurisdictions.” Since the release of the framework, the provinces have used the outcomes to help direct their individual and regional curriculum initiatives.

Evaluation

Examination and assessment policies across the provinces demonstrate a high degree of similarity (see Appendix 2 and 3). Since the mid 1980s, with the exception of PEI, all provinces re-introduced some form of high school graduation exams and all provinces, including PEI, have implemented some form of province-wide assessments to monitor the internal quality of education in their jurisdictions. In general, the assessments follow a common model based on universal testing staggered through the different stages of public education – typically at grades 3, 6 and 9. Through the CMEC, the provinces established a pan-Canadian assessment program to gauge the performance of Canadian students in each province and compare outcomes across the country. Finally,

247 Ibid.
248 Ibid.
beyond the domestic sector, all provinces participate in a variety of international assessment projects, including the OECD’s PISA program.

Differences nevertheless continue to appear among the provinces. The provinces vary in terms of the publication of the results from standardized assessments. Some provinces release the district results to the public and, in a few cases, even of the individual schools.\textsuperscript{249} Parents can use the information when selecting a school for their children, thereby putting schools in competition on the basis of their achievements on provincial tests. Other provinces have resisted this competitive impulse in standardized assessments. When results are published as provincial averages, parents cannot use assessment results when choosing a school. Schools and districts cannot use the result to compete with one another to attract more pupils from neighbouring areas. Instead, assessment results are used for internal accountability purposes by permitting the minister to gauge the results from different districts, and for public accountability purposes by tracking provincial progress over time. Moreover, the assessments are used to appraise the quality of the curriculum and pedagogy provided in the system. The stakes therefore vary among the provinces. When results are widely published down to the district and school level, the stakes of standardized assessments for students and education professionals are undoubtedly increased.

The provinces also vary in terms of how standardized tests affect students’ grades. In BC, 40 percent of students’ final marks in grades 10, 11, and 12, are derived from results on provincial exams. In Alberta, 50 percent of a student’s final mark in Grade 12 comes from provincial exams, and results on provincial assessments in grades 3, 6, and 9 contribute to a portion of the students’ final grades. For Manitoba students, 30 percent of their final grade comes from provincial standards tests, while in Ontario, none of the provincial exams or assessments influence individual grades.\textsuperscript{250}

Finally, the marking arrangements for both tests and assessments vary among the provinces. Classroom teachers locally grade assessments in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Québec, while in Alberta they are both locally and centrally graded.

\textsuperscript{249} Alberta, Ontario, and British Columbia all release their results to the public, but only the latter two publish individual school data.

\textsuperscript{250} However, to be eligible for graduation, all Ontario students must pass the Grade 10 literacy test. Unsuccessful students are given opportunities to rewrite the test.
Assessments in British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, are all centrally graded by teams of seconded teachers supervised by representatives from the departments of education. And in Ontario, the government created the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), an arm’s length agency charged with developing and administering the standardized assessments in the province.

**Teaching Profession**

There is evidence of inter-provincial similarly in certain components of teacher education and certification. Provincial universities provide all teacher education in Canada and all elementary and secondary teachers employed in the public system are required to have a university degree to gain certification. Beneath these broad-brush similarities, however, lie distinctive features that differentiate the provinces from each other. These similarities and differences are summarized below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Summary of Inter-provincial Similarities and Differences in Teacher Education and Certification, 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Initial Teacher Education</th>
<th>Sequencing of Program</th>
<th>Duration of Program</th>
<th>Certification Authority</th>
<th>Certification Regime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>independent universities in all 10 provinces develop and operate separate initial teacher education program</td>
<td>concurrent or consecutive as decided by the individual university</td>
<td>four to six years</td>
<td>8 provinces – the Minister of Education</td>
<td>9 provinces – specialized certifications according to grade levels or specific training (i.e., Special Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ON – candidates in consecutive programs receive only 1 year of teacher education as opposed to the minimum of 2 years in other provinces</td>
<td>ON – Ontario College of Teachers</td>
<td>AB – K-12 inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BC – BC College of Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Universities do not deploy a uniform model of initial teacher education (see Appendix 4 for details). Prospective teachers can choose between two types of pre-
service programs. They can pursue teacher education after completing a Bachelor of Arts or Science through a one or two year post-degree (or consecutive program). Alternatively, prospective teachers can apply for a concurrent Bachelor of Education program that integrates teacher education in a four-year degree. In some provinces, universities offer both types of programming and allow students to select the option most suited to individual needs and interests. In Québec, however, all teacher education is conducted in the four-year concurrent format.

There is no scholarly, professional, or political consensus on which type of program is most effective. Recipients of consecutive degrees are often critiqued for not having enough classroom experience before entering the job market and having a limited understanding of pedagogy given their shorter exposure to teaching philosophies. Concurrent programs, while increasing the time and effort on practical and pedagogical preparation, are criticized for limiting the candidate’s knowledge of broader subject areas and providing insufficient attention to the personal growth of the individual before he or she enters the teaching profession.

Anecdotal reports from officials in education indicate that the format of teacher education can act as a barrier to teacher mobility. Across most of the provinces, the consecutive program takes two years to complete. In Ontario, however, the consecutive program is only one year. As a result, some educators believe that Ontario teachers who have taken a consecutive degree are not as well prepared as those educated in other provinces. “Some educators” according to one source, “raise concerns about the quality of Ontario teachers who have been training in a consecutive program. While it may suit the Ontario system, it is not clear how those teachers will fit in the rest of the country.”

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253 Personal Interview, December 20th 2007; Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Personal Interview, April 21st 2008.
254 Personal Interview, February 1st 2008.
Until recently, the Canadian deans of education had resisted issuing a pan-Canadian statement on the goals of initial teacher education. In May 2006, however, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) issued a general statement on the common objectives of initial teacher education. In contrast to similar protocols in other countries that articulate particular program standards, signatories to the Agreement recognize a set of normative principles thus creating a “framework of diversity with broad characteristics.” Such a framework is consistent with the General Accord of the ACDE, which states: “The ACDE has no wish to impose a system of national standards that would erode the important local and regional characteristics of initial teacher education or education more broadly.” Nevertheless, the framework establishes some common ground among the individual faculties of education and may lead to increased similarities in the provision of initial teacher education in the future.

In a majority of the provinces, each ministry is responsible for teacher certification. In 1987, British Columbia created the BC College of Teachers (BCCT), a self-regulatory body with a mandate to set professional standards for educators, assess applicants to the profession, and issue certificates. Ten years later Ontario followed suit and created the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) to regulate the teaching profession in the province. It remains to be seen if this policy idea will take hold in the other provinces. However, the creation of these institutions has altered the policy context that surrounds certification in BC and Ontario. The two provinces have delegated authority over certification to an external body, and, in so doing, fragmented the policy process.

Certification regimes also vary across the provinces as provincial registrars and colleges of teachers maintain different definitions and scope conditions for professional

255 The Australian Deans of Education, for example, have ratified a common protocol on initial teacher education. It identifies 14 attributes and skills for the beginning teacher and includes nine program standards to provide a framework for teacher education across the states. [R.A. Yackulic and B.W. Noonan, “Quality Indicators for Teacher Training in Canada” Unpublished Paper prepared for the 2001 Pan-Canadian Education Research Agenda Symposium Teacher Education/Educator Training: Current Trends and Future Directions. May 22-23, 2001 Laval University, Quebec City. 3]. During my interviews with sources involved in the pan-Canadian process, I would bring up this Australian example and ask whether or not this was a possibility in Canada. Respondents reported that this was highly unlikely and that some deans were in fact hostile to the idea.
accreditation. In Canada, teacher certification refers to “the issuance by a provincial government agency of authority to a person to perform educational work in a provincial public school system,” and “means a license issued on the basis of the normal minimum qualifications prescribed for general teaching services within a specified grade range.” Teachers in Alberta, for example, are certified from K-12 inclusive, with no specified grade range applied. In Saskatchewan, certificates are divided between “Professional A” and “Professional B”, where a holder of a B certificate is restricted to a certain area of specialization.

There is some evidence that teacher certification regimes will be harmonized across the provinces in the near future. On September 29th, 1999, the provincial Ministers of Education through the CMEC ratified an Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) to reduce barriers to teacher mobility in Canada. The AIP simply provided a general rubric for future negotiations. A comprehensive memorandum of understanding with an implementation plan for all the provinces still needs to be ratified. In 1999, provincial leaders indicated their intention to implement a comprehensive policy quickly, but almost ten years later this goal is yet to be achieved. In December 2007, British Columbia and Alberta ratified a bilateral agreement to eliminate barriers for teacher mobility between the two provinces and harmonize their certification regimes. And when asked about the national process, sources at the CMEC and in provincial ministries indicate that they are “strongly encouraged” by the recent progress being made and believe that a comprehensive labour mobility agreement on teacher certification is now in sight.

258 Donald Roy Cameron, Teacher Certification in Canada Canadian Teachers’ Federation Research Division Information Bulletin (November 1960), 17.
259 Sources both in the CMEC Secretariat and individual ministries of education report that a comprehensive agreement has been nearly reached.
261 Personal Interview, December 20th 2007; Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Phone Interview, February 7th 2008.
Conclusion

Despite the multiple policy options that face provincial decision-makers, there are noticeable inter-provincial similarities in the education policies of the autonomous jurisdictions. All ten provinces use the same system of educational administration, all have adopted the outcomes curriculum model and ratified a framework on science learning outcomes, all provinces have introduced standardized assessments, and all have delegated the responsibility for initial teacher education to universities. These findings therefore demonstrate that a national authority, with the power to enforce common standards and practices, is not a necessary condition for the achievement of substantive similarity in the public policies of a federation.

However, this survey also identified differences that remain in the provincial policies. While a majority of the provinces have centralized education finance, Manitoba and Saskatchewan continue to employ the shared-cost framework; secondary education in Québec is uniquely arranged; the Western and Eastern provinces each ratified collective curriculum initiatives, but only the four provinces of Atlantic Canada have formally harmonized their programs; initial teacher education programs continue to vary and the progress on the harmonization of teacher certification has been slow at best. Moreover, even when adopting similar policies such as provincial assessments or school board consolidations, the implementation of the programs varies among the provinces.

How has substantive policy similarity in certain dimensions of elementary and secondary education policy been achieved in Canada over time? What are the factors that facilitated convergence on common practices and what factors sustain the differences? In the next chapter, I consider alternative explanations and build a model to account for these unexpected findings in Canadian education.
CHAPTER THREE

Accounting for Interprovincial Policy Similarity

How did the Canadian provinces establish similar elementary and secondary education policies in the absence of formal federal participation or mandatory national standards? What processes drove the establishment of policy similarity? What conditions facilitated the achievement of policy similarity and what factors limited it? The purpose of this chapter is to review some different literatures to develop a framework to answer these questions. It proceeds in four parts.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the globalization thesis, a popular explanation for the increasing similarities of political communities. I argue that the globalization thesis is marked by three weaknesses that limit its applicability to the phenomenon under investigation here. First, its validity is strongest in areas of economic policy rather than areas of social policy such as education. Second, it anticipates a particular right-wing turn in the direction and content of public policies; however, evidence of this turn is mixed at best. And, finally, the globalization thesis gives us little explanatory traction over the historical dimensions of this puzzle. However, the globalization thesis implicates interdependence and interconnectivity among domestic and international policy actors as important factors that contribute to the implementation of similar policies across autonomous communities, thus pointing us towards the literature on policy diffusion.

The second section of this chapter explores the diffusion literature and uncovers a series of channels that account for the movement of ideas among political communities: coercion, competition, learning and emulation. For reasons outlined below, this dissertation will not maintain the strict distinction between the processes of learning and emulation, instead proposing that they should be seen on a continuum. To determine which causal mechanisms are more likely to explain the spread of education policies, in the third section I apply each of the mechanisms in the context of Canadian education.

The diffusion literature nevertheless has its own limitations; it offers little in terms of understanding the conditions whereby diffusion will lead to the adoption of
similar policies across political communities. Most studies of diffusion explore situations where autonomous communities have adopted the same policy, because the focus is on explaining the process.262 The fourth section of this review thus moves to the literature on policy convergence to flesh out the conditions that will increase the likelihood or probability of governments adopting similar policies and those that will increase the likelihood of divergence. The chapter concludes by putting all the components together to build a model of action to explain the achievement of interprovincial policy similarity.

### 3.1 Globalization

One common explanation for the increasing similarities across political communities is the globalization thesis. In its most stark formulation, referred to by Colin Hay as the “hyper-globalization thesis,”263 the theory predicts the end of the national economy and the waning of the independent state as the primary unit of political identity.264 According to this rationale, the autonomy of the nation state to direct its own affairs is being curbed under the pressures of the global economy. The increasing interdependence among political communities reinforced by rising trade and international commitments is eroding the capacity of the state to act autonomously.265 To survive, states have little option but to follow the lead of dominant players and conform to the expectations of global capital leading to the increased standardization and homogenization of world culture.

In the eyes of hyper-globalizationists, national school systems are no longer able to perform their functions of promoting a distinctive national culture and identity, or generating human capital tailored to local labour market conditions. The expectation

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is that national education systems will lose their distinctiveness as governments increasingly converge on global or regional norms that produce either one broad model of schooling available worldwide or a set of common arrangements among specific yet interrelated nations.\textsuperscript{266} Such convergence would further intensify the processes of cultural homogenization and reinforce the evolution of a common global society.

In addition to cultural homogenization, the hyper-globalization thesis also implicates capital mobility as a specific driver of policy convergence. The capacity of mobile asset holders to move investments across borders in pursuit of a well-educated work force could encourage states to adopt common educational practices that cultivate a labour force suited for the knowledge economy.\textsuperscript{267} As they compete with each other for investment, moreover, states must demonstrate their educational advantage over other polities, which, among other things, has contributed to the well-documented trend of universalized domestic and international assessment policies to generate comparable cross-national data on the educational achievements of different populations.\textsuperscript{268} Through these tests, according to this logic, state officials can demonstrate the education prowess of their citizens to potential investors.

Some observers of education policy contend that globalization explains a paradigmatic change in the purposes and ideas on education known as New Right education.\textsuperscript{269} As a major budgetary item under significant state control, neo-conservative administrations have often targeted education as a key sector for funding cuts. These same administrations have also reduced the scope of public education, narrowing provision to only those crucial in the knowledge-transfer function of schooling and eliminating programs such as music, visual arts, athletics, and other extracurricular activities.\textsuperscript{270} New Right education also seeks to reform governance,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{267} European Commission. \textit{White Paper: Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society} (Brussels: EC, 1995).
\item \textsuperscript{268} Benjamin Levin, ‘An Epidemic of Education Policy: (what) can we learn from each other?’ \textit{Comparative Education} 34, 2 (1998): 133.
\item \textsuperscript{269} For a summary of these arguments see: Celine Mulhern, \textit{Globalization and the Selective Permeability of Public Policy-Making: The Case of K-12 Education in Ontario, 1990-2003} (PHD Thesis, University of Toronto, 2007), 4-5.
\item \textsuperscript{270} Michael Apple, \textit{The State and the Politics of Knowledge} (New York; London: Routledge Falmer, 2003).
\end{itemize}
centralizing control over accountability, curriculum content, and assessment, while decentralizing certain elements of decision making down to the local school level and exposing the public school system to the pressure of market choice.\textsuperscript{271} Indeed, when looking across nations, ideologically distinct political administrations have pursued common policy pathways – New Zealand’s Labour Party was an early initiator of many New Right reforms;\textsuperscript{272} in the United Kingdom, while the Tories initiated a New Right direction in English education, these policy prescriptions were subsequently followed by the New Labour government;\textsuperscript{273} and in Norway, it was the left-leaning Det norske Arbeiderparti (DNA) that spearheaded the movement to decentralize educational governance in the country and refashion the curriculum adhering to the New Right impulse.\textsuperscript{274}

Students of globalization, however, increasingly recognize that the effects of globalization are not felt equally across all states: “Although globalization is a unifying and homogenizing influence with worldwide force (one culture, one economy, one form of political system), it impacts individual countries in various ways.”\textsuperscript{275} Furthermore, while globalization constrains the autonomy of the state, policy choices are not predetermined and domestic factors continue to influence political decisions. The result, according to researchers, is an interaction between the global and local levels, which fashions hybrid cultures that simultaneously permit the penetration of worldwide practices with the preservation of components of local cultures.\textsuperscript{276} Referred

\textsuperscript{273} Mulhern, \textit{Globalization and the Selective Permeability}, 5.
\textsuperscript{276} Scholars such as Stephen Ball have applied the concepts of translation and recontextualisation to capture these dynamics. See: Stephen J. Ball, ‘Big Policies/Small World: an introduction to international perspectives in education policy’, \textit{Comparative Education} 34, 2 (1998): 119-130.
to as ‘glocalization,’ local and regional groups and institutions acting beneath the level of the nation-state are seen to attenuate the hegemonic impact of global processes.

There are nevertheless a number of shortcomings with the application of the globalization thesis to explain policy similarity in Canadian elementary and secondary education. Andy Green for one has argued that, “these futuristic scenarios are somewhat overdrawn and unconvincing.” Worldwide evidence demonstrates little support for the prediction that governments are losing control over their education arenas or ceasing to use them for domestic economic or social considerations. Broad international policy trends in various aspects of education are clearly apparent but state education sectors continue to be differentiated by culturally relevant characteristics.

On firmer ground in areas of macro-economic policy, the accuracy of the hyper-globalization thesis clearly weakens in the education sector. In contrast to economic policy, for example, states have rarely entered into international agreements that relinquish degrees of sovereignty in the education sector. Instead, some scholars have observed the opposite trend; when faced with declining authority in certain policy fields, states have reinforced their influence over education as a policy sector where they can maintain control and pursue distinctive policy pathways.

The hegemonic impulse of the first stream of the globalization thesis leaves little room for explaining and understanding persistent policy differences within and

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281 The clear exception is the growing interconnectedness of EU education with member states aiming to create a European Higher Education Arena by 2010 under the Bologna Process.

among political communities. How and why are some political communities able to resist the forces of globalization and maintain distinctive approaches to policy problems? The more nuanced formulation in the second stream of the globalization thesis allows for the continuation of local policy legacies and the ascension of regionalized responses to common educational problems and philosophies. “Globalization,” as Roger Dale argues, “may change the parameters and direction of state policies in similar ways, but it does not inevitably override or remove existing national peculiarities (or different sectoral peculiarities within national societies).”

We could therefore draw from the more nuanced interpretation of the ‘glocalization’ thesis to determine the mechanisms through which globalization affects national policies and the characteristics and conditions of national policies that manage to endure. Dale, for example, identifies five mechanisms (harmonization, dissemination, standardization, installing interdependence, and imposition) as new processes in the era of globalization that lead towards substantial cross-national policy convergence.

However, even with these detailed mechanisms, theories of globalization still predict a significant shift towards a market liberal philosophy driven by New Right politics and the accession of a “hegemonic discourse” that “alters individuals’ a priori ideas, perceptions of the empirical world and their expectations of the role of the state.” Empirical evidence nevertheless contradicts these predictions. Celine Mulhern, for example, recently determined that “the inevitable right-ward turn predicted by globalizationists did not occur in Ontario education. Instead, education policy remained resistant to New Right re-purposing.” Similarly, Grace Skogstad argues that a “rich body of Canadian literature addresses the issue of cross-national policy convergence and confirms the uneven and ambiguous link between

287 Mulhern, Globalization and the Selective Permeability, 6.
globalization and growing policy similarity across countries.\textsuperscript{288} These findings thus undermine the predictive and explanatory validity of the globalization thesis.

Finally, both forms of the globalization thesis understate historical compatibilities and trends in education. International patterns and trends in educational expansion could be observed significantly before the commencement of globalization, or the accelerated flows of good, capital, services, labour, services, and information due to the improved communications and transportations networks and deregulatory policies adopted by countries over the past fifty years.\textsuperscript{289} Focusing squarely on the Canadian case, there is significant historical evidence of powerful trends in public schooling, which resulted in interprovincial policy similarities in various areas of the education sector that date back through the turn of the Twentieth Century.\textsuperscript{290} In each period of Canadian educational development, we find undulating patterns of convergence and divergence across the five dimensions of education policy. Improved communications technologies, escalating economic interdependence, and increasingly integrated domestic and transnational networks of state and non-state actors in the education sector, have likely increased the speed at which ideas are exchanged and rate at which trends spread among political communities. This change, however, is one of degree and not kind, signaling that a deeper pattern and explanation may be at play.

Before dismissing the globalization thesis altogether, this literature nevertheless highlights the importance of connective links – economic, social, and organizational – among autonomous actors as crucial elements that account for the spread of similar policy ideas across political communities. These factors are similarly emphasized in the literature on policy diffusion, to which I now turn.

### 3.2 Policy Diffusion
Diffusion is broadly defined as the mediated spread of policies, practices, or programs across and within political systems. Or, in a more precise formulation, diffusion is “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time

\textsuperscript{288} Skogstad, ‘Globalization and Public Policy’, 817.
\textsuperscript{289} Green, ‘Education and Globalization’, 57.
\textsuperscript{290} Ronald Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Educational Policy in Historical Perspective (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).
Scholars of diffusion base their work on the assumption that the choices of one jurisdiction are shaped and influenced by the choices of others. “Policy choices,” in the words of Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett, “are interdependent . . . governments adopt new policies not in isolation but in response to what their counterparts in other countries are doing.”

Interdependence refers to “contexts in which the outcomes of interest (i.e., dependent variables) in some units of analysis (e.g., countries) directly affect outcomes in others.” Policy externalities, or spillover effects, can create conditions of interdependence. For example, political borders cannot contain environmental events. If one state lowers its emissions regulations, neighboring states may see a decline in air quality regardless of their own environmental policies. Beyond externalities, conditions of interdependence can also emerge in situations where one actor cannot accomplish its goals without coordinating or cooperating with another. Faced with certain types of problems, political actors may decide to pool their resources and cede degrees of policy autonomy to realize certain results. If one or more of the participants decide to exit, the effectiveness of the initiative will be compromised. When policy actors are in interdependent situations, the implication is that they must consider the policy choices of each other when making their own decisions.

According to Ernst Haas, forms of interdependence mean “that there is no fixed hierarchy of preference orderings for single actors or among actors.” Instead, choices are influenced by the decisions of others, and re-orderings of preferences can occur in light of these decisions. When seeking to understand the factors that shaped certain

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294 To give a more precise example, in 2008, Québec became the first province to make winter tires compulsory. As drivers in the province rushed to comply with the new legislation, it generated a shortage in snow tires across the country. Public works officials in other provinces, moreover, report that because of Québec’s policy, they are unable to purchase the necessary tires for their own snowploughs. [Ingrid Peritz, ‘Quebec winter tire law hits the skids’, *The Globe and Mail* (December 11 2008).]
295 Ernst B. Haas, ‘Words can hurt you; or, who said what to whom about regimes’, *International Organization* 36, 2 (Spring 1982): 236.
policy choices, researchers must therefore be aware of the decisions of other political communities that may have influenced particular decisions.

Haas further points out that understanding interdependence requires researchers to disaggregate the state and refocus attention from an exclusive concentration on governments to include the influence of supra-state and non-state actors. Collective institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, directly affect the independence and interdependence among the active units. Participation in such organizations is assumed to increase the level of interdependence among those involved through mechanisms such as mandatory regulations, conditions, and programs. Even for those excluded from active participation, supra-state organizations can compel certain behaviours by using carrots and sticks to induce countries to adopt preferred reforms.

Inside the domestic context, governments rarely maintain a monopoly over policy decisions, and non-state actors often play an important role in the development and dissemination of ideas, practices, programs, and policies. Captured by the concepts of the epistemic and policy communities, which will be discussed in further detail below, researchers now investigate the structural relations between groups and the state to understand how configurations in the community may influence policy development and dissemination. The state, therefore, is not the only venue that researchers should consider when exploring the issue of policy diffusion.

Interdependence is one form of relations among actors and/or political communities. We must also recognize that actors and political communities can also be connected. The idea of connectivity taps reciprocal relations and links between different actors and/or units. In contrast to interdependence, connectivity does not

296 Ibid, 236.
mean that the decisions of one necessarily affect the outcomes for another. Instead, connectivity acknowledges that actors and communities that are part of a system interact with one other by virtue of the fact that they occupy the same system. Connections act as transmission lines or conduits with two primary effects. First, information that is exchanged along these lines may shape and influence preferences and decisions of the different actors. Second, the nature and intensity of the connections themselves (and changes to them) may influence both the processes of diffusion and the interactions among the actors and communities in the system.

It is hardly contentious to say that interdependence and connections among political units in federations can exist in a number of ways. A common feature of federations is the creation of an economic union among the constituent units. This union involves reducing trade barriers and enabling labour mobility across the subnational territories, thus creating formal economic interdependence among the jurisdictions. Economic interdependence can also appear in a more targeted form. Because resources are never evenly distributed across territories and regions, political communities often devise means to redistribute economic resources among different jurisdictions. Known as fiscal federalism, governments create mechanisms to move fiscal resources from economically strong regions to economically weaker regions. Economic growth in one jurisdiction may therefore impact the economic capacities of other jurisdictions. Furthermore, changes to the redistributive regime can increase or decrease the subnational governments’ abilities to support the policy fields that fall under their jurisdiction. Therefore, the types of instruments used to redistribute wealth can influence the interdependence among the subnational jurisdictions.

Finally, independent political communities can decide to pool their resources—military or other—to collectively increase their capacity on a particular issue or in a

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301 It should not be presumed that federalism fashions a perfect economic union with a completely open market among the jurisdictions. In the Canadian context, barriers between provinces have often been greater than barriers across national borders. The rules governing the internal economic union have been frequently the focus of intense political debates between various state and non-state players. See, for example, Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, *Commission on Canada’s Future* (Ottawa: Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, 1984).
broader field. The founders of Canada, for example, used fear of an American military incursion to promote the union of the colonies. Only together, it was reasoned, could British North America resist a potential US invasion. This logic resonates below the level of the nation-state down into individual policy sectors and particular initiatives. Subnational governments, for example, may decide to collaborate in pursuit of common goals or shared policy objectives. Subnational governments may decide to share policy experts, ratify collective agreements, establish joint programs, or harmonize policies to enhance performance or achieve greater efficiency. Collective action thus serves to reinforce the interdependence among the participating jurisdictions because if one government withdraws its participation, the activities of the others are compromised.

What are the different types of connections that can form among political communities? There are three nodes of connectivity significant to this thesis: legal, organizational, and cultural. Political communities can be legally interconnected, meaning that they are bound together under an official agreement, which establishes common rights and obligations that the constituent parties must adhere to. Federalism, by its nature involves a constitutional agreement, which therefore sets down legal connections among the constituent units. Changes in the legal regime alter the nature of the connections among the constituent units and the obligations that each unit is expected to fulfill.

The second node of connectivity is organizational. Political actors can create institutions for a particular purpose or to facilitate collective action. Non-state actors, for example, can join together in groups united by common interests in a particular policy sector. These groups can then fashion networks that transcend territorial boundaries to communicate ideas across political communities. State and non-state actors can create omnibus organizations that bring together a wide array of interests in a particular policy sector that also cross territorial boundaries. Finally, state actors can create intergovernmental organizations that exclude non-state actors from

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authoritatively participating to facilitate the realization of cooperative agreements and
shared initiatives among state officials alone. Each type of organizational network
serves to reinforce the conduits for diffusion among policy actors. In federations,
moreover, organizations can emerge at any level — local, subnational, and national —
and alter the potential for collective action between state and non-state actors both
within and across political communities.

The third node of connectivity is cultural. Political communities may share
linkages based on such things as a common language, customs, shared history, or
religion. Cultural bonds help to fashion self-identified peer groups among political
communities. At the international level, for example, scholars often examine relations
among Anglo-American democracies and former post-Soviet states. As cultural ties
among political communities increase, the connective bonds among them are
intensified. Stronger bonds influence the accessibility and penetration of policy ideas
within the relevant grouping. Moreover, where cultural ties are weaker, policy actors
may selectively disregard the choices and ideas that emerge from beyond their own
group. In federations, cultural bonds can develop at the national level where an
overarching identity ties together all the constituent groups. However, students of
federalism also know that connections can emerge within particular regions. Regional
identities may generate unique patterns of policy diffusion within a
federation. For example, members of a regional in-group may be more affected by
decisions from the other members of their group than by other jurisdictions in the
federation.

Together, these separate components begin to fashion what I will call the *policy
climate*. Added to these structural components of the policy climate are the prevailing
attitudes, standards and conditions within which political communities are situated and

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305 See, for example: Barry Cooper, Allan Kornberg, and William Mishler, *Eds. The Resurgence of
Conservatism in Anglo-American Democracies* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1988);
Arend Lijphart, ‘Constitutional Choices for New Democracies’, *Journal of Democracy* 2, 1 (Winter
1991): 72-84; Manzer, *Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy*; G. Smith, *The Post-

306 Edwin R. Black, *Divided Loyalties: Canadian Concepts of Federalism* (Montreal and Kingston:
and Parties in Canadian Political Life* (Toronto: Methuen, 1980); Jan Erk, *Explaining Federalism:
State, Society and Congruence in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland* (London:
Routledge, 2007).
policy actors make their decisions. It is made up of prevalent policy problems, active policy trends, associational networks among political communities, and areas of interdependence among groups. While the policy climate fashions a common setting, it is important to recognize that various groups will experience its patterns differently and these differences may encourage alternative adaptations to a similar climate. It is within this setting that the alternative processes or mechanism of diffusion operate.

In general, there are four mechanisms of diffusion: coercion, competition, learning, and emulation.\textsuperscript{307} Coercive diffusion occurs when powerful actors intentionally influence weaker actors to adopt their preferred policy, either through direct action or mediated through an organizational framework. Students of competitive diffusion see states (or alternative political units) in competition with one another for investments and market shares and will systematically match the policy choices of another player to ensure that they remain attractive to potential investors. Learning, defined as a change of beliefs or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observation and interpretation of experience, can also generate policy diffusion.\textsuperscript{308} As rational agents, political actors look to the choices of others when making decisions about their own pathways and adjust their ideas in light of new evidence thus building upon the previous experiences of others and adapting the ideas to suit a new environment. Finally, emulation is grounded on the idea that while policymakers \textit{should} determine the best policy practices they \textit{cannot} accurately determine whether Option A is conclusively better than Option B. When making decisions, political actors therefore turn to others in their self-identified peer group who are perceived as legitimate to help inform their choices. Policy actors, moreover, may be influenced by ideas, regardless if they are successful or not. Often taking the form of

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\textsuperscript{308} There are a number of different conceptions of “learning” used in the literature. Peter Hall’s emphasizes learning as a deliberate action where Hugh Heclo sees learning as a less conscious activity that can occur as a response to a societal or environmental stimulus. For a useful analysis of these different conceptualizations, see: Colin Bennett and Michael Howlett, ‘The lessons of learning: Reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change’, \textit{Policy Sciences} \textit{25} (1992): 275-294.
\end{footnotesize}
mimicry, emulation offers shortcuts to decision-makers to reduce the costs of information gathering and sidestep the task of acquiring complex technical knowledge that another community already has. Moreover, the uncertainty of new options is reduced when policy makers see practices in place in a community that is comparable to their own.

Recognizing different types of processes in diffusion is the first step in this research. The second step involves understanding the causal factors that generate policy diffusion. Saying that political communities are connected does not help us to understand why they look to one another when making decisions. We therefore need to specify the incentives that underpin the dynamics that propel the movement of ideas and programs between political communities.

Coercion has the most obvious causal force. A strong actor intentionally encourages its preferred policy option onto weaker actors, either through direct or indirect measures. Direct coercion includes such things as physical force or sanctions, while indirect coercion includes information and expert monopolization or ostracization. The coercive enforcer is therefore the central causal factor behind the diffusion of the policy choice. There are many ways by which a powerful actor can exercise its influence. Strong states can exert power bilaterally or through intergovernmental organizations acting as their agents. Erica Gould, for example, argues that private actors, such as the IMF, can play a considerable role in coercion by enforcing conditions and requirements on weaker actors. In a softer form of coercion, Simmons, Dobbin and Garret note that powerful actors can act as coercive agents simply by aligning themselves with certain policy prescriptions:

With a sort of Gramscian ideological hegemony, dominant actors can influence others through ideational channels without exerting physical power or materially altering costs or benefits. By virtue of their central positions in policy networks, the more powerful countries may be influential in the framing of policy discussions.

At first glance, it seems difficult to distinguish between soft coercion and emulation. However, the assumption behind coercion is that relations between actors are hierarchical and that weaker communities only follow the choices of the dominant actor largely unwillingly. Emulation, as we shall see below, does not turn on these kinds of dynamics.

Forces of competitive diffusion are slightly less tangible than the clear epicentre of the dominant actor in coercive diffusion. Elaborations of competition often turn on the causal idea of efficiency, but as Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett note, competitive theories of diffusion “must stipulate why competition among countries, not just ‘efficiency’ within them, drives the spread of a particular policy.” To do this, students of competition start from the premise that policy equilibrium can be achieved among political communities. A community can destabilize that equilibrium if it introduces a policy change that makes it more appealing for potential investors. If this occurs, it acts as a catalyst for the other communities to follow the actions of the leader. Therefore, the incentive to follow a leader turns critically on how the change will affect the receipt of a particular market share. If the new policy does not tip the scales in favour of the innovating actor, the other members of the connected group will be less motivated to re-synchronize the policy sector.

Causal forces in learning are more difficult to pinpoint. The assumption of learning theorists is that policymakers in one jurisdiction treat the decisions of others as experiments whose outcomes provide useful information. Learning approaches “generally hold that states can learn from their experiences and that they can modify their present actions on the basis of their interpretation of how previous actions have fared in the past.” Because information is costly, decision-makers have an incentive to gather knowledge from other communities and draw on their experiences to determine future policy choices. In the words of Hugh Heclo, politics “finds its sources not only in power but also in uncertainty – men collectively wondering what to

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312 Ibid, 792.
do.”

Some learning theorists draw upon a rational model of decision-making, where actors have access to considerable information and weigh their options according to their ranked preferences in an effort to maximize economic performance and political support. Others, however, recognize that policy actors do not enjoy complete information, face time constraints, and are restricted by routines “that are based on interpretations of the past more than anticipations of the future.” Boundaries on rationality mean that diffusion through learning is more likely among political communities that share a common set of beliefs and share ideas of validity based on internally defined criteria for evaluation, common policy projects, and shared normative commitments.

Beyond the internal motor of policy learning where governments are themselves motivated to seek out examples and evidence from other jurisdictions, researchers also implicate groups of actors that play a crucial role in the spread of ideas. Peter Haas, for one, emphasizes the importance of epistemic communities. An epistemic community is defined as a network of knowledge-based experts or groups with an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge. Policy actors that draw from a common epistemic community are exposed to similar lessons and evidence that subsequently propels the diffusion of ideas, programs, and policies, across jurisdictional boundaries. These communities of experts are nested within wider groups, known as policy communities. A policy community is defined as “all actors or potential actors with a direct or indirect interest in a policy area or function who share a common ‘policy focus,’ and who, with varying degrees of influence shape policy outcomes over the long run.” Where members of an epistemic community are presumed to remain objective and personally disinterested in the particular outcomes of

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the policy sector, a policy community refers to the full spectrum of groups, including those that may have a particular stake in the sector. For example, in education, members of the epistemic community would be academic researchers at universities, while the policy community would include teachers’ federations, trustees associations, and parental groups. Policy communities thereby fashion networks that can transcend political borders and facilitate learning through the exchange of ideas.

Of all the processes, emulation has the least obvious causal agent. Involving “the social construction of appropriate behaviour, where actors model their behaviour on the examples provided by others”, the causal murkiness of emulation theorists rests in part on their ontological assumptions. Rather than seeing the political world governed by law-like regularities operating across space and time as coercion, competition, and learning theorists tend to, emulations theorists observe the political world through a post-positivist lens where human knowledge is conjectural, generated through multi-tiered constructs known as paradigms, and objective knowledge is diminished in the face of relativism. The evidence of emulation brought to bear is less tangible than that in the other processes of diffusion. As Michael Howlett writes, emulation “is more difficult to trace, since there generally is neither a record of conquest nor a formal treaty . . . and its origins are more difficult to understand since there is not necessarily any conscious recognition by governments or other policy actors.”

Some causal factors can nevertheless be distilled from the writings of emulation scholars. Simmons and Elkins, for example, suggest that the decisions of one government produce externalities that influence the decisions of other governments. These externalities can take an ideational form and operate through the “more subjective pressures of prevailing global norms.” When a consensus emerges on a

326 Ibid, 172.
particular subject, such as human rights or environmental protectionism, there are reputational payoffs for making certain policy choices. Governments,” as Kurt Weyland observes, “dread the stigma of backwardness and therefore eagerly adopt policy innovations, regardless of functional needs.” Governments are therefore “highly sensitive to the number, or proportion, of other countries that have adopted a particular policy stance.” Captured in the idea of “thresholds” or “tipping points”, these effects are amplified within self-identified peer-groups. Moreover, “individuals emulate the behaviour of their self-identified peers . . . sociocultural linkages (common language, history, religion, and so on) may contribute to ‘psychological proximity’ among political communities. As a consequence, policy actors will tend to emulate others in their peer group and downplay the examples of outsiders. Finally, Dobbin, Simmons, and Garret note that policy choices made through emulation are often “based on fads, revered exemplars, or abstract theories, rather than solid evidence.”

However, presenting learning and emulation as distinctive processes raises a number of interesting questions. How do we know empirically when the process is emulation as opposed to learning? When a person decides to emulate the actions of another, have they not also learned from them? What distinguishes a “fad” from “solid evidence”? When one emulates, does one not learn; and when one learns, does one not emulate?

The roots of the strict demarcation between learning and emulation seem to lie in debates between rationalists and constructivists and the distinction made between objective and subjective knowledge. However, since James March and Johan Olsen’s seminal piece, we know that actors can be motivated by both the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness, which signals that we use both objective and

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327 Ibid, 173.
328 Weyland, ‘Theories of Policy Diffusion’: 270.
subjective information when making decisions. Furthermore, following Herbert Simon, students of rational choice have suggested that actors use heuristics and other shortcuts when making decisions that further blurs the line between learning and emulation. It therefore seems more productive to consider learning and emulation along a continuum, rather than retaining the strict barriers that may compromise empirical study.

At this point, I would like to highlight a particular myopia in the diffusion literature. Students of diffusion frequently view intergovernmental organizations as a platform for coercion, a producer and advocate of specific policy paradigms, or as a passive venue for ideational exchanges enabling diffusion through emulation or learning. I would like to offer a different interpretation of the potential impact of these organizations that in turn generates an additional process of diffusion. Intergovernmental organization can promote policy diffusion through cooperation.

Motivated by a desire to coordinate group activities, political leaders can set up intergovernmental organizations to create a venue with formal rules of decision-making. These organizations reduce the transaction costs for coordination and may provide a strong framework for constituent groups to cooperate. When supported by an active secretariat, intergovernmental organizations can facilitate the ratification of comprehensive agreements, collective actions, policy harmonization, and subsequently intensify the interdependence among the constituent groups. Whereas diffusion through competition, learning, and emulation generally follow a linear chain of leader-follower

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(or non-follower)-laggard, cooperation involves constant exchanges and interactive effects, as policy actors work together to fortify common goals, cultivate common strategies, and ratify collective agreements. For those engaged in the process, moreover, the interaction may generate policy learning in areas beyond the particular initiative. However, in this instance, learning is a by-product rather than the result of deliberate action.

Before advancing to the next component of this chapter, a caveat needs to be made. Despite distinguishing between these alternative causal processes of coercion, competition, learning, and cooperation, it is important to recognize that multiple mechanisms of diffusion work simultaneously and the presence of one does not necessarily preclude the incidence of others. Driven by a desire to remain competitive, governments may decide to learn from the examples of others. While working cooperatively on one initiative, governments may gain new experiences that can be transferred to other enterprises or even to other policy fields. Or, in the name of gaining a competitive edge, governments may decide to cooperate and pool their resources together. We must therefore be attentive to the potential for different processes to be at work concurrently in the transmission of ideas and policies among political communities.

In the next section I develop a set of propositions to determine which process (or processes) of diffusion may account for the movement of ideas in the Canadian case. The propositions will be used to guide the empirical investigations of each dimension of education policy during the four periods of Canadian educational development. To develop these propositions, I put the particular features of each diffusion process into the Canadian federal framework. This helps determine which processes may be more and less likely to appear in the education sector, and exclude those that are improbable. Among the mechanisms included, I also consider how the processes may vary depending on the different contexts of each dimension of education policy.

338 In their work on public sector downsizing, for example, Chang Kil Lee and David Strang identify a hybrid emulation and learning dynamic whereby a prominent epistemic community zeroed in on a particular policy option that generated one type of learning – countries systematically disregarded indications that undermined the policy prescription in favour of evidence that supported it. (Lee and Strang, ‘The International Diffusion’.)
3.3 Policy Diffusion in Canadian Education

Given the empirical focus of this study, it is unlikely that coercion performs a large role in the movement of educational policies across the provinces. The autonomy enjoyed by the ten provincial governments over the policy field precludes the mechanism of a powerful actor intentionally influencing weaker ones towards a preferred policy option. To be sure, in other policy fields, coercive mechanisms may be more apparent. For example, in health policy the federal government is an active player and exerts considerable direct influence through its spending power. Conditional grants from the federal government and the Canada Health Act have created a hierarchical dynamic in the policy arena that allows Ottawa to assert its will over provincial policy makers.339

In elementary and secondary education, however, the provinces remain largely free from federal interference. To date, there is also little evidence of larger provinces attempting to unilaterally impose their will on smaller provinces to propel education in a certain direction. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and other regional organizations, such as the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET), are explicitly governed by the principle of provincial self-rule where participation in initiatives is voluntary. Furthermore, unlike organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the CMEC Secretariat and the CAMET neither develop nor promote specific policy packages for provincial policy makers. These characteristics of both the policy sector and the organizations that operate within it reduce the likelihood that coercion has been the prime causal force of interprovincial policy diffusion.

In spite of the minimal potential for coercion, it would be rash to completely disregard it here. The federal government maintains its spending power as a potentially powerful lever that can be deployed to encourage certain policy activities among the...
provinces. I therefore consider occasions when the federal government used its spending power in education as potential cases of coercion and examine its impact on subsequent policy outcomes.

Students of Canadian federalism often implicate competition as the key driver of intergovernmental policy dynamics. Researchers examine how the mobility of both individuals and capital may induce interjurisdictional competition in various policy fields including taxes, environmental policy, and welfare standards.\textsuperscript{340} The analysis is based on the premise that federalism creates a competitive system both between the federal and provincial governments and among the provinces as each vies to maintain public support and create acceptable policy packages that respond to the needs and interests of its populations. In the words of Michael Greve, “The citizens’ ability to vote with their feet and to take their talents and assets elsewhere will discipline government in the same way in which consumer choice, in nonmonopolistic markets, discipline producers.”\textsuperscript{341} As governments find themselves in competition with other jurisdictions that are adopting certain policies, they may try to match or surpass the choices, causing either an unsustainable race to the top (as governments try to outdo one another) or a vicious race to the bottom (as they limit spending or harmonize policies to the lowest common denominator). Signs of these types of outcomes include patterned budgetary increases or decreases in program spending, cascading regulatory reforms, and sequential increases or decreases in tax rates.

Extensively examined in areas of regulatory and redistributive policy, how will competition influence choices in a sector that is also developmental? Of the five education dimensions, the fiscal component shares the most similarities with redistributive policy. It seems logical to predict, for example, that competition may drive subnational jurisdictions to either increase or decrease their investments in the sector to remain competitive with the spending patterns of jurisdictions. Competition, however, may not influence the particular manner in which the education sector is


financed. It is therefore unclear how interjurisdictional competition would encourage policy convergence on a common model of education finance.

Alternatively, we could envisage that competitive pressures may induce increases or decreases in the standards for teacher certification, a regulatory component of the sector. As one province increases the certification requirements for teachers, others may follow suit to ensure a comparable level of quality in the profession. If this pattern emerges, it would indicate that provincial decision-makers are more influenced by external developments than their own internal labour market conditions. The spread of curriculum and assessment policies may also be driven by competition. A challenging program and high results on universal assessments could signal to potential investors the presence of a well-educated workforce thus increasing capital investments.

The potential salience of competition therefore turns on three things. First, diffusion through competition presumes that investors pay close attention to education policies and are willing to move between provinces when changes are made. Second, competition assumes that citizens move between provinces at a significant rate, or at a rate enough to encourage governments to change their policies for fear that out-migration would compromise the population of the province. Finally, competition suggests that citizens are themselves aware of the policy differences among each jurisdiction. So much so that citizens are willing to move between provinces to find better education systems, thus forcing their own government to respond to ensure their continued residency. Competition therefore explains policy diffusion “as a response to inter-state pressures in the form of lost business, tax revenues and jobs.”

Building on Hugh Heclo, students of diffusion have increasingly embraced learning as a crucial mechanism that propels the movement of policies between political communities. Competitive models theorize that political actors are constantly racing against each other for individuals, goods, or investments induced by the migration of mobile factors in a zero-sum game. By contrast, models of learning

343 Harrison, ‘Provincial Interdependence’, 14-16.
portray decision-makers, policy experts, stakeholders, and citizens as information seekers. When faced with problems, wishing to fulfill certain objectives, or obtain particular goals, policy actors will look to others for examples, evidence, and benchmarks. Bounded by innate limitations on information processing and memory capacity, decision-makers may also be motivated by reputational concerns and seek a new strategy to increase their legitimacy in a particular area.344 In this case, decision-makers look to identifiable leaders for new ideas that can be imported into their own jurisdiction, thus engaging in a learning process.

Federalism, by formally interconnecting the separate political units, creates tangible networks through which ideas can be exchanged and lessons can be learned. United together under common legal, economic, and organizational arrangements, elected and bureaucratic officials meet regularly and exchange ideas through formal and informal mechanisms. Situated beneath the federal umbrella, non-state actors similarly organize and interact to keep track of developments in the other jurisdictions. Together, these various networks constitute powerful policy communities with shared norms, beliefs, and understandings of validity.

In the case of Canadian education, to observe evidence of learning, we should see one province adopting a policy that is gradually considered and potentially adopted (or rejected) by the others. Various formal and informal networks in the policy community, including those among education professionals, government officials, and elected politicians, should facilitate the movement of information across the provincial borders as policy actors draw lessons from one another. We could anticipate that learning should generate successful public policies that serve to increase the quality of education in the various jurisdictions. However, different actors rarely draw lessons in the same way and mistakes or misinterpretations can often be made, meaning that success is not guaranteed. Because learning is an interactive process, it is also important to note that decision-makers and stakeholders from the innovating jurisdiction may use new information from the adopting jurisdictions to further assess the workability of the initiative in their own jurisdiction. Therefore, jurisdictions that

follow a leader are not simply free riders by poaching ideas, but contributors to the collective knowledge on the characteristics, attributes, and benefits of a given policy.

Federalism also creates a natural peer group, interconnecting potentially disparate groups under a shared institutional arrangement that may, in turn, facilitate policy learning. Within a federation, moreover, certain subnational units may share more things in common with others. Canadian observers have long argued that regionalism is a potent force in the dynamics of the federation with certain provinces frequently aligning and pursuing common policy pathways. For example, the Atlantic Provinces could be regarded as a self-identified internal peer group within the Canadian federation that shares cultural affinities that increase the bonds among those provinces. We could also predict that Québec will tend to emphasize its differences from the other provinces and maintain the most distinctive practices in the education sector. Therefore, these internal groupings and variations in the cultural bonds among the provinces may generate distinctive patterns of policy learning in Canada with certain provinces drawing more (or fewer) lessons from within a particular group than from across the country as a whole.

The final channel of policy diffusion is cooperation. Independent actors can collaborate to fulfill common objectives and engage in collective activities. In a federal system, collaboration both between and among the orders of government towards such endeavours is promoted under the principle of shared-rule. Intrinsically, cooperation involves a different type of policy process than the one used in autonomous decision-making. It requires the coordination of traditionally independent policy actors towards a common agenda. To facilitate this process, governments can fashion organizations and procedures that establish rules of decision-making, provide administrative support, and lower transaction costs of intergovernmental coordination. Given the differences

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and the increased efforts involved in cooperation, however, we could predict that it will appear with less frequency than the other mechanisms of diffusion.

Probable outcomes of diffusion through cooperation include formal harmonization of procedures or policies among the participating actors, pooling of resources to enhance limited capacities, and the establishment of collective programs in a policy sector. In education, curricula could be harmonized to further allow for common textbooks to be purchased. Provinces can enter into collective agreements to purchase school buses to reduce the costs of the individual units. Teachers’ certification requirements could be standardized across the provinces to ensure common qualifications and assure the mobility of labour among the jurisdictions. And collective testing programs could be established to provide comparable data to decision-makers, education professionals, and the public.

The diffusion literature thus reveals a set of processes that drive interjurisdictional policy exchanges in the context of interdependence and connectivity. Actors inform their policy choices not only by internal conditions and problems, but also in light of decisions made in other jurisdictions. I have suggested that while coercion and competition are plausible processes, the complete spectrum of learning seems to be the most likely process at work across the various dimensions of the Canadian education sector. I have also raised the idea that cooperation could also propel diffusion among the jurisdictions. At the moment, however, it remains unclear how diffusion can lead to policy similarity. Each process of diffusion has the potential to generate increased similarities and differences, as actors can choose between following the options of another or pursuing an alternative pathway in light of the knowledge and information that they have gained. We therefore need to uncover the conditions that will increase the probability of similarity and those that generate the possibility of difference. For this we now turn to the policy convergence literature.

3.4 Understanding the Achievement of Policy Similarity
The most basic and accepted definition of convergence is “the tendency of societies to grow more and more alike, to develop similar structures, processes, and
performances.”

Using entire societies the unit of analysis, early works of convergence implicated industrialization as the primary cause of increasing cross-national similarities. However, this macro-level approach has proven difficult to sustain as it ignores persistent differences and complex processes that continue to distinguish societies. As Anthony King puts it, macro-level convergence arguments “in some ways resemble photographs taken from a high-flying aircraft; the main features stand out, but much detail is lost – and the lost detail may be important.”

Macro-level studies have thus been supplanted by sector-level assessments to better capture the details of policy change occurring within and between systems.

Embracing sector level assessments, convergence researchers examine the increasing similarities of goals, contents, instruments, outcomes, and styles, both within and among political communities. But convergence cannot be used as a simple synonym for similarity. Colin Bennett, for one, notes that convergence “implies a pattern of development over time. The comparative reference point is not another country, but a condition of divergence or variability from some former stage.” For interprovincial convergence to appear, we need to find increasing similarities in the different policy dimensions among the different provinces over time. However, in a field as wide and diverse as education, we must be willing to accept that in a particular time period, certain policies in particular dimensions of the field may converge while others diverge. One province may initiate a policy change in assessments that are subsequently followed by the other provinces generating policy convergence in that area. At the same time, a province may introduce a policy change in education finance

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349 Bennett, ‘What is policy convergence’; Katharina Holzinger and Christoph Knill, ‘Causes and conditions of cross-national policy convergence’, *Journal of European Public Policy* 12, 5 (October 2005): 775-796.
that other provinces do not pursue, leading to policy divergence in that area. The result of which is that the overall degree of similarity in the education sector across the provinces may remain stable.

Christoph Knill offers a useful typology of policy convergence to capture this dynamic. He says that the most common type of convergence investigated involves the general trend of decreasing variation in policies among the units (i.e. provinces) under consideration.\textsuperscript{351} Here the focus falls on cases that start from different places and end up in a similar position. Paula Blomqvist, for example, has explored policy convergence between two European health care systems, the social insurance-based of the Rhine countries and the tax-based systems in the UK and Scandinavia, towards a third, market-like system.\textsuperscript{352} However, convergence also occurs when laggard units catch up with a leader over time.\textsuperscript{353} Common examples of this include the spread of anti-smoking legislation across European and North American jurisdictions,\textsuperscript{354} the implementation of municipal anti-pesticide bans,\textsuperscript{355} and the developing initiatives to ban bisphenol A.\textsuperscript{356} It may be that the evolution of provincial education policies adheres more closely to this latter form of convergence as opposed to the former.

Knowing what convergence is we now need to find out what causes it. Christopher Knill concedes that despite “enormous research efforts, it is generally acknowledged that we still have a limited understanding of the causes and conditions of policy convergence.”\textsuperscript{357} Knill attributes this limitation in part to the disparate research traditions that address convergence where scholars come from different academic backgrounds and disciplines that include comparative politics, policy

\textsuperscript{353}Knill, ‘Introduction’: 769.
\textsuperscript{357}Knill, ‘Introduction’: 775.
analysis and international relations. Consequently, there is a vast array of factors implicated as possible causes of policy convergence.

One immediately discovers that many of the causes of convergence overlap with those implicated in policy diffusion and that what are regarded as distinct processes in one literature are sometimes conflated in another. For example, Bennett presents emulation as a cause of convergence and says its central characteristic is “the utilization of evidence about a programme or programmes from overseas and a drawing of lessons from that experience. This process of lesson-drawing then produces a convergence on some dimension of policy effort.” His formulation therefore presents emulation as a form of learning and reinforces my own argument to see the processes on a sliding scale rather than as manifestly different mechanisms.

In their survey of empirical studies on policy convergence, Stephan Heichel, Jessica Pape and Thomas Sommerer, observe that causal factors can either be differentiated between economic and ideational pressures or categorized into national and international factors. To account for cross-national convergence in agriculture policy, William Coleman for one has suggested that international competition was an important factor. In her account of cross-national convergence in health policy, Blomqvist argues that policy changes were driven predominantly by ideational considerations. When convergence does not appear, typical explanations tend to claim that domestic characteristics (i.e. institutions or culture) act as filters. The forces of convergence are mediated by contextual conditions, meaning that different jurisdictions will experience the impact of the alternative pressures in different ways.

It therefore seems that an attempt to settle upon a specific set of causal forces that lead to convergence is similar to chasing windmills – the messy and complex world of policy making is not amenable to a definitive selection of a particular variable or set of variables that will consistently produce policy convergence. Knill for one

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358 Bennett, ‘What is policy convergence’, 221.
361 Blomqvist, Ideas and Policy Convergence.
states that convergence “might simply be the result of similar but independent responses of different countries to parallel program pressures.”³⁶² Bennett similarly implicates independent problem solving to a common challenge as a force that may lead to the same solution.³⁶³ Given the complexity that stems from the interactions between structure and agency in public policy, it therefore seems unlikely that we would ever be able to compile a precise list of causal factors that could consistently predict where and when convergence will occur.

Instead, we need to accept equifinality and multicolinearity to account for policy convergence. This means reducing the traditional emphasis in political science on parsimony and accepting the reality that similar policies can result from different combinations of factors that are influenced by the specific contexts in which they occur. Moreover, it encourages the development of a probabilistic model where we relax standards to include causes that are “usually” or “almost always” necessary or sufficient.³⁶⁴ It therefore seems more reasonable to suggest that certain pathways and conditions may be more or less conducive for policy convergence.

Keith Banting, George Hoberg, and Richard Simeon identify three pathways to policy convergence.³⁶⁵ First, convergence can result from parallel internal factors without reference to relations that may exist between individual political communities. Jurisdictions that face similar problems (i.e. a population boom, ageing society, or pollution), and experience similar public pressures, may end up adopting similar solutions without any necessary influence being brought to bear from any of the other jurisdictions. Second, building from the diffusion literature, convergence can result from learning: “in this context, governments continually learn from one another, and the policies of two countries can converge if one country adopts the policies of another because it finds the program and experience of that country attractive.”³⁶⁶ And finally,

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 16.
convergence can occur because of external pressures that limit the capacities for autonomous action by individual jurisdictions. Put differently, political communities that are in conditions of interdependence may experience policy convergence. If identified goals are unattainable in the absence of coordinated action, interjurisdictional convergence will likely appear.

These three pathways to convergence are channeled through the existing conditions (or contexts) of the individual jurisdictions. Andrea Lenschow, Duncan Liefferink and Sietske Veenman, for example, argue that convergence is affected by “the domestic predispositions to react to one impulse but not to another.” Building upon their work, I divide the concept of domestic predispositions into institutional and cultural characteristics. First, the institutional architecture of a jurisdiction provides opportunities and constraints for policy actors. In his analysis of economic policy-making in Britain and France, Peter Hall suggests that:

- the view from the Elysée is not the same as the view from Whitehall. The range of customary policy instruments at hand and the kind of societal resistance to be expected in the face of a given policy vary according to organizational differences that affect the perceived costs and benefits of policy in many issue areas.

The institutional context, therefore, shapes the policy process by establishing the norms and rules for policy formulation, development, implementation, and assessment. Similarities in the institutional contexts across different communities, moreover, will likely generate similar policy processes as they adhere to a similar institutional logic.

All the Canadian provinces share the common macro-institutional structure of parliamentary government. However, the particular configuration of the administrative regime of the education sector varies among them. For example, in some provinces, religious denominations continue to formally participate in the delivery of education while others are strictly secular. Moreover, in some provinces and in certain policy

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dimensions, education stakeholders play a larger role in the policy process to limit the
degree of independence possessed by state actors when formulating objectives and
implementing policies.\textsuperscript{370} I anticipate that the greater the consistency among the
administrative systems of the provinces and the stronger the policy monopoly held by
the government, the more likely they are to adopt similar policies.

Second, policy ideas are situated within the broader cultural context of a
particular jurisdiction. When presenting proposals to the public, policy entrepreneurs
try to structure the discourse in a way that resonates with the political culture of their
target population.\textsuperscript{371} Furthermore, cultural factors will influence the goals that
decision-makers decide to pursue and the subject configuration of the content of the
policy itself. Finally, decision-makers can deploy alternative implementation strategies,
depending on the cultural dispositions of their population. The result is that the
likelihood and probability of policy convergence is mediated by existing internal
cultural context of the jurisdictions.

Culture’s impact on the policy process is also felt in an interactive sense. Illuminated in my outline of policy diffusion is that policy actors from different
jurisdictions who share certain cultural characteristics may be more willing to look
within their particular subgroup when developing new policies and adopt practices on
the basis of cultural affinities. This tendency, in turn, increases the potential for policy
similarities to appear within the group. Alternatively, interjurisdictional variations in
culture may generate policy heterogeneities thus increasing the policy differences
between the jurisdictions as elected and appointed officials tailor programs to fit the
particular cultural characteristics of their populations. Therefore, the cultural
connections among the jurisdictions influence the probability of policy convergence.

Pushing below the broader institutional and cultural dimensions, the likelihood
of policy convergence is also influenced by the particular educational regime that is in
operation within a political community. Manzer defines an educational regime as:

\begin{quote}
    a stable ordering of political principles and public authority for the governance of
    education. An educational regime is instituted, first, as a collective response to a
    primary problem of political economy. Second, its coherence and purpose depend
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{370} Coleman and Skogstad, ‘Policy Communities and Policy Networks’, 15.
\textsuperscript{371} Wallner, ‘Legitimacy in Public Policy.’ 421-443.
on widespread acceptance of a core of political ideas that may derive from a
dominant political ideology but more often will be created from conflict and
compromise among the proponents of opposing doctrinal positions. Third, an
educational regime implies a distinctive set of public policies covering both the
governance and provision of education. Hence, the concept of educational regime
includes the establishment of institutions and procedures for educational
governance, allocation of public authority, and style of public decision making as
well as the design and implementation of educational programs.\textsuperscript{372}

Regimes, according to Stephen Krasner, establish actor expectations in a given issue-
area.\textsuperscript{373} More than temporary arrangements, regimes “must embody some sense of
general obligation”\textsuperscript{374} that compels certain behaviours from the actors involved. The
configuration of the educational regime thus establishes certain parameters for action
that influences behaviour. Stability, however, must not be conflated with immutability.
Changes in rules and decision-making practices can alter the dynamics \textit{within} regimes,
while changes in the principles and norms can propel a change of the regime itself.
Those who benefit from the regime, moreover, are constantly jockeying to maintain
their position and retain the configuration. However, those whose interests and
aspirations are compromised by the regime are constantly seeking change. Therefore,
the educational regime shapes but does not determine the possibility for policy
convergence.

Having fleshed out the structural conditions for convergence, we still need to
understand why some policies are taken up by the different jurisdictions while others
are not adopted. Characteristics of the policies themselves and their interaction with the
overarching context also affect the subsequent outcomes and the potential for policy
convergence.\textsuperscript{375} To capture this attribute of policies, I adapt Peter Hall’s concept of
\textit{viability} to understand why some policy prescriptions gain more currency than

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Manzer, \textit{Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy}, 3-4.
\item Ibid, 187.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
The relevance of a new policy turns on: (a) the alignment between the idea and the problems of the day; (b) its fit with historical and administrative experiences; and (c) the support that is given by relevant authorities to the proposed policy.

The problem viability of policies refers to the apparent capacity of a proposed policy to rectify a pertinent set of concerns. Reflecting on the importance of Keynesian ideas, Hall writes: “Keynesian proposals have generally been taken more seriously in settings where unemployment is the pre-eminent problem on the economic agenda because they speak directly to that problem.”377 In education, a policy proposal must resonate with problems that have been pinpointed in a particular jurisdiction. Moreover, Hall argues that ideas must also be “theoretically appealing”, 378 meaning that they correspond in some way with existing doctrines. In the education sector, professional research communities in universities and other education associations in the policy community evaluate new ideas. If the policy ideas are determined to be substantively sound, the members of the policy community may promote the proposal as a plausible option thus increasing its appeal for decision-makers.

Administrative viability draws attention to the fact that new policies are more likely to be accepted if they fit with the administrative traditions, the policy legacies and the educational regime of the jurisdiction. According to Theda Skocpol, for example, one reason why President Clinton failed to implement comprehensive health care reform was that his package did not fit within the institutional constraints of the US system.379 The constellation of stakeholder groups combined with the limited capacity of the American political system undermined Clinton’s abilities to implement socially inclusive health reforms. In education, the relative power of the department of education, the school boards, and the teachers’ associations affect the structural capacities for implementation of particular policy proposals. Previous policies, moreover, “constitute important rules of the game, influencing the allocation of economic and political resources, modifying the costs and benefits associated with

378 Ibid, 372.
379 Theda Skocpol, Boomerang: Health Care Reform and the Turn Again Government (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).
alternative political strategies, and consequently altering ensuing political
development.”380 New ideas must therefore be adaptable – or at least amenable – to the
legacies in the policy sector. It is here, as Neil Bradford notes, that the potential for
“organizational politics to frustrate” policy change is apparent and “the need for
political leadership to channel administrative resources or direct the formation of new
capacities” typically arises.381 This leads to the third component of viability: political
appeal.

If an idea gains support in the policy sector or receives positive endorsements
from the relevant policy community, it is more likely that politicians, who ultimately
make the decision, will accept the idea. A coalition of support can form around a
particular policy proposal and as more individuals and groups support the idea, a
bandwagon effect may occur where the idea finally catches on.382 Policy actors can
subsequently intensify their promotion of the idea and gather up the necessary currency
to ensure the successful implementation of the particular policy.

To summarize, where Hall’s notion of viability allows us to understand why
some ideas are adopted over others, I have also suggested that the likelihood of policy
convergence among political communities is influenced by the particular policy
environment; namely the cultural and institutional conditions and the educational
regime at work in the individual jurisdictions. My logic is straightforward: cultural and
institutional synergies between political communities and consistencies across
educational regimes will increase the likelihood of policy convergence emerging from
the alternative pathways of parallel problems, intentional exchanges, or
interdependence.

3.5 Putting It All Together: A Model of Action for Policy Similarity

By combining the insights of diffusion and convergence scholars, I have developed a
model of action to understand how the 10 Canadian provinces gradually fashioned
similar elementary and secondary education sectors in the absence of formal federal

45, 4 (July 1993): 596.
381 Bradford, Commissioning Ideas, 20.
College Publishers, 1995), 140.
participation and mandatory national standards. I start with the presumption of interdependence and connectivity among political and societal actors, where the decisions of one jurisdiction influence the decisions of others. There are three nodes of connectivity that are pertinent in this thesis: legal, organizational, and cultural. Mutual dependence and connective networks create incentives and fashion the pathways through which policy ideas are exchanged among political jurisdictions and thus sets the stage upon which policy diffusion occurs. Taken together, these components establish what I will refer to as the *policy climate*.

I have suggested that coercion, competition, learning and cooperation could all be motors of education policy diffusion across the provinces. Certain processes of diffusion may be more influential in certain dimensions of the education sector. Moreover, I have proposed that the processes of diffusion may be influenced by the *policy climate*. For example, learning may be more likely among jurisdictions that share a higher degree of cultural connections. Diffusion through cooperation may be more feasible when formal intergovernmental organizations are established. I anticipate that changes to the *policy climate* will subsequently affect the diffusion processes.

I have also argued that policy diffusion does not immediately translate into inter-jurisdictional policy convergence. Put simply, policy diffusion can lead to either convergence or divergence. Using Banting, Simeon, and Hoberg, I have identified three pathways to policy convergence: parallel problems; intentional exchanges; and interdependence. These pathways to convergence are mediated by the internal contexts of each jurisdiction. I have suggested that certain *scope conditions* influence the probability that policy similarities will arise across political jurisdictions. These scope conditions are divided on two levels. First, the broader institutional and culture context influences the potential penetration of ideas from other jurisdictions. I predict that the greater the institutional and cultural affinities among the jurisdictions, the more likely policy convergence will occur. Second, the internal configuration of the educational regime sets down certain parameters of action and establishes actor expectations in the policy field. As such, the provincial educational regime affects behaviours and outcomes. The characteristics of the regime therefore influence the possibility for a
policy idea from another jurisdiction to penetrate the existing system and thus potentially increase the extent of interprovincial policy similarity.

The scope conditions help us to establish the structural probability that an idea will be adopted. In addition, I also suggested that characteristics of ideas themselves affect the likelihood that they will penetrate into a new jurisdiction. Using Peter Hall, ideas must demonstrate problem, administrative, and political viability to be seriously considered by policy actors involved in the sector. If a policy idea from an alternative province meets with these conditions, it is more likely that the receiving province will implement the idea and increase the interprovincial policy similarity in the given dimension.

The next four chapters trace the historical evolution of provincial elementary and secondary education policy, to show how changes in the policy context influenced the processes of policy diffusion and how relations among the provinces and the internal policy contexts influenced the probability of policy convergence. I begin in 1840, when the colonial governments made their first forays into the education field.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Foundation and Consolidation of Elementary and Secondary Education
(1840 – 1945)

The question is not whether all men will ultimately be equal – that they certainly will not – but whether progress may not go on steadily, if slowly, till, by occupation at least, every man is a gentleman. I hold that it may, and that it will . . . [The state] is bound to compel them and to help them to take the first step upwards; and it is bound to help them, if they will, to make many steps upward.

Alfred Marshall, 1873

This chapter surveys over 100 years of Canadian educational history. My purpose here is not to provide a comprehensive account of the intricacies of all provincial education policies. Instead, this chapter demonstrates that throughout the foundation and consolidation of public schooling, policy ideas on education diffused across the different jurisdictions. When seeking policy pathways, provincial officials, experts, and stakeholders looked both to one another and the international arena for models, examples, and practices. Motivated by a desire to uncover best practices and devise effective education systems, these actors attempted to learn from the actions of others. New ideas were then moulded to fit the internal policy context of the receiving jurisdiction. These activities established certain similarities and differences in the initial trajectories of the 10 jurisdictions that fixed internal policy legacies within each of the provincial education sectors and set out some conditions that continue to resonate today. And, all this was achieved before the advent of modern communications technologies.

Policy diffusion was relatively unstructured throughout this period. Organizations were only in the most embryonic form and there were few institutionalized mechanisms of ideational exchanges. Nevertheless, intermittent and irregular learning enabled policy diffusion across the provinces. Active entrepreneurs,
either traveling abroad or migrating between regions, carried ideas across borders and introduced them to new policy actors and into the different jurisdictions. With decision-makers, these entrepreneurs determined the suitability of new practices in the context of the problems and conditions of the receiving jurisdiction. Regional affinities began to emerge, as certain provinces clustered around particular policy options. Interested members of the policy community began to fashion organizations, first contained within provincial boundaries and later crossing borders to establish the first pan-Canadian bodies dedicated to educational issues thus setting down the first interprovincial lines of communication in the policy field.

This chapter tracks the developments in four of the five dimensions of education policy: administration, finance, curriculum, and the teaching profession. By the end of this period, seven of the ten provinces had converged on a common model of central educational administration, all had implemented a similar means of financing the sector, a majority followed the same elementary curriculum, and all provinces used a similar form of initial teacher education (Table 4.1). Despite the achievement of these notable similarities, variations remained in a number of areas. Three provinces – Nova Scotia, Québec, and Newfoundland – maintained alternative models of central administration, the organization and provision of secondary education demonstrated significant variability, and teacher certification regimes were disorderly at best. The description of these policy developments suggests that while policies diffuse across borders and provinces are motivated to draw lessons from each other, internal conditions and the relations between the pertinent jurisdictions influence the transmission of policy options and the probability of subsequent adoption leading to increased interprovincial policy similarities.

383 The development and evolution of evaluation policies will be outlined in a subsequent chapter.
Table 4.1: Policy Developments in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education, 1840-1945

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Education</th>
<th>Policy Developments</th>
<th>Type of Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Central</td>
<td>- 7 provinces with IMR *</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intermediate</td>
<td>- 1 province with CMR *</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2 provinces with RT *</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces with local school boards</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Finance</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces with local tax</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces with shared cost financing</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Elementary</td>
<td>- 10 provinces with common curriculum</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Secondary</td>
<td>- Limited experiments with partite and bilateral schools</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Profession</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher Education</td>
<td>- 10 provinces with normal schools</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher Certification</td>
<td>- 10 provinces with central certification</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No interprovincial recognition of qualifications</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IMR = Individual Ministerial Responsibility; CMR = Collective Ministerial Responsibility; RT = Religious Trusteeship.
4.1 The Policy Climate

In the late 1800s, the idea of mass education began to take root in the countries of northern Europe and their offshoots, including the colonies of British North America. “The nationally rooted state,” write John Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, and Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, “secularizing earlier religious ideas and institutions, everywhere incorporated mass education as a main enterprise.”\(^{384}\) A common set of goals and ideas took root, centred on achieving basic literacy for all, establishing public control of the sector and ideally mitigating the influence of religious authorities in education. Furthermore, expounded in the writings of intellectual leaders such as Alfred Marshall,\(^ {385}\) education was recognized as a crucial instrument to mitigate the economic disparities between the classes. Influenced by these ideas, the administrators of British North America initiated a series of activities and thus began to sketch out the early programs of what would become the Canadian education enterprise even before the formal creation of Canada as a federation. To be sure, the absence of mass communication and rapid transportation technologies limited the exchange of ideas. However, the early policy environment was one of openness with few gatekeepers obstructing the diffusion of ideas.

British and French settlers carried their educational experiences with them over the Atlantic Ocean. Early pioneers and religious missionaries adapted their experiences from the Old World to fit the new conditions in the nascent societies. For religious leaders, British North America offered a new opportunity to assert their influence over the schooling of the settlers; and one that some managed to capitalize on. The Canadian colonies also received numerous migrants from the American colonies who carried alternative ideas of educational theory and practice.\(^ {386}\) Interestingly, the older colonies

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\(^{386}\) For example, one British-born, but American migrant, who brought his comparative educational experiences to Upper Canada was Richard Cockrell. In 1759, he published a pamphlet entitled *Thoughts on the Education of Youth*, which included a statement on the poor state of the teaching profession in Upper Canada. To ameliorate the condition, Cockrell advocated the adoption of an American practice of examining teachers before they are hired. According to education historian J. Donald Wilson, Cockrell’s recommendations to emulate American practices “thereby established a pattern that has continued to the
of Canada tended to rebuff the educational practices of Americans while the newer provinces of western Canada exhibited a greater openness to the ideas from the south. These contrasts laid the foundation for future divergences in the education sector emerging in the subsequent periods.

In 1867, four of the colonies of British North America joined together under the *British North America (BNA) Act, 1867* (renamed the *Constitution Act, 1867*). The agreement solidified the ideas that citizens would be able to move freely throughout the new country and that the signatory parties would fashion an economic union to secure collective social and technological advancements throughout the jurisdictions. The *Constitution Act*, therefore, legally bound the willing participants together through certain powers and responsibilities. Where before colonial education officials may have casually looked to the other surrounding territories for policy ideas and practices, the *Constitution Act, 1867* permanently altered the connectivity among the former British colonies.

Under the terms of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, Section 93 allocated education to the provinces. However, this power was not absolute. Constitutional guarantees were issued to religious minorities (Protestant and Roman Catholic) that had already been operating public schools in certain territories. This provision established a specific policy legacy for educational administration, discussed in further detail below. Ottawa was entrusted with providing education for Aboriginal Peoples who lived on reserves and for the children of military personnel who lived on base. Moreover, as Canada expanded westwards, the federal government oversaw the development certain western territories. The Canadian government thus influenced some of the early decisions for public education in what would later become Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Following Confederation, an immediate objective of the federal government’s agenda included the creation of a pan-Canadian economy as part of a nation building exercise. From 1867-1940, federal policies coalesced into the First National Policy present day.” [J. Donald Wilson, ‘The Pre-Ryerson Years’, *Egerton Ryerson and His Times* Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton, Eds. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 21].
manifested in strategies collectively referred to a *defensive expansionism*. Designed by Macdonald and Laurier, the core instruments included national tariffs, railway construction and other infrastructure projects, as well as immigration to settle the western territories and consolidate Canada’s sovereignty from coast to coast. The wheat boom at the turn of the Nineteenth Century brought new waves of settlers to the west: “Sons and daughters of the Maritimes and Central Canada migrated to the plains and built up the West, thus forging innumerable links between the older Canada and the new.” Canada’s contributions to World War I, moreover, developed “a wealth of resources and capacities which . . . brought very substantial and permanent gains to the economy.”

However, the Great Depression and economic stagnation soon replaced the economic prosperity that had characterized the early years of the Twentieth Century and the economic downturn revealed a specific weakness of the Canadian federation: the vulnerability of the provincial fiscal systems and the reluctance of the federal government to either relieve or assist the provinces and compensate them for regional disparities. Outlined in further detail below, these fiscal conditions played a significant role in the evolution and expansion of the provincial educational systems and influenced the similarities and differences that appeared among them.

In 1891, a group of Canadian education professionals adopted the following resolution:

> That in the opinion of the representatives from the different provinces of the Dominion present, it is desirable that an association for the teachers of the Dominion of Canada should be formed to be called the Educational Association of the Dominion of Canada.

The resolution set the stage for the creation of the first inter-provincial organization for education in Canada. Marshalled by a series of teachers’ organizations drawn from the

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389 Ibid, 108.

390 Ibid, 130.

founding provinces of Canada, the Dominion Education Association (DEA) was established. The Association marked the first cooperative foray that formally linked the provincial educational communities together. Under the terms of the DEA constitution, “Any person interested in the work of Education shall be eligible for membership;” therefore included were all components of the education sector from teachers and principals to trustees and superintendents and on to government officials and elected leaders.

The DEA provided an arena for provincial actors to exchange ideas about the pressing issues that faced the development of educational policies and programs in the country. Interestingly, despite this interprovincial organization, many members of the education policy community requested federal involvement in the education sector. One such advocate was a Protestant high school inspector from Québec, Dr. J.M. Harper. During his address to the DEA in 1898, Harper urged the federal government to establish a national department of education modeled after the US Bureau of Education, responsible for such things as improving and co-ordinating the various school systems, collecting documents on education development, preparing annual reports and collecting statistics, disseminating new educational developments from other countries to the provincial governments, and publishing addresses and conference proceedings.

But not all members of the policy community agreed with the proposal. The response from Harper’s Francophone colleagues in Québec, for example, was quick and clear. Boucher de la Bruère, Chief Superintendent of the Catholic Committee, read a resolution that stated: “the establishment of a federal department is neither constitutional nor desirable.” Simply stated, the Catholic Committee was unwilling to support any initiative that included the federal government and infringed on its constitutionally guaranteed autonomy in the policy field.

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393 The Dominion Educational Association, The Minutes of Proceedings, with addresses and papers of the Third Convention of the Association, Halifax August 2-5, 1898. (Halifax: Dominion Education Association, 1900), 1xvi-1xxv.
Despite Catholic Québec’s clear position, the DEA sporadically entertained the proposal throughout the early 1900s and pressed the federal government to create a national department of education. In response to the initiative, the Catholic representatives from Québec withdrew from the DEA thus isolating the province (and particularly the Francophone sector) from the rest of Canada and only returned in 1918, when the DEA was reconstituted as the Canadian Education Association (CEA) and proposals for a federal bureau of education were no longer considered.395

The activities of the Association throughout this period were haphazard at best. These limitations can be attributed to three factors: a lack of clear focus, unrepresentative provincial participation, and the lack of a permanent secretariat.396 Recognizing these limitations, the participants of the CEA’s convention in 1934 decided to create a committee to identify educational problems that faced all the provinces and to rotate the location of future conventions as a way to diversify provincial participants. At the same time, the CEA’s influence also began to stretch beyond Canada’s borders. In 1938, the government of Newfoundland sent a request to become associated with the Canadian provinces through the CEA, even though it still remained an independent colony. The other provinces expressed their willingness to accept this new partner, and the constitution was amended to change the association to The Canada and Newfoundland Education Association (CNEA).397 However, in spite of these advancements, the CEA was never able to establish a permanent secretariat to manage the affairs of the Association. Its failure to do so limited the capacity of the organization to disseminate ideas across the provinces and coordinate any policy activities.

Aimed at broader educational advancements, omnibus organizations such as the CEA gave little opportunity for targeted interests to press their own agenda and so certain groups began to form their own associations exclusively for their purposes.398

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395 Many provinces initially supported the idea of a federal bureau of education. However, they gradually came to accept Québec’s position that such a bureau was unconstitutional. Instead, statistics on education were collected through the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.
398 Trustees in Alberta, for example, founded the Alberta School Trustees Association (ASTA) in 1907.
Starting within their own provinces and then branching out to form interprovincial associations, teachers and school trustees founded organizations to articulate their interests, to exchange ideas with one another, and to stimulate discussions of educational methods and practices. Despite being occupied with their own provincial affairs, in July 1920, representatives of various teachers’ federations held the inaugural meeting of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF). Three years later trustees from Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia founded the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA). These groups served to further interconnect the provincial policy communities by sponsoring conferences, conducting research, and developing comparisons of the various jurisdictions.

Along with increased legal, economic, and organizational connectivity, the overarching regime fashioned by the Constitution Act, 1867 nurtured the sociocultural bond among the provinces. Interprovincial migration saw groups of people who had been socialized in one setting move to jurisdictions and carry their ideas on education with them. However, a homogenous pan-Canadian social identity did not emerge. In Québec, for example, cultural connectivity was bifurcated with English-speaking Quebecers looking to the other provinces of Canada and French-speaking Quebecers remaining insular and isolated. In the meantime, the three Maritime Provinces exhibited deeper sociocultural ties as a regional group. As the Chief Superintendent of Education from New Brunswick declared at the opening session of the DEA:

These three Provinces facing the Atlantic Ocean are one in a sense which cannot apply to any other group of Provinces of the Dominion. Geographically,

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399 The idea for the CTF began as an initiative to gain closer cooperation between the teachers’ alliances and federations of the four Western Provinces with an eye to push for the standardization of teachers’ certificates and a uniform minimum salary in the region. Hearing of the idea, teachers from Ontario sent representatives to the first meeting of the Western Federation and encouraged the foundation of a national organization. The representatives from the Western Provinces agreed, and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation emerged founded by British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario. Representatives from the other provinces joined over the subsequent decade. For more on this history, see: Gerald Nason, The Canadian Teachers’ Federation: A Study of its Historical Developments, Interests, and Activities from 1919 to 1960. (Unpublished Thesis submitted to the University of Toronto, 1964).


401 As noted above, Québec’s isolation was furthered by its withdrawal from the Canadian Education Association due to fundamental disagreements between Francophone leaders and others in the education policy community regarding the role that Ottawa should play in the sector.
historically, traditionally, in sentiment we are very intimately connected, and though we have our little rivalries, and taunt each other occasionally as to the relative merits of our respective towns – of the amount of fog or ice in the Bay of Fundy or in Chebucto’s famous harbor – yet after all, these are only little family jars, which show our kinship to the race and help to intensify the family attachment. 402

Provincial connectivity thus underwent a substantial revolution through this period. With the exception of Newfoundland, the independent colonies and separate territories became formally connected under the terms of the Constitution Act, 1867. Political leaders and education stakeholders created organizations to promote educational issues and to advance the cause of public schooling in their provinces. Later, the separate organizations came together and created education networks across the provincial boundaries. Finally, while sociocultural bonds increased across the jurisdictions through interprovincial migration, distinctive identities and regional particularities remained. Policy actors and political leaders, moreover, became committed to the idea of universal education for all. The impulse to establish a form of public schooling that reached all citizens provided a common goal that all members of the policy community were attempting to achieve. It is therefore clear that the web of interconnectivity in British North America was transformed from a weakly linked chain of autonomous colonial governments to a nascent multilayered network that stretched from coast to coast. It was in this changing context of interconnectivity that the policy developments in education occurred.

4.2 Establishing Central Educational Administration

Since the 1700s, small one-room schools had been operating across the colonies to provide for the basic educational needs of the early settlers. Run by various religious orders or local community leaders, these rudimentary institutions pioneered the Canadian educational enterprise. By the 1840s, colonial officials began to recognize

the importance of education and a small group of elites started advocating for the establishment of public control over schools. Political leaders could have chosen to end the practice of local control and centralize all authority in the hands of the central state. However, officials in British North America preferred to preserve local school administration for three reasons.

First and foremost, maintaining some form of local control was less politically contentious than unilaterally eliminating it. Local leaders enjoyed the trust of their communities, and would have resisted an attempt by provincial officials to completely centralize educational administration. Secondly, local boards bring government closer to the people and can help distribute the administrative burdens in the policy sector. Through locally elected trustees, smaller communities can influence the direction of their school and help ensure that education policies respond to their particular needs and conditions. Moreover, local boards act as administrative agents and, when supervised, release the central government from such duties as hiring teachers, purchasing textbooks, erecting buildings, and collecting local revenue for the operation of the schools. By delegating these duties to local trustees, central officials can focus on the broader policy outcomes and issues. In other words, policy actors saw local boards as a tool to increase the effectiveness of the education sector. Finally, in all the provinces, the populations were sparse and widely distributed with limited means of communicating. These conditions made complete centralization of administration a practical impossibility. For political, administrative, and practical reasons, all of the

403 Taking a comparative perspective, educational development in France followed a pathway of centralization. Napoleon established a central administrative apparatus in 1806 and 1808, which took control of secondary education. Laws in 1816 then put elementary schools under the control of communal committees, who were also overseen by the central state. Prussian educational administration exhibited similar centralization tendencies, with the marginalization of local control between 1780 and 1840. For more on comparative educational development, see: Andy Green, Education and State Formation: The Rise of Education Systems in England, France, and the USA (London: MacMillan Press, 1990).


406 In 1816, for example, the population of Upper Canada was slightly over 95,000 and spread out over 500 miles. This situation made complete central control and administration impossible. [J. Donald Wilson, ‘The Pre-Ryerson Years’, 28].
provinces therefore decided to maintain local school boards to administer public schooling in Canada.

Despite the interjurisdictional convergence on the configuration of local educational administration, the situation in central educational administration was noticeably different. Four models of central educational administration jockeyed for dominance during the foundation and consolidation of education in Canada: civic trusteeship, religious trusteeship, collective ministerial responsibility, and individual ministerial responsibility. A comparative analysis of the progression of these four models reveals the presence of conflicting pressures for policy convergence and divergence. On the one hand, the logic of common macro-political structures exerted a powerful incentive for policy convergence. On the other hand, these pressures for convergence do not occur in a vacuum. Internal characteristics of each jurisdiction exert counter-pressure that influence the rate and extent of policy similarity that developed in the dimension during the foundation and consolidation of public education in Canada. We start with Ontario and the implementation of civic trusteeship.

**Civic Trusteeship**

During the foundation of Canadian education, one policy entrepreneur undoubtedly stood out: Egerton Ryerson. Motivated by a conviction that the achievement of a good society rested upon civil and religious liberty for all its members, Ryerson wrestled control over education from the churches and put it in the hands of a secular council in Upper Canada. Believing that educated citizens were the “best security of a good government and constitutional liberty” and that ignorant individuals were destined to become “the slaves of despot and the dupes of demagogues”, Ryerson wished to fashion an education system “established by Acts of our Provincial Legislature . . . in which the different bodies of clergy will not interfere – a system which will bring the blessing of education to every family.”

Ryerson set up a civic council known as the General Board (later the Council for Public Instruction) to govern the education sector. The Board had the authority to

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draw up schedules of instruction, establish qualifications for teachers, and designate textbooks and curricula.\textsuperscript{408} Local school boards, comprised of elected trustees, were responsible for the day-to-day operations of the individual schools. These trustees could hire teachers who met provincial qualifications, select from the approved list of textbooks, and ensure that their schools were governed according to provincial regulations. To maintain a connection between the local boards and the central administration, the General Board appointed superintendents to oversee the actions of the elected trustees. These superintendents provided the “crucial supervisory link between the central authority and the local trustees.”\textsuperscript{409}

The Act for the Establishment and Maintenance of Common Schools in Upper Canada (1843) established secular central governance, non-denominational common schools, and separate schools for denominational minorities – in this case, Roman Catholics. Ryerson himself believed that:

\begin{quote}
Sectarianism is not morality . . . To teach a child the dogmas and spirit of a sect, before he is taught the essential principles of religion and morality is to invert the pyramid, - to reverse the order of nature, - to feed with the bones of controversy instead of with the nourishing milk of truth and charity.\textsuperscript{410}
\end{quote}

The Chief Superintendent nevertheless supported the right of minorities to operate schools alongside the common school system, and successfully defeated a number of government-led efforts to abolish or undermine the separate school system.\textsuperscript{411} These separate schools thus fell squarely under the purview of the Council of Public Instruction, subject to the same rules and regulations as the common schools, including curriculum protocols, teacher training, and funding requirements.\textsuperscript{412} And, following the

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\textsuperscript{408} Charles Edward Phillips, \textit{The Development of Education in Canada} (Toronto: Gage Press, 1957), 224.
\textsuperscript{410} Egerton Ryerson, \textit{Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada} (Montreal: Lovell and Gibson, St. Nicholas Street, 1847), 22-23.
\textsuperscript{411} Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, 55.
\textsuperscript{412} Ryerson’s protection of minority rights in educational administration set up a lasting policy legacy in Ontario: the separate school system administered by the Catholic Church. Because the territorial administrators for the Northwest Territories imported Ryerson’s model, there is a similar legacy of separate Catholic school systems in Alberta and Saskatchewan.
\end{flushright}
ratification of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the separate Roman Catholic system in Ontario gained permanent protection.

**Religious Trusteeship**

Flowing against the international and domestic tide of secularism, Québec created a dual confessional system to administer education in the territory: “Respect for confessionalism and liberty, keeping politics out of education, this is what characterizes educational legislation in French Canada since Confederation.” The political salience of religious authority in Québec was in part a reflection of the cultural battles between Francophones and Anglophones in the province. The Catholic Church asserted itself as the protector of French culture and claimed control of the educational affairs of the community in the province, while the minority Anglophone population put its educational interests to a Protestant Church that wished to follow Ryerson’s footsteps.

In 1869, authority over public education in Québec was afforded to the Council of Public Instruction, divided between Roman Catholic and Protestant Committees. The result was a “dual hierarchy headed by a common superintendent, with separate Roman Catholic and Protestant secretaries who were responsible respectively to the Roman Catholic and Protestant committees of the Council of Public Instruction.” The accession of religious control signaled a victory for the religious and linguistic forces in Québec who wanted to preserve the isolation between the English Protestants and the French Catholics in the province. By the end of the Nineteenth Century, public education was run by the two separate denomination boards, “functioning side by side but rarely touching, each governed by its own administrative apparatus and distinct philosophy, and each serving different clientele.”

Newfoundland’s colonial government also eschewed secularism and pursued a system of religious trusteeship that conferred responsibility for education on religious committees. The dominance of religious interests rested in part on the fact that the

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British Government regarded Newfoundland not as a colony but as a summer fishing ground which therefore did not warrant the aid or attention that the other mainland colonies were receiving.\footnote{Frederick W. Rowe, \textit{Education and Culture in Newfoundland}. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1976), 5.} Many of the needs of Island settlers were being met exclusively by various religious orders. Widespread acceptance of religious authorities and their legitimate claims to govern thus permeated the colonists. The Education Act of 1843 set down the legislative provisions for a denominational system and introduced provisional grants to various religious orders to establish schools.\footnote{Frederick W. Rowe, \textit{The Development of Education in Newfoundland} (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1964), 81.}

In the cases of Québec and Newfoundland, the decision to implement religious trusteeship was made entirely at the discretion of internal policy actors. For Manitoba, however, external forces played a role in the initial adoption of this model of educational administration and the resulting outcomes were substantially different.

When Manitoba was brought into Confederation in 1870, the demographic characteristics of its population were similar to those in Québec. The province was linguistically and religiously divided between French Catholics and English Protestants. The federal government, moreover, had a significant stake in Manitoba politics and influenced some of the early decisions of the new government.\footnote{Pressured by his Québec colleagues in Parliament, Prime Minister MacDonald fashioned the Manitoba Act to set up the province in the image of Québec: Manitoba had a bicameral legislature, conducted all public business in French and English, and printed public proceedings in both official languages. For more information, see: Charles Bruce Sissons, \textit{Church and State in Canadian Education: An Historical Study} (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1959).} In 1871, the Manitoba government passed the \textit{Act to Establish a System of Public Education in Manitoba}, modeled after the Québec system. A government-appointed Board of Education with representation divided between Catholics and Protestants was given control over education.\footnote{Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, 85; Alexander Gregor and Keith Wilson, \textit{The Development of Education in Manitoba} (Dubuque, IO: Kendall-Hunt Publishers, 1984), 3, 31.} Local school inspection was also divided along religious lines, with guarantees for separate Catholic and Protestant superintendents. Settlement patterns in the province reinforced the dual system. Districts tended to be either predominantly Catholic or Protestant such that schools could be linguistically and religiously homogeneous. In fact, throughout the early years, the two systems were
geographically separated by the banks of the Red River, with the Catholics on the east and the Protestants on the west.\textsuperscript{421}

However, in contrast to the political conditions in Québec and Newfoundland that perpetuated a long-lasting consensus on the model of religious trusteeship, the situation in Manitoba was more dynamic. Inter-provincial migration patterns and federal immigration policy in the 1870s had a significant impact on Manitoba politics (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6). A large Ontario-bred population entered Manitoba determined to “develop institutions consistent with those they were familiar with,”\textsuperscript{422} and targeted educational administration as a key area for reform. The new migrants included Jews, Mennonites, and Icelanders, who upset the demographic balance between Catholics and Protestants in the province and challenged the principle of religious duality that had been preserved in the Board of Education.\textsuperscript{423}

Politicians in Manitoba were also increasingly aware of the benefits of public education, not just for the individual but also for society-at-large, and believed that the management and administration of education should no longer be left in the hands of religious leaders. The political elite was attuned to programmatic disparities between the two systems, with the Protestant sector consistently out-performing the Catholic sector. Clifford Sifton, for example, an official in the Greenway Government that was educated in Ontario, observed that the dual system was rife with inequalities. Teacher training in Catholic districts was substandard and illiteracy rates had soared among that portion of the population.\textsuperscript{424} In his opinion, Manitoba could never improve its educational outcomes under the confessional system because clerics resisted any attempts to create public regulation in the field. Due to Sifton’s leadership, the Greenway Government began the process of ending denominational educational administration in the province in 1890 in favour of the model of civic trusteeship that Ryerson had created. When announcing his intentions, Premier Greenway declared:

\textsuperscript{421} Gregor and Wilson, \textit{The Development of Education in Manitoba}, 34.
\textsuperscript{423} The proportion of Catholics to Protestants tipped from near equity in 1870 to a distribution of 12,000 to 50,000 by 1881. [Gregor and Wilson, \textit{The Development of Education in Manitoba}, 46].
\textsuperscript{424} Sissons, \textit{Church and State in Canadian Education}, 190.
In 1870 a certain way of life was thrust upon us, when we were still in embryo, not at our behest but to suit the political convenience of Ottawa. Under the Canadian constitution, education is the business of the Province. So let it be. Dual schools and dual language we find a nuisance, and will have none of them.425

The federal government’s effort to impose a particular policy choice in the province thus proved ineffective and provincial policy actors took the opportunity to act in their own interests and reorganize the administration of education according to their own ideas.

Collective Responsibility

As secular and religious trusteeship advanced in certain areas of Canada, the Maritime colonies pursued an alternative model of central educational administration. As some of the oldest settlements in North America, the colonies on the Atlantic coast were the sites of the earliest evidence of government action in education in the New World. Nova Scotia’s first education act predated any in western Canada by almost one hundred years.426 By Confederation, New Brunswick already had legislation stipulating the minimum average daily attendance and government grants for the operation of schools. Prince Edward Island had a Free Education Act that guaranteed colonial grants to cover the costs of teachers’ salaries and infrastructure.427 As in Ontario, political elites in these colonies had a proclivity towards secular control of education. However, in contrast to Ryerson, policy actors decided to pursue a political rather than civic model of educational administration. Nova Scotia provides a useful illustration of the arrangements in the Maritime colonies and the factors that led to their configuration.

The first colony to achieve responsible government in 1848 “not by rebellion or revolt, but through evolution,”428 Nova Scotia viewed British institutions in a positive light and wished to preserve their influence. In 1864, the Nova Scotia government created the Council of Public Instruction, with the premier as president and the executive council as members. A provincially appointed superintendent advised the

425 Quoted in Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education*, 180.
The superintendent was the agent of the Council, commanded to supervise the local schools, while the executive council retained the policy functions of writing legislation, establishing funding formulas and providing the overall direction for the system. Nova Scotia thus became the first province to adopt a system of collective ministerial responsibility for central educational administration in North America. The other Maritime colonies followed soon after and institutionalized this administrative system in eastern Canada.

Collective ministerial responsibility offered a number of advantages for decision-makers. First, the model shields an individual from the opposition of powerful denominational forces who challenged the assertion of the democratic state in the policy field. Political leaders also championed the collective model on the grounds of efficiency. After reviewing the systems in England and Nova Scotia, in 1869, the New Brunswick Attorney-General argued that it was important for a Board of Education to be composed not of individuals of “profound scholastic attainments” but of “men with fairly sound judgement and good business talent.” Moreover, the Attorney-General continued, if the Board were a civic body made up of individuals from across the province, members would need compensation for their travel throughout the year. Compensation, he reasoned, would unnecessarily drive up the cost of education. Lastly, proponents of collective decision-making argued that the committee system would help control the costs of education and limit the potentially unpredictable and rapid increases that could result if a single individual were responsible for education.

Beyond these instrumental advantages, a political philosophy of favouring limited government ran through the Maritime Provinces and reinforced the legitimacy and acceptance of collective responsibility. The three provinces had a tradition of small executive councils and resisted increasing the number of ministers with portfolio

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429 Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas, 83.
431 MacNaughton, The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 190.
432 Ibid.
Despite the expanding functions of government. As the premier of Nova Scotia in the first decades of the Twentieth Century, George Murray presided over the Council of Public Instruction. At the same time, he supervised a wide range of functions as the Provincial Secretary, was ex officio Provincial Treasurer and King’s Printer, exercised general supervision of three departments, and monitored the affairs of other officials and boards. Due to Murray’s influence, Nova Scotia retained one of the smallest political executives in Canadian history. Collective responsibility and the management of central educational administration in this manner therefore resonated with this overarching political philosophy of limited government in the Maritime Provinces.

**Individual Responsibility**

In spite of the educational advancements made in Ontario and the other provinces under civic trusteeship, there were some shortcomings with this model of central educational administration. Under Ryerson’s regime, the Chief Superintendent could completely circumvent cabinet and the legislature through the use of regulatory powers. During the 1860s, Ryerson used these powers to pass a series of unpopular education policies that concerned grammar schools and secondary education. These actions generated resentment among his supporters and reinforced mistrust among his opponents. Recognizing the autocratic nature of the position, Premier Oliver Mowat sought to reduce the autonomy of the superintendent and ensure that all decisions flowed through the cabinet and the legislature.

Beyond the potential for autocracy, civic trusteeship conflicted with elements of parliamentary democracy. Under the rules of parliamentary government, only a cabinet minister is allowed to answer questions directly on the floor of the legislature. Bureaucratic officials are shielded from public scrutiny to preserve the principle of administrative anonymity. The Chief Superintendent was therefore unable to answer

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434 Between 1867 and 1918, the Maritime Provinces consistently had the smallest cabinets with only three to six ministers appointed to a portfolio. Québec, Alberta, and British Columbia ranged from six to eight, and Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan ranged from four to seven. For more information, see: J. Murray Beck, *The Government of Nova Scotia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957) Appendix I, 354.


questions or respond to critics in the public forum. Ryerson himself admitted that this lack of accountability was a serious weakness of the post, and that the only possible remedy was to create the position of minister of education. And, with Ryerson’s retirement in 1876, a window of opportunity opened for the Mowat government to abolish the post of Chief Superintendent and create the position of minister of education, directly responsible to the legislature.

Accustomed to the leadership of a single individual clearly in charge of the policy sector, rather than following the path of the Maritime Provinces, the Mowat Government introduced individual ministerial responsibility. The new minister inherited all the power and authority previously held by the chief superintendent and the Council of Public Instruction. The centralized nature of Ontario education that had been fostered by Ryerson was thus preserved. The newly created Department of Education, through the authority of the minister, determined curriculum, authorized textbooks, set exams, and trained and certified teachers. From this point onwards, the political and policy direction of education in Ontario was developed through the minister of education who enjoyed substantial control over virtually every aspect of public schooling.

**Unpacking the Politics of Administrative Change**

By 1945, seven of the ten provinces had adopted the same model of central educational administration. Ryerson’s model of civic trusteeship had set an example for the burgeoning education system in western Canada. As one school inspector wrote:

> In seeking the origins of our patterns of school administration in Canada, we must turn first to the Province of Ontario. This province, originally known as Upper Canada, has been a laboratory for the development of Canadian government, both local and national.

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438 When justifying the change, Premier Mowat argued that: “The Chief Superintendent had hitherto been virtually a minister without a minister’s responsibility . . . If responsibility was essential to all other departments of the Government, surely it was to the Education Department.” (Toronto, *The Globe*. 22 January 1876).


In contrast to the pattern of rapid transformation in Ontario however, when moving away from the models of civic or religious trusteeship the western provinces opted to incrementally shift towards individual ministerial responsibility via collective ministerial responsibility. The logic of policy actors was straightforward. The collective model offered useful protection from the heated opposition of entrenched civic and religious interests (as was the case in Manitoba). In truth, the legacy of collective ministerial responsibility was short-lived in western Canada. Political leaders were heavily influenced by Ontario’s choices and subsequently adopted individual ministerial responsibility as the preferred mode of central educational administration. By the turn of the Twentieth Century, all the provinces west of Ontario had converged on the administrative model of individual responsibility.

East of the Ottawa River, however, the consolidation of individual responsibility was slower. The Maritime Provinces gradually abandoned the system of collective ministerial responsibility throughout the 1930s and 1940s. By 1945, the only province to continue collective ministerial responsibility was its exemplar, Nova Scotia. Given that collective ministerial responsibility fit under the principles of parliamentary government, why did the Maritime Provinces introduce individual ministerial responsibility for central educational administration?

It seems that the model of collective ministerial responsibility suffered certain deficiencies that limited educational expansion. Under collective responsibility, the sector lacked a clear advocate at the cabinet table. Since decisions were reached through a consensus among members of the executive council, proposals were often watered down to satisfy the interests of all those involved. Consequently, educational spending, curriculum development, and teacher professionalization tended

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441 Under the *Common School Ordinance 1869*, educational governance in BC was entrusted to the executive council. However, according to the Dominion Statistician H. Marshall, education “thus regulated did not function effectively” and by 1891, the province followed Ontario and appointed a specific minister to preside over the department of education. [H. Marshall, *The Organization and Administration of Public Schools in Canada*. Dominion Bureau of Statistics Reference Paper (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1952), 22.]

442 The principle of collective responsibility dictates that a member of the executive council must either support all initiatives or resign from his/her position. Despite having this principle in place since 1893, no Nova Scotia minister ever withdrew because of a difference with his colleague on a matter of public policy. This outcome begs the question of whether in such circumstances, clear and consistent proposals could have been developed.
to lag in the Maritime Provinces. Occasionally, provincial superintendents attempted to take on a greater leadership role and encourage innovation; however, such efforts were often met with opposition from the executive council. Marshall d’Avery, a provincial superintendent in New Brunswick, for example, “was dismissed because of his progressive and enthusiastic advocacy of public schools and replaced by the brother of Charles Fisher, the new government leader.” This model of central educational administration therefore dampened the internal capacity of these provinces to encourage their educational activities.

As public demands for quality education and the complexities of the sector increased, the effectiveness of collective educational administration began to decay. Prince Edward Island created the position of minister of education in 1931, and in 1936, the New Brunswick Annual Report of the Department of Education stated that, “the most forward step taken was the appointing of a Minister of Education in the person of Honourable A.P. Patterson . . . Under his efficient administration and competent leadership, progress will be made.” When reporting this administrative change in New Brunswick, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics observed that, “educational interests will thus have a special representative in government the way that they have in most of the other provinces.” Therefore, the leadership vacuum that had previously existed in these jurisdictions was rectified. Seven of the ten provinces had thus converged on a common model of educational administration.

For the remaining three provinces, the situation was different. In Newfoundland, some signs of change in central educational administration began to appear in the 1920s. In 1920, the colonial administration attempted to create the first permanent administrative body and set up a Department of Education. By this point, however, the churches had established themselves as the legitimate providers of education and successfully resisted the government’s attempt to centralize and

secularize education. In 1927 the department of education was abolished and replaced by a Bureau of Education similar to Québec’s Council of Public Instruction. For Nova Scotia and Québec, however, the different models of educational administration showed no signs of abating. Collective ministerial responsibility still fit with the political culture and institutional framework of Nova Scotia and there was little impulse to change the course of action in the province. For Québec, societal conditions preserved the legitimacy of the dualistic system and overshadowed the institutional dissonance between religious trusteeship and the rules of parliamentary government. The result was that these alternative models of educational administration carried over into the next stage in the development of Canadian education.

4.3 Financing Education – Determining Who Should Pay and How

During the early years of Canadian history, the costs of education were borne by parents with small government subsidies offered to impoverished families or piecemeal grants irregularly given to communities to offset certain costs. Teachers levied fees on students and were allowed to increase the rates if attendance dropped. Poor families frequently covered their fees through goods or services, such as providing rum or shoes, or hauling hay for the teachers. The effects of this fiscal policy, in the words of Charles Phillips, “were vicious.” The provision of schooling was highly unstable, as schools would often close periodically throughout the year because of insufficient funds. Teachers were often impoverished, as they frequently had to accept goods for which they had no need. Conditions for teachers in rural areas were particularly grim, posing considerable challenges for local officials to attract and retain viable candidates.

Without financial levers, the central governments exerted little influence over educational affairs. Trying to mandate common policies and uniform standards in

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447 Representation was initially bilaterally divided between Protestants and Catholics. However, because Protestants in Newfoundland were more evangelical than their counterparts in the rest of British North American, they pushed for a multi-confessional framework. The result being the gradual fragmentation of the General Protestant Committee into four committees: the Salvation Army, the Pentecostal Assemblies, the Presbyterian Church, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church. For more information, see: Rowe, The Development of Education in Newfoundland; and Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas.


449 Ibid, 281.
education without providing some fiscal support challenged accepted understandings of legitimacy:

No legislature could pursue this fiscal policy [of non-support] with respect to schools and at the same time require all children to attend schools, prescribe teachers’ qualifications and class size, and make the many other mandatory provisions which make up the typical provincial schools acts and regulations. \(^{450}\)

If elected and appointed officials wanted to regulate education, so the reasoning went, the state needed to provide financial backing.

By the early 1800s, political and intellectual elites began to favour the idea of a free common elementary education system. This goal gained currency and political leaders needed to devise a means of achieving it. \(^{451}\) During the 1840s, proposals were issued in the three Maritime assemblies that recommended general tax assessments to ensure that all families, regardless of economic standing, could send their children to school. In 1841, Judge Charles Mondelet of Québec wrote a number of letters to the government requesting that the legislature institute permanent government aid for education and introduce local taxation for public schools. School trustees in Toronto pressed for public funds on the grounds that free universal education would benefit the city by “withdrawing from idleness and dissipation a large number of children who now loiter about the streets or frequent the haunts of vice, creating the most painful emotions in every well regulated mind.” \(^{452}\)

Political actors began to debate the merits of two general frameworks of education finance, and the terms of this discourse was neatly captured in the Ontario legislature. \(^{453}\) In the 1830s, William Buell Jr. of Brockville initiated a bill that favoured local administration that was financed through central grants drawn from a

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\(^{451}\) The free schools movement was not universally endorsed. Strong opposition was launched by political conservatives who saw education as the privilege of the elite, not the right of the individual. Reverend John Roaf, for one, wrote in a letter to *The Globe* that free schooling amounts to “communism in education” and undermines private property and the privileges of elites. Along with others, Roaf contested the idea of the working class enjoying the right to “educate their children at the expense of their more wealthy neighbours . . . Though it is our duty to give this blessing to the poor,” he acknowledged, “it does not follow that the poor should forcibly take from us.” For more on his position, see: Phillips, *The Development of Education in Canada*, 284.

\(^{452}\) Toronto Board of Education, quoted in Phillips, *The Development of Education in Canada*, 284.

variety of revenue sources. The representative from Brockville sought to create a system of full state funding to centralize the responsibility for education finance and provide equal access for all local boards to comparable levels of funds. Mahlon Burwell of London, however, opposed Buell’s proposal on the grounds that it would increase the scope of the central government at the expense of local control. Burwell advocated the establishment of a local tax assessment similar to one he had observed in New York. Under this model of education finance, local boards were delegated the right to set and collect property taxes to finance and administer the education system set by the central government. Local tax assessment was seen as a means to both encourage parents (who may have otherwise kept their children at home to save money) to send their children to school and provide a more sustainable answer to the perennial problems of school finance.

By the turn of the Nineteenth Century, Mahlon Burwell’s arguments had won out across Canada and free universal elementary school was available to Canadians from coast to coast. All the provinces implemented the second model of education finance and allocated taxation powers to local authorities that were responsible for delivering educational programs at minimum standards, as set by the central government. Interprovincial convergence on this model of education finance can be attributed to the viability of the policy idea in the policy context. By establishing a stable and relatively consistent source of revenues, local taxation offered a practical solution for the problem of intermittent financing for public schools. Moreover, it provided a means to motivate parents to send their children to school since parents were forced to support the system, whether they sent their children to it or not. Since parents were required to pay, so the reasoning went, they would be more likely to send their children to school on a more regular basis. The plausibility of achieving the goal of mass public education was in turn increased. Politically, local taxation was palatable for provincial legislators because it put the often-unpleasant responsibility for setting tax rates in the hands of local politicians. Finally, because all the provinces had preserved local control by maintaining local school boards with elected trustees, the necessary administrative apparatus was already in place.

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The model of local taxation fit also with existing sociological traditions and the political heritage of the population:

In the opinion of the Survey, such a system of centralized [financial] control and administration – for administration and control cannot logically be separated – would be more Prussian than British in its essential characteristics. The enervating effect on our future democracy through the weakening of its powers of local self-government in school matters, with the consequent loss of local initiative and interest in the schools would more than counterbalance any real or imaginary gains from such a dangerous experiment. . . . The history of education in England, which is more pertinent to British Columbia’s case than is that of education in Prussia, affords an answer to the question of financial administration and local control.455

Thus, the practice of local taxation as the model of education finance was universally implemented from coast to coast.

As the scope of education expanded during the initial decades of the Twentieth Century, provincial decision-makers realized that local revenues would be insufficient to cover rising costs. As expenditures ballooned, it became quickly apparent that fiscal inequalities within provinces between urban and rural districts hindered educational advancements and improvements. All provinces therefore introduced grants in an effort to rectify this problem.

British Columbia started the trend in 1933 when it introduced a weighted population grant. Based on the recommendations of the Putnam-Weir Commission, the model saw the distribution of provincial aid in proportion to a population measure, such as number of pupils, classrooms, or teachers, adjusted according to local resources benchmarked according to local property value.456 Over the subsequent decade other provinces introduced similar programs to off-set the costs of education where, according to a report from the CEA, “Practically all provinces are moving in the direction of larger provincial grants, with a correspondingly lower proportion of educational costs to be carried locally by taxes on real estate.”457 Therefore, in response

456 Ibid, Chapter 17; Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas, 116.
to similar problems and the building of the existing model of education finance that all ten jurisdictions had previously adopted, the provinces uniformly introduced the shared-cost model of educational finance.

It is important to recognize however that policy convergence in the substantive policy for education finance did not translate into policy convergence in terms of the levels of investment. Significant subnational variations in the extent of government support for public schooling demarcated the provinces from one another throughout the foundation and consolidation of elementary and secondary education (see Appendix 7). In 1900, for example, per pupil spending ranged from a low of $7.00 in Quebec to a high of $31.00 in British Columbia. By the end of this period, the variations in educational expenditures had not been alleviated. In 1945, Prince Edward Island recorded the lowest investment at $37.00 per student, while BC retained the top spot at $107.00. Outlined in further detail below, these variations in government support contributed to substantial differences in the capacities of the provincial governments to expand educational programming in their respective jurisdictions.

4.4 The Curriculum: Deciding How Far to Go and How to Deliver It

The elementary curriculum experienced fairly rapid inter-provincial uniformity early on. Provincial governments that claimed a strong role in educational administration exerted control over the course content and areas of study required in public schools. By 1910, most provinces had adopted an eight-grade elementary system with children organized into homogenous groups. In his review of Canadian education at the end

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458 In Québec and Newfoundland, religious trusteeship undermined the uniformity of curriculum both within the two provinces and between the other provinces. Within the provinces, each religious council maintained a firm grip on its curriculum and resisted advances from other councils. In turn, the fragmentation and limited communications between the religious councils generated internal differences within the two provinces. Furthermore, the internal isolation reinforced differences in the curriculum with the other provinces. The one exception to this was the Protestant Committee in Québec’s Council for Public Instruction. The Protestant Committee intentionally drew its programs of study from the other Anglophone provinces. As a result, Anglophone children in Québec received a similar education with the other children in the rest of Canada.

459 The exception to this pattern was the Catholic sector of Québec and Newfoundland. Catholic Québec used a seven-grade elementary system for a longer period and elementary schooling was only extended to grade eight in 1923. Also, despite the effort made under the Education Act of 1843, education in a majority of Newfoundland schools was, according to Frederick Rowe, a “chaotic mess in almost every particular. There was no uniformity of curriculum or of achievement standards” [Rowe, Education and Culture in Newfoundland, 20-21].
of World War I, Peter Sandiford remarked that, “The courses of study [in elementary schools] throughout any province is remarkably uniform. The department of education takes pride in making it so.”\textsuperscript{460} Visitors to Canada from the United States and the United Kingdom were similarly astonished at the influence of central authorities over the content of what was being taught at the local level.\textsuperscript{461} Indeed, in the case of the United States, centralized curriculum at the state level was virtually inconceivable as local authorities retained complete control over course standards and offerings.\textsuperscript{462}

What led to the interprovincial uniformity in elementary curriculum? First and foremost, there was a widespread consensus among policy actors across the country on the purpose and goals of elementary education. The notion of mass basic education for all had swept around the world, and Canadian educational leaders were caught up in the ideals. The consensus laid a common foundation across each of the provincial jurisdictions. On its own, however, the ideational consensus may not have been enough to generate the strong interprovincial similarities in elementary curriculum. The goals and aspirations of educationalists needed institutionalized supports to facilitate the spread of mass education across the country.

To ensure the implementation of the central curriculum, provincial governments attached school board funding to local adoption of the mandatory courses of study. Individual schools or districts that attempted to diverge from the prescribed curriculum were deemed ineligible for public funds. Provinces also required the use of specific textbooks to enhance uniformity in the system. To quote Egerton Ryerson:

> The variety of textbooks in the Schools, and the objectionable character of many of them, is a subject of serious and general complaints. All classification of the pupils is thereby prevented; the exertions of the time of the scholars is almost wasted, and improper sentiments are inculcated.\textsuperscript{463}

To remedy this problem, the Ontario government mandated a common series of textbooks that all public schools in the province were required to use. Because the costs of publishing alternative versions of textbooks were highly prohibitive, the other provinces tended to use the books that Ontario had authorized. This cost-saving device further contributed to the observed interprovincial similarities in elementary curriculum.\(^{464}\)

Moreover, since its inception, the Dominion Education Association had as one of its key priorities the education of children “not as sectionalists but as Canadians.”\(^{465}\) At all its national meetings, the agenda included informational exchanges on the state of elementary curriculum in each of the participating provinces, thus providing provincial educational elites the opportunity to examine the programs and practices of the other jurisdictions.\(^{466}\) Consequently, the centralization of curriculum in provincial hands, in conjunction with the use of common textbooks, and the information exchanges through the DEA, resulted in a high degree of consistency in elementary programming across the Canadian state.

Beyond the elementary level, interprovincial similarity in curriculum dropped dramatically. Unlike the shared consensus on the meaning and purpose of elementary school, there was no universal outlook on secondary education. For the most part, in the eyes of government officials and professional educators, secondary education was reserved for students who wished to pursue advanced learning in a university setting.\(^{467}\) As such, political leaders initially demonstrated little interest in expanding the educational enterprise beyond the elementary level.


\(^{466}\) One of the first resolutions of the DEA read: “The varied classification of the Schools of the different Provinces has been found to be a matter of considerable perplexity in dealing with the attainments of pupils who have changed their residence from one Province to another. Your Committee would therefore recommend the adoption of a uniform nomenclature in the designation of the Schools of the Province and the adoption of a course of study for each class, so that pupils so removing from one Province to another may be conveniently allocated to the class which they are best qualified to enter.” [Dominion Education Association, *The Minutes of Proceedings with Addresses, Papers and Discussions of the First Convention of the Association Montreal, July 5-8 1892* (Montreal: Dominion Education Association, 1893), 29-30].

The onset of industrialization created a demand for a new worker, capable of applying the latest technological advancements, which required a higher level of education than had previously been available. Ideas on equality also began to change during this period, and larger numbers of people pushed to expand educational opportunities beyond the elites of society. Because of these demands, by the end of the Nineteenth Century, the provinces began experimenting with two different forms of secondary schooling.

The first model was the partite system. Educational reformers in concert with businesses sought to develop vocational schools that were institutionally and physically separate from the academic high schools. In 1897, the Ontario government spearheaded this movement and ratified the Ontario Technical Education Act. The legislation helped support existing schools, such as the Toronto Technical School, while simultaneously encouraging local boards to expand their own provision of vocational education. At the DEA’s convention in 1898, Ontario’s actions were a major agenda item and W. J. Robertson presented a detailed report on the advancements made to all the delegates. By 1904, the Vancouver Board of Education introduced a commercial program in the Vancouver High School, and other Canadian provinces began to introduce similar experiments in the provision of secondary education.

In its 1913 report, Canada’s Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education recommended the expansion of vocational and technical training in Canadian high schools. Believing that vocational training would enhance economic productivity and that students should have the opportunity to pursue different interests, the reviewers endorsed transforming the Canadian secondary system from one that emphasized academics to one that could also provide apprenticeships and trades training. Following an exhaustive survey of systems in the United Kingdom and continental Europe, and an audit of provincial efforts, the Commission called upon the

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federal government to issue conditional grants supporting the construction and operation of separate schools for vocational and agricultural training.\textsuperscript{472}

Although its findings were not binding on the provinces, provincial officials used the Commission’s research to inform their own policy choices. Based on preliminary reports released in 1910, the Ontario government drafted the Industrial Education Act of 1911. This legislation set down the policy for technical training institutes in the province and mandated that manual training be included as a component of the Ontario curriculum. Similar industrial education acts were quickly passed in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, to expand vocational training to villages and towns throughout those provinces.\textsuperscript{473}

Despite these preliminary advancements, there were two barriers that inhibited the expansion of partite schools throughout the first decades of the Twentieth Century. First, many of the provinces lacked the fiscal capacity to finance the expansion of secondary education and could not provide the necessary funds to support these innovations. Building upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education and seeing the headway made in certain provinces, in 1919, the federal government passed the Technical Education Act. Under its terms, the federal government offered to share up to 50 percent of the provincial costs for vocational schools by providing grants totalling more than $10 million over a 10-year period. However, by 1929, Ontario was the only province that managed to use its entire allotment, and four extensions were required before all the remaining provinces could claim their shares.\textsuperscript{474}

The inability of the other provinces to capitalize on federal funds signaled the second barrier to secondary school expansion: the size of local jurisdictions. Feasible in large urban environments, smaller communities lacked the necessary capacity to construct and maintain separate buildings for the different groups of students.\textsuperscript{475} Some

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\textsuperscript{472} Ibid, vol. IV, 1650.
\textsuperscript{473} Sandiford, ‘Canada’.
\textsuperscript{474} In 1939, there were 62 vocational schools in Ontario; 2 in the Atlantic region; none in Québec; and one vocational school in each of the four Western provinces. (Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, 100-101, 111).
\textsuperscript{475} The Canada and Newfoundland Education Association, \textit{Trends in Education 1944: A Survey of the Current Educational Developments in the Nine Provinces of Canada and in Newfoundland} (Toronto: Canada Newfoundland Education Association, 1944), 29.
provinces attempted to consolidate school boards to create larger districts that would make partite schools more practical. Local trustees and citizens, however, were often opposed to such proposals.\(^{476}\) For example, in Saskatchewan in 1918, Deputy Minister of Education Augustus H. Ball supported the consolidation of thousands of school districts into larger areas.\(^{477}\) Legislation was passed to allow districts to voluntarily consolidate and take advantage of the increased opportunities by pooling resources. However, school trustees and parents were reticent to affiliate with neighbouring jurisdictions for fear of losing local control over teachers, costs, and programming.\(^{478}\) Moreover, parents raised concerns over the practical matter of transporting students over long distances to attend regional schools. Because of this opposition, no amalgamations were completed in Saskatchewan. Similar trends were reported in other provinces,\(^{479}\) and partite schools thus remained beyond the reach of many Canadian communities.

Beyond these material conditions, partite schools did not equalize educational opportunities for Canadian students. In general, the public stigmatized vocational schools as inferior to academic schools, which served to reinforce economic class distinctions.\(^{480}\) Education experts therefore developed a second model of secondary schools known as the bilateral schools movement. All students were placed in a common school and then streamed into either general or academic programs designed to accommodate the diverse needs of the student population. While abating somewhat the challenge of accessibility in rural areas, the bilateral program still perpetuated class-distinctions as students from poorer backgrounds were systematically relegated to the general secondary stream. Moreover, the general programs also did not adequately

\(^{476}\) In its brief chapter entitled “Consolidation of Schools” the authors of the Putnam-Weir Commission wrote: “Often consolidation of schools is theoretically advisable but practically impolitic. Often it would be the right thing to do if the people believed in it, but the wrong thing to do until they themselves realize that its proposed benefits are real” (Survey of the School System, 300).

\(^{477}\) Saskatchewan, Department of Education, Annual Report, 1918, 16.


\(^{479}\) At the proceedings of the 18\(^{th}\) Convention of the CEA, Dr. McFarlane, Chief Superintendent of Education in New Brunswick, reported that despite the government’s best efforts to convince the public that New Brunswick should adopt a larger unit than the small school district, no consolidations had occurred [Proceedings 1938, 118].

\(^{480}\) Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas, 102.
meet the particular needs of specific vocations. Bilateral schools, therefore, offered an unsatisfactory solution to the problem of systematic inequality in secondary education, leaving room for future policy entrepreneurs to promote an alternative course of action in the future.

Before leaving this dimension of education policy, it is important to address the conditions of secondary education in Québec. In Québec, the provision of secondary education internally diverged with markedly different pathways between the Protestant and Catholic systems. Influenced by developments in the rest of Canada, aided by a greater tax base at its disposal, and assisted by smaller but territorially concentrated populations, the Protestant sector began to experiment with partite and bilateral schools and pulled secondary education under the public system.\(^{481}\) Anglophone Quebeckers thus began to experience educational improvements similar to those recorded in the rest of Canada. The Catholic sector, dominated by the clergy, resisted any idea of expanding secondary education beyond the academic stream. Few efforts were made to include vocational training, and the expansion of secondary education in the Francophone community lagged. Secondary instruction remained almost entirely under a system of classical colleges operated by the clergy and oriented to the exclusive goal to create a French-speaking elite. This arrangement “offered little opportunity for the exchange of ideas or for cooperation between two entirely distinct cultural communities.”\(^{482}\) In fact, between 1908 and 1960, the Council of Public Instruction was virtually inactive, as the two committees developed and implemented their own programs of study without consulting each other.\(^{483}\)

The policy divergence translated into significant internal variations in the educational attainments of the Anglophone and Francophone populations. Up to the middle of the Twentieth Century, Québec was reported to have the lowest school attendance among the Canadian provinces. A federal study on pupil retention, for example, found that Catholic Québec had the highest dropout rate in Canada and

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\(^{482}\) Smith and Donahue, *The Historical Roots of Québec Education*, 23.

Protestant Québec the lowest. For every 100 pupils who started the second grade in all provinces, 90 reached grade eight in Protestant Québec, 90 in BC, 87 in Ontario, 66 in Newfoundland, and just 48 in Catholic Québec. As the population of Québec began to industrialize and urbanize in the 1930s, these disparities between the Anglophone and Francophone sectors would become the focus for major reforms, but these changes would not arrive until the 1960s.

4.5 Teaching the Teachers and Professional Standards

If there was a unity of feeling, then the same stuff that makes a good teacher in Prince Edward Island is what we want in Ontario; and if we could here by some means ascertain what would be a suitable common standard for all and work up to that standard, then the citizens of Canada would be citizens indeed.

George W. Ross, Ontario’s Minister of Education, 1892

Under the leadership of Egerton Ryerson, Ontario was an early leader in teacher education. In 1847, Ryerson established the Toronto Normal School, the first of its kind in the country. New Brunswick opened its first Training School in Fredericton in 1848. Nova Scotia followed soon after with its own normal school in 1854. Two years later, Prince Edward Island established another normal school, and finally, in 1857, Québec’s Council for Public Instruction created separate normal schools for Catholics and Protestants. The rapidity and consistency in the growth of the normal school model in Eastern Canada was a testament to the influence of European traditions in teacher education among the founding provinces. More importantly, the tradition of normal schools was established before the separate colonies came together

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484 Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Student Progress Through the Schools by Grade (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1960), 28.
485 Ryerson was inspired by the training schools in Prussia, France, Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States when he made his educational tours in 1845. When he set up the Toronto School, he blended attributes from the German and Irish system which, according to him, had “pre-eminence over all similar establishments in the British Dominions.” [quoted in Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950. (Toronto: Baptist Johnston, 1950), 540.]
486 Similar to the experiences in secondary education, teacher education also diverged between Protestants and Catholics. In general, teachers in the Protestant system attended normal schools. Teachers in the Catholic system, however, were frequently excluded, as they were more often than not members of the clergy. For more on this, see: Smith and Donahue, The Historical Roots of Québec Education, 25; Magnuson, A Brief History of Quebec Education.
487 John M. Stark, a Scotsman educated at David Stow’s normal school in Glasgow, established normal schools in Prince Edward Island. For more on the history of teacher education in PEI, see: Willard Brehaut, Teacher Education in Prince Edward Island: Report of a study undertaken at the request of the Minister of Education of the Province of Prince Edward Island. (Toronto: OISE, April 1972).
in 1867. The normal schools thus constituted a specific policy pathway that became an enduring legacy in the founding provinces.

According to education historian F. Henry Johnson, Ryerson’s model “set the pattern for elementary teacher-training across western Canada for almost a century.” As with the spread of educational administrative practices, individuals such as John Jessop were instrumental in bringing the Ontario model to the new provinces. Jessop was the first superintendent of education in BC and had been an early graduate of the Toronto Normal School. He had been inculcated with Ryerson’s ideas on teacher education and carried them with him to the Pacific Coast.

Limited resources in the expanding territories nevertheless delayed the establishment of separate normal schools in the new provinces. To satisfy their growing educational needs, provincial officials in the West attracted teachers from the eastern provinces, Britain, and the United States to teach in the expanding territories. Once the Western provinces established their own high schools, governments began using them as a temporary training ground to prepare their teachers, to reduce their dependence on migrants from abroad. In his report on public schools in 1874, Jessop wrote that high schools would “do good service as Training Institutes for teachers, till such time as the number of our school districts would warrant the establishment of a Provincial Normal School” in British Columbia. His dream was realized in 1901 when the Vancouver Normal School was opened.

489 John Jessop provides one example of a specific individual that carried ideas between provinces. D.J. Goggin is another individual that has been similarly credited with bringing Ryerson’s ideas to the West. Born and raised in Ontario, Goggin taught Ryerson’s system before being appointed Principal of the Manitoba Normal School. He was active in Manitoba education circles and gained a reputation that spread beyond the provincial borders. When the Council for Public Instruction of the Northwest Territories wanted to set up its own normal schools, it appointed Goggin as the director of normal schools and superintendent of education for the Territories. Accepting the appointment, Goggin introduced the Ryersonian tradition into what would later become Alberta and Saskatchewan. [John W. Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province. Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Alberta Teachers’ Association, 1967. Chapter 1; Alan H. Child, ‘The Ryerson Tradition in Western Canada, 1871-1906’, Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 279-301].
490 Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province, 32.
491 Johnson, ‘Teacher Education in Historical Perspective’, 18.
By the early Twentieth Century, the four Western provinces had set up normal schools to train teachers.\textsuperscript{492} At this point, we find strong evidence of inter-provincial uniformity in the structure and delivery of teacher training. Convergence was achieved through policy learning based on eastern Canada’s (and particularly Ryerson’s) early lead. Ideas on teacher training had been informally exchanged among provincial education officials and stakeholders through various conferences organized by the Dominion Education Association. At the first DEA conference, for example, a key item up for discussion was teacher training.\textsuperscript{493} And in 1919, Edmonton hosted the Conference on Teacher Education with representatives from the various provincial governments and education stakeholders with a central focus on the normal school system.\textsuperscript{494} Additionally, specific individuals who had been trained in the Ontario system were appointed to key positions in the new western provinces, and they adapted their previous experiences to meet the developing needs. Individual agents thus acted as the carriers of ideas, spreading notions on teacher education from one jurisdiction to the next. Facing the common problem of developing a strong teaching force, provincial educators in the newer jurisdictions looked for inspiration from those with established programs.

Teacher certification in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec and Ontario initially fell to the local or regional school boards.\textsuperscript{495} Candidates applied directly to the school board and their certification was only valid in the specified territory. A teacher that moved from his or her original area had to be re-certified to teach in the new school. Boards were notoriously lenient in their examination of potential candidates; the result was poorly qualified individuals instructing in the schools.\textsuperscript{496}

\textsuperscript{492} Manitoba’s first normal school opened in 1882, Alberta’s in 1905, and Saskatchewan’s in 1911.
\textsuperscript{493} Stewart, Interprovincial Cooperation in Education, 13.
\textsuperscript{494} Robert Patterson, ‘History of Teacher Education in Alberta’, Teacher Education in Alberta: The Record and the Future. (Lethbridge: University of Lethbridge 1976), 13.
\textsuperscript{495} Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada.
\textsuperscript{496} In Québec, for example, lax certification standards lowered the incentive for prospective teachers to attend one of the normal schools operating in the province since individuals could simply get a local board to employ them without training. As a result, for generations, teachers in Québec were rarely trained. (Milner, The Long Road to Reform, Chapter One).
Recognizing the problem with supervision, Ryerson implemented central standards for certification in Ontario. The legislature transferred the responsibility for teacher certification from the local trustees into the hands of provincially appointed district and township superintendents of education in 1843.\textsuperscript{497} Local boards were still permitted to hire teachers, but central regulations introduced in 1846 made it impossible to certify “aliens” and required that certain minimal training standards be met. Admittedly, superintendents could issue temporary certificates in case teachers fell in short supply, but permanent certificates could only be granted following a designated training period within a provincial normal school. Ryerson’s model for certification spread quickly throughout the Maritime and Western Provinces, as the colonies moved to centralize the authority over education.\textsuperscript{498} Again, the DEA played a large role in the dissemination of these practices, highlighting the centralization of teacher certification as a key policy priority for governments to address.\textsuperscript{499}

These efforts at centralization did not, however, mean that a uniform regime of teacher certification developed. Provincial policies for teacher certification varied both over time and between provinces. These variations persisted despite the fact that organizations such as the DEA had been considering the establishment of uniform standards and nomenclature for teacher certification since 1898.\textsuperscript{500} The explanation for this variation lies on three factors.

First, as noted above, when faced with teacher shortages departments of education frequently reduced the standards for certification or offered temporary certificates to unqualified individuals to make sure that schools could continue operating.\textsuperscript{501} Second, in all provinces, teachers’ certificates were divided between

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{498} Admittedly, the requirements for certification were not overly rigorous. Elevating responsibility for certification, however, set down a policy pathway that reinforced centralization of authority into the hands of the central government.
\item \textsuperscript{499} Stewart, \textit{Interprovincial Cooperation in Education}, 13.
\item \textsuperscript{500} At the third conference, J.A. MacCabe observed that: “We find that each province of the Dominion, in receiving at Confederation control over education within its own limits, has established for itself a system of licensing its teachers, and will not accept, without re-examination, a teacher licensed by another province.” He argued that the ratification of a uniform teacher’s license would help to elevate the overall standards in the profession. (Dominion Educational Association, \textit{The Minutes of Proceedings}, 1xxix-1xxxvi).
\item \textsuperscript{501} Canada and Newfoundland Education Association, \textit{Trends in Education}, 4.
\end{itemize}
elementary and secondary instructors and organized according to different classes. Teachers at the secondary level were required to have a university education while elementary teachers only needed to attend normal schools to gain the necessary training. This panoply of certificates was reproduced in each of the provinces and was further complicated by the fact that alternative terms were used for comparable positions. Finally, provincial officials in the departments of education were concerned that normal schools in other provinces were not necessarily up to the same standards. Consequently, they did not want to recognize the qualifications of potentially underqualified candidates without reaffirming their knowledge of teaching. These conflicting pressures set the foundation for a patchwork of certification standards and regulations that made neither interprovincial coordination nor harmonization easy.

Consistent with the patterns that emerged in the other dimensions of education policy, teacher education and certification did not advance in the same manner in Québec and Newfoundland. It was not until 1939 that teachers in Québec were required to hold some form of education diploma, and the clergy were exempted from this regulation. A few normal schools operated in the province, but they played only a minor role in the preparation of teachers. Most candidates choose to get recognition at individual boards that were lenient and asked for only minimal skills. Similar conditions were reported in Newfoundland. Lacking a central department of education, the examination and certification of teachers was left to the individual boards, and no mention was ever made of training Roman Catholic teachers. Minimal teacher training was provided in the ordinary schools, as there was no separate institution dedicated to initial teacher education on the Island. In 1921, the Newfoundland government opened a normal school, which operated until 1932, when it was forced to

502 The case of BC is instructive. Teachers were certified in four classes: Academic (for a university degree plus teacher-training); First Class (senior matriculation plus teacher-training); Second Class (junior matriculation plus teacher-training); and Special Certificates (for teachers of Manual Training, Domestic Science, and Commercial Subjects). For more information, see: Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, Chapter 15.


504 Magnuson, A Brief History of Quebec Education, 56.

505 Rowe, The Development of Education in Newfoundland, Chapter 14.
close because of a lack of funding. The professional advancement of teachers in both provinces thus lagged behind the other Canadian jurisdictions.

**Conclusion**

This chapter surveyed the early foundation and consolidation of elementary and secondary education in Canada. I examined the historical trajectories of the ten provinces to uncover the similarities and differences in the initial pathways of education policy and understand how ideas on education policy moved across the provincial borders.

This chapter demonstrates that from the outset of the Canadian educational enterprise, policy actors actively sought out the ideas of other jurisdictions, thus initiating a tradition of diffusion through learning and emulation. Confederation formally interconnected the provinces and thus altered the networks among the formerly independent jurisdictions. In the absence of mass communications technologies, policy ideas and practices were literally carried by individuals migrating from one country or colony to another. To bolster the opportunities for ideational exchanges, however, policy actors set up organizations dedicated to educational matters. First starting within provincial boundaries, by the 1890s, interprovincial organizations began to emerge. In the words of the first chairman of the DEA:

> The circumstances of our union as one country have rendered it impossible for the Dominion Government or Legislature to take cognizance to any extent of the matter of education. That affair has been left in our Federal constitution to the wisdom of the different Provinces; but as we all know it will not do to educate the people of Canada as sectionalists or provincialists, the necessity for a general plan of education has made itself felt. If our people are to grow up as members of one common country with a sentiment for Canada common to all, it becomes imperatively necessary that there should be a union of educators, - a Dominion association irrespective of race, province, origin, creed or language, in the interest of that unity of our people which can alone be secured by the training of our children not as sectionalists but as Canadians, and beyond this as integral parts of the great empire to which we belong.

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506 Rowe, *The Development of Education in Newfoundland.*
By 1945, a number of interesting similarities had appeared among the provinces. Where four models of central educational administration competed for dominance at the beginning of this period, seven of the ten provinces had introduced individual ministerial responsibility as the preferred system. I argued that the shared macro-institutional logic of parliamentary government created a strong incentive for all the provinces to move to this model of central educational administration. In education finance, all provinces encouraged community control through the allocation of property tax powers to local boards, but also recognized the need to establish provincial funding and so introduced shared-cost arrangements to support the expansion of educational programs. The universal consensus that surrounded the idea of mass education set the stage for uniformity in the structure and design of the elementary curriculum. The ideational imperative was reinforced by a practical reality: textbooks were expensive and difficult to produce. It therefore made sense for each of the provinces to use a similar set of books as a cost-savings measure. In teacher education, we saw marked policy convergence where the normal school model was firmly entrenched in eastern Canada and gradually institutionalized in western Canada. In each of these dimensions, convergence was achieved through the exchange of ideas as provincial decision-makers who faced similar problems drew lessons from Ontario’s examples.

But interprovincial convergence was neither uniform nor complete. Having implemented collective ministerial responsibility right from the outset, the institutional imperative to switch to individual ministerial responsibility was weaker in the Maritime Provinces. The ascension of this model was therefore delayed in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Nova Scotia, moreover, ended up carrying collective responsibility into the subsequent period. There was also no move to reconfigure educational administration in Québec and Newfoundland. Unlike the other provinces that pursed civic trusteeship, which was more amenable to the accession of public control, the dominance of religious influence in Québec and Newfoundland ingrained alternative norms and practices in the education sector. Religious trusteeship thus set the foundation for markedly different educational regimes in Québec and Newfoundland.
While elementary curriculum was relatively consistent across the provinces, secondary education demonstrated significant variability. I argued that these differences stemmed from three factors. First, ideational disagreements both across and within the provinces on the need for and purpose of secondary education prevented the establishment of clear goals. Second, variations in the fiscal capacities of the provincial governments and, more importantly, the local jurisdictions, impeded the advancement of secondary education in Canada. Finally, the alternative educational regimes established in Newfoundland and Québec under denominational control significantly hindered the expansion of educational opportunities in those two jurisdictions.
In the aftermath of World War II, governments around the world turned their attention to the social fabric of the state. There was a collective sense that the atrocities of the war could not be repeated and a general appetite for egalitarian forms of state intervention. British social researcher Richard Titmuss offered the following description of this attitudinal transformation:

The mood of the people changed, and in sympathetic response, values changed as well. If dangers were to be shared, then resources should also be shared. . . dramatic events on the home front served to reinforce the war-warmed impulse of people for a more generous society.  

The focus lay on creating a universal safety net of minimum standards applied to all citizens as a right and establishing public social programs to enhance the overall quality of life in a state. Governments thus sought new and innovative means to provide for the welfare of their citizens and to create popular programs and benefits.

Public education became a cornerstone of state directed endeavours and there was a dramatic increase in educational systems worldwide. Canada was no exception to this trend. Decision-makers, stakeholders, and the public, all became committed to the idea of universal education for all in the name of economic and social advancement. In addition to this ideational turn, the increased focus on education also stemmed from

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509 The motivation that underpinned the establishment of the welfare state has been the subject of numerous lively academic debates. For some scholars, the welfare state marked the effort to decommify labour and protect the individual from swings in economic fortunes in response to democracy pressures; for others, the welfare state was a by-product of industrialization to replace the pre-industrial modes of social reproduction; and for yet another group, the welfare state was an integral component of nation-building where full citizenship incorporation requires social rights. For more on these and other arguments, see: T.H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* (New York: Anchor Books, 1965); Gosta Esping-Andersen *Politics Against Markets* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); R. Levine, *Class Struggle and the New Deal* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1988); R. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1958); C. Offe, *Contradictions of the Welfare State* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984); T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950); Keith Banting, ‘The Welfare State as Statecraft: Territorial Politics and Canadian Social Policy’ *European Social Policy: Between Fragmentation and Integration* Stephen Leibfried and Paul Pierson, Eds. (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 269-300.
practical considerations. The post-war baby boom rapidly increased the number of children who needed to be educated. After hitting a low in 1937, when the annual number of live births per 1000 inhabitants was 20.1, the birthrate in Canada had risen to 24.3 by 1945; in 1946 the birthrate jumped to 27.2, where it remained until 1959, after which it began to gradually decline. Moreover, the technological advancements that began in the industrial age continued to fuel demands for highly skilled workers capable of adapting to rapidly changing conditions. Supported by the policy community and the public, provincial governments from coast to coast focused on augmenting elementary and secondary education.

It was during this period that the ideas of progressive educationists began to take hold in Canadian education. Schools were now being championed as “vehicles to promote future progress . . . [and] were increasingly expected to accommodate and retain more and more students for a longer duration of their lives.” There were calls across the policy community to move beyond the traditional 3Rs of schooling, reject rote learning, and instead see that “each child is exceptional; each poses an educational problem which is, in fact, unique.” However, in contrast to the consensus that emerged on mass elementary education, the ideas of progressive educations did not immediately coalesce around clear policy directives. The result was disparate policy initiatives promoted by different members of the policy community and taken up by political leaders.

As the financial insecurities of the Great Depression faded, and the public yearned for “normality, security, and stability,” the federal and provincial governments turned their attention to social policy. Between 1945 and 1967, per pupil spending in Canada rose from an average of $84.00 to just under $800.00, government spending on education as a percentage of total provincial and local expenditures rose, and student enrolments increased across the board (see Appendix 7). In terms of policy

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511 Ontario, Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, Report (Toronto: King’s Printer, 1950), 67. [Hereafter the Hope Commission].
512 R.D. Gidney, From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario’s Schools (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 10.
developments, three dimensions of education policy rose above the rest during this period: educational administration, curriculum, and initial teacher education.

This chapter begins by outlining adjustments in the overarching policy climate and then proceeds to detail changes in the three pertinent dimensions (Table 5.1). By 1967, all of the provinces had a minister of education, all the provinces had reduced the number of local school boards, and all attempted to increase the opportunities for secondary education in their respective jurisdictions. But along with these similarities, important differences remained. The implementation strategies for district consolidation varied among the provinces; the provinces continued to use different models of secondary education; and the policies for initial teacher education diverged. Eastern Canada maintained the model of normal schools but western Canada transferred the responsibility for initial teacher education to the universities. I argue that these policy differences are directly related to differences in the internal policy legacies and policy communities of each province that, in turn, influenced the viability of particular policy options within each jurisdiction.

Table 5.1: Policy Developments in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education, 1945-1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Education</th>
<th>Policy Developments</th>
<th>Type of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Central</td>
<td>- 9 provinces with IMR*&lt;br&gt;- 1 province with RT*</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intermediate</td>
<td>- 10 provinces consolidate boards</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Secondary</td>
<td>- Limited experiments with bilateral and multilateral schools</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Profession</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher education</td>
<td>- 4 provinces with normal schools&lt;br&gt;- 5 provinces with university led-teacher education</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IMR = Individual Ministerial Responsibility; RT = Religious Trusteeship
5.1 The Policy Climate

From the violence of the Second World War emerged an international willingness to form organizations to rebuild the devastated societies and facilitate interstate collaboration on various endeavours. In 1949, a series of European countries formed the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) to administer the Marshall Plan. In September 1961 the OEEC was superseded by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and now took in the United States and Canada among its members. The central purposes of the OECD included the creation of a permanent network to communicate ideas among member and non-member states, strengthen the tradition of cooperation among them, use consultation to promote sustainable economic growth, and to identify and disseminate best practices in a variety of policy fields.\(^{513}\) As a member of the OECD, Canada was now formally connected into this global network that extended the scope of its education epistemic community. Because Canada lacked a national department of education, the Canadian provinces gained direct access to the OECD Directorate for Education.\(^{514}\) Admittedly, this change only occurred near the conclusion of this time period; however, it set the stage for future developments in the education sector.

A reconfiguration of educational ideas also began to take root in the post-war period. A group of policy actors articulated an additional set of goals and priorities that encouraged decision-makers to expand educational opportunities and remove barriers between the classes. In the words of R.H. Tawney, “The intrusion into educational organization of the vulgarities of the class system is an irrelevance as mischievous in

\(^{513}\) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* Paris 14\(^{th}\) December 1960. [on-line publication] Available at: [http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,3343,en_2649_34483_1915847_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,3343,en_2649_34483_1915847_1_1_1_1,00.html) (accessed on October 15, 2008).

\(^{514}\) Because education was a provincial responsibility and Canada lack a national department of education, the federal government could not effectively represent Canadian interests abroad in this policy area. Therefore, the federal Department of Foreign Affairs fashioned agreements first with the Canadian Education Association and later with the Council of Ministers’ of Education Canada to provide international representation for Canadian education. As a result, the provinces are directly involved in international meetings that pertain to education. For example, it is the provincial chair of the CMEC and/or the director-general of the CMEC who attends international meetings sponsored by the OECD not officials from the federal government. (Canadian Education Association Archives, Series MG 28 I 472 Box 7, File 131; Phone Interview May 24\(^{th}\) 2007; Personal Interview December 20\(^{th}\) 2007).
Building upon the ideas of Rousseau, Frobel, Pestalozzi, Dewey, and Kilpatrick, these entrepreneurs promoted a more differentiated curriculum and expansive programming that included technical and vocational training. The prescribed remedy was universal secondary education for all.

This new goal, however, was not free from controversy. In contrast to the earlier unanimity on mass elementary education, a consensus on a uniform model for secondary education did not appear. Consequently, there was greater uncertainty in terms of the preferred policy option. Discussed in further detail below, the absence of a clear direction contributed to the persistence of policy divergence in Canadian secondary education where provinces pursued alternative pathways rather than converging on a common model during this period.

Following the Second World War, Ottawa moved to direct its excess revenues to support a range of social policies and programs in areas that fell under provincial jurisdiction. By the 1960s, a large number of cost-sharing programs set upon conditional grants had been created. Described by scholars as a period of cooperative federalism, the two decades after WWII saw Ottawa lead much of the program and policy design. While some intergovernmental bargaining preceded the establishment of the major programs, “ultimately the federal spending on these programs was usually the result of independent federal decisions.”

Welcomed, or at least accepted, by many of the provinces, Ottawa’s actions antagonized nationalists in Québec. In 1956, the Duplessis government challenged the federal spending power to give grants directly to post-secondary institutions. He refused to allow these institutions to accept funds given directly by Ottawa and demanded fiscal compensation in the form of tax points. Moreover, Duplessis

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appointed the Royal Commission on Constitutional Problems (the Tremblay Commission), which declared:

Since confederation, the sentiments of Quebecers, and French-Canadians in general, have not changed: exclusive provincial jurisdiction over education is one of the most important federal compromises. It should be jealously guarded and it should remain as comprehensive as possible.520

In 1958, Paul Sauvé reached a deal with Prime Minister John Diefenbaker to exclude Québec from the federal government’s conditional grant program in education but with compensation to ensure that the transfer of resources from Ottawa to the provinces remained equal. As Jan Erk notes: “This was the beginning of the pattern of Québec opt outs with financial compensation from federal-provincial shared cost programs.”521 In essence, it augmented Québec’s capacity to pursue distinctive policy pathways from the rest of Canada.

It was during this period that the federal government revolutionized the system of fiscal federalism. Informally practiced since Confederation, in 1957, the federal government introduced the first formal equalization program. Its purpose was to assist the Atlantic Provinces experiencing low rates of economic growth and emigration to other regions in the country.522 Inspired by the recommendations of the Rowell-Sirois Commission, the federal government solidified a means to redistribute wealth across the country. The goal of the program was to give every province the same per capita revenue as the two wealthiest provinces, Ontario and British Columbia. These grants were unconditional and provinces could allocate the resources at their own discretion. In no small part, the equalization program was a major factor in the noticeable reduction in the variations in provincial investments in education, both in terms of per

pupil spending and student-teacher ratios (see Appendix 8 and Appendix 9 for details).\textsuperscript{523}

1945 marked a watershed in terms of the institutionalization of an inter-provincial organization dedicated to educational affairs. That year, the CEA established its first permanent secretariat based in Toronto. To finance the secretariat, the provinces collectively agreed to guarantee funds to support the Association and its related purposes.\textsuperscript{524} Despite preserving the broad membership base, a new constitution placed control over the CEA in the hands of the departments of education. The new constitution also dropped “Newfoundland” from the name of the Association, not because the Island was leaving the Association but because Newfoundland was not as yet part of the Dominion. As such, it was not party to the funding arrangement ratified by the nine provinces and did not have the same voting rights in the Association.\textsuperscript{525}

Newfoundland’s marginalized status in the CEA did not last long. In 1949, its citizens narrowly voted in favour of entering Confederation. Union with Canada increased the general standard of living on the Island through an influx of federal funds, including equalization payments and conditional grants for shared cost programs. As an official member of the Dominion, moreover, Newfoundland became a full participant in the activities of the CEA and gained voting rights under the terms of the Association’s constitution.

The CEA also began to build bridges between different associations. In the 1950s, for example, with the CTF and the l’Association canadienne des Educateurs de langue français, the CEA established the National Advisory Committee on Educational Research (NACER).\textsuperscript{526} The founders of NACER envisioned a group that could carry out research on topics that had inter-provincial implications.\textsuperscript{527} During its early

\textsuperscript{523} This analysis is reinforced by Richard Simeon and E. Robert Miller’s assessment of equalization as a force for convergence in provincial spending patterns. See: ‘Regional Variations in Public Policy’ Small Worlds: Provinces and Parties in Canadian Political Life (Toronto: Methuen, 1980), 242-284.

\textsuperscript{524} Freeman K. Stewart, Interprovincial Co-operation in Education: The Story of the Canadian Education Association (Toronto: W.J. Gage Limited, 1957), 55.

\textsuperscript{525} For more information on this and other changes, see Stewart, Interprovincial Co-Operation in Education, Chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{526} Canadian Education Association Archives, Series MG 28 I472 Volume 13, File NACER Miscellaneous, 327.

\textsuperscript{527} Canadian Education Association Archives, Series MG 28I472 Volume 13, File Research Council Miscellaneous, 326.
initiatives, more than 50 topics were considered, including trends in centralization and
decentralization in administration and the types of local education authorities,
departmental examinations and the promotion of pupils, elementary and secondary
curricula and textbooks, and teacher training and the working conditions of teachers.

The number of pan-Canadian conferences on education increased in this period.\textsuperscript{528} In addition to the annual conventions held by the CEA, the CTF, and the
CSBA, the provincial ministers of education and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation
established a National Committee to develop a program for future national
conferences.\textsuperscript{529} The effort culminated in three national conferences on education, held
respectively in 1958, 1960, and 1962. Attendees included professional educators,
deputy ministers of education, and representatives of provincial councils on education,
along with such diverse groups as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the
Canadian Labour Congress, the Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Catholic
Women’s League, the Canadian Jewish Congress, and the Canadian Association for
Adult Education.\textsuperscript{530} The conferences facilitated intensive information exchanges on
topics that ranged from initial teacher education, education finance, curriculum, and
educational administration.

It is therefore clear that the density of the associational links in the educational
policy community strengthened throughout this period. Interestingly, however, as the
CEA reached out to the CTF through NACER, its internal relations with teachers were
in decline. In a letter to Freeman Stewart, the Secretary-General of the CEA, the
president of the CTF declared:

\begin{quote}
We understand that while there are matters of common interest on which we may
act jointly, each organization has its own field of special interest . . . we feel that it
is necessary to reiterate our stand that the Canadian Teachers’ Federation does not
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{528} During the first period, a number of inter-provincial conferences for education were held by the DEA. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, these were held intermittently and rarely garnered representation from all the provinces. From 1945 onwards, the CEA held annual conferences with attendees from coast to coast. Other stakeholder groups, such as the CTF and the Canadian School Boards Association increased the regularity and scope of their activities, further contributing to the dissemination of educational programs and practices across the country. For more information, see: Gerald Nason, \textit{The Canadian Teachers’ Federation: A Study of its Historical Development, Interests, and Activities from 1919 to 1960}. EdD. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1964.

\textsuperscript{529} \textit{Annual Report: Canadian Conference on Education}, 1959.

subscribe to the principle that the CEA coordinates and speaks for all educational interests in Canada.\textsuperscript{531}

It seems that while the CEA officially remained an omnibus organization, the changes made under the new constitution marked the beginning of a transition for the organization. The leadership of the Association was claimed by the provincial deputy ministers, whose interests were influenced both by their political leaders and their own knowledge as central administrators over the entire policy sector. As a result, the direction and positions taken by the CEA were not always in accordance with the interests of teachers and other professionals in the education policy community.

A number of provinces launched their own royal commissions throughout this period, including: the Cameron Commission (1944) in BC, the Hope Commission (1950) in Ontario, the Cameron Commission (1959) in Alberta, the MacFarland Commission (1959) in Manitoba, the Chant Commission (1960) in BC, and the Parent Commission (1963-1966) in Québec.\textsuperscript{532} Common threads ran throughout these commissions, including an acknowledgment that increased policy leadership needed to come from the provincial ministers and deputy ministers, secondary education needed improvement across the country, and the quality of teaching should become a major priority. Furthermore, all the commissions embraced the ideas of progressive educationists and reinforced the calls to reconfigure the educational enterprise. The research also included the examination of policies and practices in other jurisdictions, either through official site-visits or written submissions from the other departments. These royal commissions thus provided the opportunity for the provinces to exchange ideas and learn from one another’s successes and, potentially, failures.

\textsuperscript{531} Letter from George Croskery (CTF) to Stewart (CEA) October 23, 1948. Canadian Education Association Archives, Series MG 281472 Volume 13, File CTF-CEA Relations with (official statement), 318.

Landmark studies were also published on the state of education in Canada during this period. The CEA completed a survey of current educational developments in the nine provinces and Newfoundland. The first of its kind, it offered a pan-Canadian assessment of some of the major problems confronting each of the provinces. It highlighted the developing crisis in teacher supply, articulated alternative plans for teacher training, raised the need for financial reforms, and the necessity of improving the provision of secondary education across the country. The new secretariat of the CEA also published and widely distributed conference papers and proceedings (including those of the Canadian Conferences on Education) that added to the dissemination of policy information across provincial borders.

5.2 Central Educational Administration: And Then There Was One . . .

The previous chapter described the rise of individual ministerial responsibility as the preferred model of central educational administration in a majority of the provinces. When this period opened, three provinces continued to deploy alternative models for central educational administration: Nova Scotia, Québec and Newfoundland. Between 1945 and 1967, Nova Scotia and Québec adopted the model of individual ministerial responsibility, leaving Newfoundland the sole outlier.

Collective ministerial responsibility enjoyed its longest tenure in Nova Scotia. I argued in the previous chapter that there were few incentives for Nova Scotia to change its system. Collective ministerial responsibility was consistent with the macro-institutional rules, norms, and principles of parliamentary government. Moreover, the philosophy of small government inculcated by Premier Murray during his time in office between 1896 and 1923, resonated with the idea of limiting the number of ministers in cabinet and preserving the status quo of collective ministerial responsibility. Collective ministerial responsibility was therefore both institutionally and ideationally consistent within the context of the province.

533 Canada and Newfoundland Education Association, *Trends in Education 1944* (Toronto: Canada and Newfoundland Education Association, 1944).
Given the synergy between the internal context and the original policy choice, the administrative change in Nova Scotia is interesting. Throughout the 1930s, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island abandoned the system of collective responsibility in favour of individual responsibility and the issue of administrative reform gradually gained salience among the political elite of Nova Scotia. Seeing the policy changes in its regional counterparts, and noting the educational improvements in other provinces, the Nova Scotia government began to incrementally increase the number of cabinet ministers each heading a department devoted to a specific policy sector. In 1949, the government appointed its first minister to head the department of education.\footnote{The changes were also part of a broader movement to renew the public sector by introducing a merit-based system in the bureaucracy and modernizing the machinery of government in the province. For more on these reforms, see: J. Murray Beck, \textit{Politics of Nova Scotia, Volume 2 1896-1988} (Tantallon, NS: Four East Publications, 1988), Chapters 7-8.} A broad consensus on the set of appropriate actors to manage the education sector had emerged, and other regional leaders served as exemplars for the Government of Nova Scotia. Convergence thus occurred through the pathway of similar problems, where policy actors drew lessons from the neighboring jurisdictions.

In Québec, I argued that social and economic factors contributed to the triumph of clericalism in education. There was a sense among English Quebeckers that their interests were best served by the confessional structure of education, and among French Quebeckers that political and/or secular control of public education would lead to assimilation with the rest of Canada.\footnote{Roger Magnuson, \textit{A Brief History of Quebec Education: From New France to Parti Québécois} (Montreal: Harvest House, 1980) 43; Jean-Pierre Charland, \textit{L'entreprise educative au Québec, 1840-1900} (Québec: Les Presses de L'Université Laval, 2000), Chapitre 3; Milner, \textit{The Long Road to Reform}, 37.} The Catholic Church had cast itself as a defender of French Québec and had solidified its position of authority in the psyche of the population. As a conservative institution, the Catholic Church had rebuffed many educational innovations, particularly in terms of secondary and post-secondary schooling.\footnote{As I discussed in the previous chapter, a major structural difference between the two education systems in Québec was that for Protestants, secondary school was provided for free by the public system, but for Catholics, secondary education was housed under the private sector in classical colleges operated by the clergy. These schools provided superior training in literature and philosophy, but little in terms of technology, commerce, or science. Moreover, tuition rates frequently exceeded the means of individual families and so the rate of Francophone participation in advanced education was dramatically lower than both Anglophones in the Province and throughout the rest of Canada. For more on this, please see:} The result was marked educational inequalities between the Anglophone

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\footnotetext[535]{The changes were also part of a broader movement to renew the public sector by introducing a merit-based system in the bureaucracy and modernizing the machinery of government in the province. For more on these reforms, see: J. Murray Beck, \textit{Politics of Nova Scotia, Volume 2 1896-1988} (Tantallon, NS: Four East Publications, 1988), Chapters 7-8.}
\footnotetext[536]{Roger Magnuson, \textit{A Brief History of Quebec Education: From New France to Parti Québécois} (Montreal: Harvest House, 1980) 43; Jean-Pierre Charland, \textit{L'entreprise educative au Québec, 1840-1900} (Québec: Les Presses de L'Université Laval, 2000), Chapitre 3; Milner, \textit{The Long Road to Reform}, 37.}
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\end{thebibliography}
and Francophone populations in the Province. Economically, French Quebecers had resisted the trend towards urbanization and industrialization longer than their counterparts in English Canada. Limited urbanization and industrialization in Québec in turn delayed the economic imperative to expand the educational opportunities among the Francophone population in the province, allowing the denominational system to maintain its legitimacy.

What factors facilitated the change in central educational administration in Québec? Changing demographics in Québec provided the necessary room to give currency to the idea of initiating political control over elementary and secondary education. Increased urbanization and immigration from continental Europe altered the traditional population profile of the province. By the late 1930s, more than 60 per cent of the population was living in urban centres, and by 1960, this figure had reached over 75 percent. English-speaking Catholics and Jews disrupted the static binary linguistic and religious divisions that had previously characterized the population and the existing model of central educational administration was incapable of responding to this new pluralism. Moreover, under the papal leadership of John XXIII, new views on education were germinating in the Catholic Church itself that sparked debates on the need to reform the Québec system. In sum, Québec’s society was undergoing a massive transformation. Led by George-Emile Lapalme, the Québec Liberal Party became the foremost political voice that challenged the existing order and attracted many public intellectuals to the “Quiet Revolution.”

Québec’s educational turning point arrived in 1960. The newly elected Liberal government took steps to end religious control and secularize the administration of education. On March 21, 1961, an Order-In-Council established a Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education (hereafter the Parent Commission). The preamble featured the statement that “education at all levels is beset by many problems and it is therefore

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expedient to have a thorough and impartial study of the state of education in the Province.”

Highlighting the demands of the industrial revolution, immigration and population expansion, economic expansion, and progress in technical knowledge, the Parent Commission declared that the province needed a better-educated labour force with broader training and more advanced technical and vocational preparation. The Commissioners also targeted the need to equalize educational opportunities in the province and elevate the educational outcomes among Francophones. The Parent Commission assessed the extent to which the central administrative structure hindered educational advancement in the province and argued that three “defects” prevented the government from exercising its functions effectively: the fragmentation of the school system; the division of government authority over education itself between several ministries; and the recruitment of government personnel.

When seeking a remedy for these defects, the Parent Commission examined the administrative structures employed in other international and Canadian jurisdictions. The Commission first considered the model of a Crown Corporation, a system that was being used by the State of New York. The Commissions ultimately rejected this system on the grounds that it was unsuitable in a system of parliamentary government:

Such a form of organization, in short, does [sic] not suit the political institutions of our democracy, which differ greatly from those of the State of New York. The rank of the Commissioner of Education in that state is the same as that of the other departmental secretaries, none of whom are elected. The Commissioner may himself defend the budget and educational legislation before the Assembly, whereas our system of government does not permit the Superintendent to do this. It seems preferable, under the circumstances, to preserve the Department of Education within the framework of the provincial administration rather than to set it up as an independent agency.

Due to the macro-institutional similarities with the other provinces, the Parent Commission decided to draw upon their examples and recommended that a

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541 The Parent Commission, Volume 1, iii.
543 Ibid, 81.
544 Ibid, 82-83.
provincially controlled department of education headed by a minister individually responsible to cabinet, the legislature, and the public be established in the province.\textsuperscript{545} Four years later, Bill 60 implemented the recommendation of the Parent Commission by creating a department of education headed by a provincial minister.

There is, nevertheless, one administrative anomaly in Québec. Sensitive to the potential public backlash that this administrative reform could generate, the Commission put forward the idea of an advisory council to maintain some representation for the religious orders in the education sector. Seeing the wisdom in this recommendation, the Québec government created the Conseil supérieur de l’éducation (CSE) comprised of a Catholic Committee and a Protestant Committee. The Conseil assured the continuity of the confessional system and to protected the rights of parents to choose “the institutions which, according to their convictions, ensure the greatest respect for the rights of their children.”\textsuperscript{546} The purpose of the CSE was to advise the Minister on any education-related issues and prepare reports every two years on the state and needs of education in the province. However, the CSE did not gain any authoritative powers in the administration of education in Québec.

The creation of the CSE symbolically preserved the legacy of the denominational system in Québec. By creating the CSE in tandem with the position of minister of education, the Québec government converged with the rest of Canada in the area of central educational administration, but also introduced a policy adaptation that suited the internal conditions of the province.

5.3 Consolidating Local Administrative Units
Small districts with one-room schools had provided for the educational needs of Canadians when schooling was limited to basic fundamentals and there were few expectations to advance beyond the most rudimentary levels. As the goals of education changed, the size of local jurisdictions proved to be a critical deterrent against the expansion of educational opportunities.

Ontario, with its larger population base and increased urbanization, was able to capitalize on the funding opportunities provided by the federal government to expand

\textsuperscript{545} Ibid, Chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{546} R.S.Q., chapter C-60, An Act Respecting the Conseil supérieur de l’éducation, Preamble.
secondary education. Even with the advancements, however, provincial decision-makers realized that they needed to consolidate the smaller rural units to improve educational opportunities: “It is realized that in Ontario the present system of rural school administration is neither economically sound nor in any sense efficient. Larger units of administration . . . are being formed, and immediately better results are forthcoming from both the economic and the educational point of view.”

Provincial teachers’ federations supported the consolidation of local jurisdiction. Teachers’ federations saw larger administrative units as a means to improve their job security and working conditions. Trustees in smaller units often had problems raising sufficient revenues to pay teachers. During the 1930s and 1940s in Alberta, for example, the minimum teacher’s salary was officially set at $840, but the salaries offered by local school trustees frequently fell below that minimum. Larger units, it was reasoned, could more easily generate the necessary revenues to cover the teachers’ salaries. The organizations also supported larger units as a means to systemize a regime for the promotion of teachers and professional development, which would in turn enhance the professional status of the teachers.

The Canadian School Trustees’ Association also endorsed the idea of creating larger administrative units. The CSTA argued that the education sector would reap five main benefits from consolidating school boards: assessment and tax rates would become more equalized over large areas; the number of one-room schools would be reduced; consolidated boards could create regional and rural composite high schools which would provide diversified programs; educational opportunities would be equalized for rural and urban children; and improvements in health, physical education and libraries would be generally realized.

In spite of this elite and expert support, district consolidations frequently proved an onerous task. Part of the problem rested on the logistical challenge of

transporting students across sparsely populated regions to a common centre.\textsuperscript{551} Local populations often opposed the idea of district consolidations for fear of losing their influence over the provision of education in their communities, as well as the potential of rising tax rates that would be required to cover the expanding educational programs.\textsuperscript{552} To contend with this opposition, the provincial governments pursued three different implementation strategies: hierarchical unilateralism, presumed local consent, and local voluntarism. The cases of BC, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba are instructive.

In 1925, the \textit{Report of the Survey of the School System}, submitted by J. H. Putman and G. M. Weir to the BG government, recommended that, “the consolidation of assisted schools be carried out wherever it seems educationally or financially desirable.”\textsuperscript{553} At the time, BC had legislation that allowed school districts to consolidate voluntarily; however, none of the districts had done so. In 1934, the BC government decided to unilaterally abolish the boundaries of 63 impoverished rural districts in the Peace River Block and set up a single administrative unit. In 1944, the Cameron Commission recommended that the government divide the province into 74 larger districts and stipulated that it occur without local approval to expedite the process.\textsuperscript{554} The BC Legislature adopted the recommendation of the Cameron Report and unilaterally reduced the number of school boards from 653 to 89.

That same year, based on the recommendations of the Committee on School Administration, the Saskatchewan Legislature passed \textit{The Larger School Units Act}.\textsuperscript{555} The legislation included two stipulations. First, consolidations were carried out gradually, with the government incrementally determining which school districts should be grouped together. Second, local ratepayers were given the opportunity to petition for a vote on consolidation, should they wish to oppose the proposed amalgamation. If petitions were not forthcoming, the government presumed local

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{551} The Cameron Commission (Alberta), 76.
\item \textsuperscript{552} Province of British Columbia, \textit{Survey of the School System}. (Victoria BC: Charles F. Banfield, 1925), 300-302 [hereafter: The Putman and Weir Report].
\item \textsuperscript{553} The Putman and Weir Report, 302.
\item \textsuperscript{555} The Committee on School Administration in Saskatchewan used Alberta as its exemplar. [The Hope Commission, 261].
\end{itemize}
consent and proceeded with the amalgamation.\textsuperscript{556} In the 1950s, the Saskatchewan government amended the legislation to require a plebiscite before any additional units could be permanently established.\textsuperscript{557}

In 1944, a Special Select Committee of the Legislature was appointed to examine education in Manitoba. The Committee called for the establishment of large school areas modeled on those in Alberta and Saskatchewan.\textsuperscript{558} The Committee also said that “an educational campaign be initiated to inform the public and to gain public approval and support for the re-organization of educational administration.”\textsuperscript{559} The Manitoba government was therefore encouraged to actively involve the public in decisions on educational administration. Acting on the recommendations of the Committee, the Manitoba Legislature passed an act to create two experimental district areas, subject to the approval of local ratepayers. Furthermore, all future consolidations were to be achieved through voluntary consent by the local ratepayers.

Each province therefore decided to implement the same policy option, but in different ways with noticeably different results. BC’s unilateral imposition achieved dramatic success at the cost of democratic participation. Under Saskatchewan’s implementation scheme, 46 large districts were formed by 1949, and the government received few petitions that opposed the consolidations. Even after the government required plebiscites, ratepayers voted in favour of creating the larger units, demonstrating public support for the administrative changes.\textsuperscript{560}

In Manitoba, the strategy of local voluntarism generated less fruitful results. By 1950, only one experimental school area – the Dauphin-Ochre River Area - was in operation and no further consolidations had occurred. Unsatisfied with these outcomes, the legislature appointed a Royal Commission to study and report on all aspects of education in the province. Seeing the advancements being made in Saskatchewan and other provinces, the MacFarlane Commission recommended the unilateral establishment of larger administrative units to oversee secondary education in

\textsuperscript{556} The Hope Commission, 261.
\textsuperscript{557} Owen, ‘Larger School Units’, 44.
\textsuperscript{558} The Hope Commission, 263.
\textsuperscript{560} Owen, ‘Larger Schools Units’, 44.
Having campaigned on the issue of education, the newly elected Conservative government led by Dufferin Roblin quickly passed an amendment to the Public Schools Act, which gave the government the authority to establish school divisions, subject to local approval via plebiscite. Following a series of active campaigns designed to engender local support for the initiative, the vote of local residents took place in February, 1959: “Of the 36 divisions in which the vote took place, only four rejected the plan.” The education policy community did not miss the benefits of this strategic change:

What are the influences that play upon education that make education changes so slow in coming about? And they are slow in Manitoba where initiative is left to the people. The only really successful venture in the field of larger units was the campaign to organize the one hundred consolidations which was done by aggressive departmental leadership.

The drive to consolidate school districts confirms two important points. First, when faced with common problems, provincial decision makers and policy stakeholders looked to one another for examples and evidence when developing policy options. The policy decisions of other jurisdictions provide vital information that can in turn changed the course of action in a political community. Information from other Canadian provinces inspired the Roblin Government to abandon the model of voluntary consolidations in favour of active government-led amalgamation. Similarly, the Hope Commission declared: “The fact that no other area has since been formed suggests that the voluntary formation of larger units without special financial inducements is impracticable.” Therefore, lesson drawing from the other provinces is clearly apparent throughout the initiative to consolidate local jurisdictions.

Second, it is also clear that even when adopting the same policy, the provinces can choose to implement them in their own fashion in a way that reflects the local conditions and priorities within each jurisdiction. These differences in implementation

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561 MacFarland Commission, Chapter 2.
563 Gregor and Wilson, *The Development of Education in Manitoba*, 110.
564 CEA Archives, MG 28 I472, Volume 1, File 6, Western Resource Workshop, Saskatoon.
565 Through an extended series of articles in the Bulletin, the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, for example, actively educated its clientele and members on the benefits of larger administrative units as demonstrated by operational models in other provinces.
566 The Hope Commission, 263.
strategies, moreover, establish certain expectations among the public and stakeholders alike regarding how the provincial government may approach a given problem. For residents and the policy community of BC, the pattern of hierarchical authority was set, but for those in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the respective governments had enacted a procedure of active engagement when seeking policy change in the education sector.

5.4 Universalizing Secondary Education

*Choices should not irrevocably confine a child to one single sphere; it must be possible to correct an unwise choice, or to guide in a new direction a child whose aptitudes and tastes turn out to be other than was thought, or change with the passage of time, without forcing the child, if it is at all possible, to retrace his steps through one or several years of study.*

Since the early decades of the Twentieth Century, provincial governments had started to expand educational opportunities and widen the scope of secondary schooling in their jurisdictions. Their efforts generally followed two paths, the partite and bilateral models. The Canadian public, educational officials and education professionals were increasingly critical of the partite and bilateral models of secondary education. Ronald Manzer attributes the condemnation to inherent deficiencies in both models that caused them to fail the tests of efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy. Partite schools failed the efficiency test because they were impossible to operate outside of large urban centres; they failed the effectiveness test because the academic schools remained in higher demand as vocational schools were stigmatized; and, finally, the partite system reinforced and reproduced existing class divisions, which caused the model to fail the test of legitimacy. Bilateral schools, passing the efficiency test because they were feasible in rural settings, nevertheless failed the tests of effectiveness and legitimacy due to a similar reinforcement of class divisions and continued emphasis on academic studies. Following World War II, two new policy options for secondary schools arose in Canada: the multilateral and composite school systems.


Multilateral schools extended course offerings beyond general and academic to increase the number of streams available in high school by including technical and vocational training. Students were still streamed upon their entry to high school, but they had a wider array of program choices to better suit their needs and interests. However, multilateral schools still had a proclivity towards academic studies, and students frequently avoided the vocational streams. Consequently, multilaterally schools did not provide a sufficient remedy for the reinforcement of class divisions.

Observing that both “the academic and the vocational secondary schools have failed to retain their students,”\(^6\) in 1944 the Canadian Education Association outlined the idea of composite schooling, which was “adapted in part to community and individual needs, but essentially a common secondary school for all the people.”\(^7\) A composite school sought to break down the barriers between streams where:

- youth may secure both a general education (including the opportunity to explore their interests and capacities through a variety of experiences) and a specialized education suited to their abilities and introductory to their vocational goals and aspirations.\(^8\)

Over the next decades, the composite model\(^9\) gained endorsements across components of the Canadian education policy community becoming the preferred policy option of groups of education experts from coast to coast.\(^10\)

Inspired by the recommendation of the CEA, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government in Saskatchewan adopted the composite model as its preferred system of secondary education.\(^11\) By 1949, the Department of Education reported that such schools had been set up in a number of districts in the province.\(^12\) Following Saskatchewan’s lead, some advances in composite schooling were made across the other western provinces. Ten fully composite schools educating 25 per cent of

\(^6\) Canada and Newfoundland Education Association, *Trends in Education*, 29.

\(^7\) Ibid, 31.

\(^8\) A. F. Brown, ‘Composite High Schools in Canada’, 2.

\(^9\) In the UK, this is known as the “comprehensive” model.

\(^10\) At the Conference on the Canadian High School that was held in 1963, all of the participants agreed that the composite model of secondary education was the preferred policy option. For more information, see: Lawrence W. Downey and L. Ruth Godwin, eds. *The Canadian Secondary School: An Appraisal and a Forecast* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company and W.J. Gage Limited, 1963).


secondary students were operating in Alberta by the early 1950s. Outside of these schools, however, the vast majority of Alberta students who completed high school were from the academic programs: “The program of the high schools has been largely confined to “general” or pre-university studies. It was – and, in terms of relative effectiveness, still is – the matriculation program.” And in British Columbia, the Chant Commission determined that outside of Vancouver, most high schools were only offering an academic high school program and concluded that the policy of streaming students into general and junior matriculation streams had failed.

Advances in composite schooling were similarly mixed in Eastern Canada. Because the partite and bilateral systems were more established in Ontario, adjusting the policy pathway to adhere to the principles of multilateral and composite education proved to be more onerous. Political leaders also remained biased towards the traditional scholastic programs. Throughout the 1950s, Ontario’s Minister of Education W.J. Dunlop gave high priority to academic programs and allowed many technical and commercial programs to languish. Under the Protestant authorities, Anglophones in Québec saw some experiments and advancements made in composite schooling, but secondary school in the Catholic sector remained committed to an elite academic curriculum. In Nova Scotia, the Vocational Educational Act of 1953 had locked the partite system in and hindered any consideration of composite schooling in the province. Finally, in opposition to the national trend, secondary education in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island remained steadfastly committed to academic subjects. Vocational and technical training programs were instead offered in provincial trade schools that were segregated from the public education system.

Actions from Ottawa also contributed to the differing pathways in secondary education. In 1960, the federal government passed the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act (TVTA Act). The TVTA Act offered federal funds to the provinces to galvanize the expansion of technical and vocational education across the country. Under the TVTA Act, new secondary schools were built at no cost to

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576 The Cameron Commission (Alberta), 91.
577 The Chant Commission, 244.
578 Stamp, The Schools of Ontario, 205.
579 Manzer, Public Schools and Political Ideas, 109.
municipal governments and resulted in the construction of 662 schools across the country. The terms of the TVTA Act required that at least one half of the space in the funded schools be devoted to technical and vocational training subjects.\(^{580}\) The TVTA Act therefore marked a substantive federal effort to actively coerce the provinces to follow a particular direction in secondary education.

Reflecting on the federal government’s actions, Harold S. Baker, an education professor at the University of Alberta stated:

What the [TVTA] grants have done is to provide special support for one kind of programme (or one group of programmes) and so to accelerate the differentiation of high school programmes generally. And they have probably helped to eliminate – at least for the time being – an earlier concept of the comprehensive (or composite) school in which it was thought that there could be a kind of interdisciplinary enrichment (as between academic and non-academic programmes) and even a good deal of common study for all students.\(^{581}\)

In Ontario, for example, John Robarts quickly ratified a deal with the federal government under the terms of the TVTA Act. At the same time, the Minister of Education revamped the curriculum to allow the streaming of students into technical and vocational programs.\(^{582}\) Because the Ontario government was operating under significant time constraints imposed by Ottawa, Robarts authored the Reorganized Program quickly and without consulting education stakeholders in the province: “The plan had merely been announced to them.”\(^{583}\)

Between 1961 and 1966, more than $805 million of federal funds were transferred to Ontario, resulting in the construction of 335 new schools and additions to


\(^{582}\) Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario*, 203-207.

the 83 existing schools dedicated to technical and vocation training.\textsuperscript{584} Similar deals between the federal and provincial governments that were ratified in the other provinces (including Québec) resulted in the construction of hundreds of new schools across the country. But the sudden influx of funding, as exemplified by Ontario, translated into programs being “hastily conceived and prematurely announced” where “those who had to live with the plan had nothing to do with its conception.”\textsuperscript{585} Curriculum reorganization in Ontario was originally intended to increase the flexibility of the system and allow students to move between streams. The final result, however, was the introduction of a rigid streaming system that reinforced class distinctions in the provinces.\textsuperscript{586}

Therefore, despite the efforts of the education experts who had been diligently promoting the implementation of the composite model, the provision of secondary education across Canada was still characterized by panoply of initiatives and the perpetuation of bilateral and multilateral education. And, in some part, the continued differences stemmed from the federal government’s interference in the area. Federal interference, however, was only one part of the story. In its review of Canadian secondary education, the Committee on Educational Research declared:

\begin{quote}
Across Canada there is uniformity in neither the lower nor the upper limits of composite schools. The contributors to the survey pointed out that these differences were deeply rooted in their traditions or in the former solutions to previous problems within each of the provinces.\textsuperscript{587}
\end{quote}

It therefore seemed that decisions from the previous period continued to resonate in the contemporary actions of political and policy authorities.

\textbf{5.5 Teacher Education: A Regionally-Based Policy Innovation}

Between 1840 and 1945, the accepted form of teacher training was the normal school. The inter-provincial consensus on this common model of teacher education was soon

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{585} Harry Pullen, quoted in Stamp \textit{The Schools of Ontario}, 204.
\textsuperscript{587} The Committee on Educational Research, \textit{Composite High Schools in Canada}, 97-98.
\end{footnotesize}
disturbed as the education policy community mobilized around increasing the training standards. Certain provinces proved to be fertile ground for the introduction of a new idea leading to a policy divergence in the dimension.

Superintendents across the country had been voicing concerns over the quality of the teaching profession, and education officials and stakeholders alike were seeking ways to enhance the existing programs. In the past, limits in the teacher supply had hindered the expansion of public schooling and officials turned their attention to the available programs and the need to attract more candidates to the profession. Teachers’ federations became actively engaged in the issue of teacher education and lobbied in favour of reforming existing practices. The CEA also weighed in, releasing a report entitled “An SOS from the Schools” that decried the quality of teacher education in Canada. And, according to a report from the CSTA, in 1952-53, there were approximately 5,150 instructors in Canadian classrooms without any professional training serving as teachers and almost 4,000 more whose education and training were below the prescribed minimum of their respective provinces. The goal of expanding educational opportunities through the universalization of secondary school increased need for well-qualified teachers in the public school system. The post-war baby boom had rapidly increased the school-age population across all the provinces. These conditions combined with the beliefs of some policy actors that the normal school system was not supplying effective programs propelled teacher education on the policy agenda.

In 1928, Dr. H.M Tory created the School of Education in the University of Alberta, which offered a four-year program for initial teacher education. Under the leadership of Dean Ezra LaZerte, the School was transformed into an official faculty of education in 1942. Supported by the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA), the new Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta offered a three-year program that led

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588 In New Brunswick, for example, efforts to take advantage of federal grants and establish vocational education programs were delayed due in part to poorly trained teachers. According to the Secretary and Director of the Vocational Education Board, Fletcher Peacock, the “greatest single difficulty in the successful establishment of vocational education in New Brunswick is to procure competent teachers” (New Brunswick: First Annual Report of the Vocational Education Board, 1919, 18).
590 Canadian School Trustees’ Association, The Road Ahead, 12.
to a B.Ed. and a teaching certification, the first of its kind in Canada. Certain factors nevertheless delayed political acceptance of the idea of university-led teacher education in Alberta. Specifically, government concerns for labour supply, controlling costs, and maintaining control over the content of teacher education impeded the transfer of teacher education to universities in the province.

Under the normal school system, training only took four months and the minister exercised complete control over the structure and delivery of the program. If the government transferred the control, the minister of education reasoned, program requirements would be expanded, which would increase the time spent on initial teacher education and delay and candidate’s entry into the workforce.591 The costs for teacher education would invariably rise and increase the financial burden for potential candidates. Higher tuition fees would likely deter potential candidates from entering the field. For these reasons, political support for the policy idea was not forthcoming.

Teacher education reform in Alberta would have languished had it not been for the opening of a window in 1935. A change in government created the possibility for comprehensive reform in the education field. William Aberhart became premier and concurrently held the post of minister of education. As a former educator, Aberhart had first hand experience of the trials that faced poorly trained educators and agreed that reform was necessary. Under his leadership, the education portfolio gained increased prominence on the Government’s agenda. The Premier appointed Dr. Fred McNally as his deputy minister of education. McNally was a long-time supporter of university-led teacher education, and worked within the government to ensure that the bureaucracy endorsed the new policy idea.592

591 G.P. Smith, Alberta’s minister of education during WWI and through the 1920s, frequently refused requests from the ATA to extend the initial training period for teachers and viewed it as an unnecessary burden on the province that would exacerbate rather than ameliorate teacher shortages in the province. For more on G.P. Smith’s outlook, see: John West Chalmers, *Schools of the Foothills Province: The Story of Public Education in Alberta.* (Toronto: Alberta Teachers’ Association by University Press, 1967), Chapter 23.

Political and professional interests were now aligned behind the policy idea in the province. On February 22, 1945, the Government of Alberta issued the following statement:

An agreement has been entered into with the University of Alberta, whereby its Faculty of Education will, henceforth, carry on the entire programme of teacher training, subject to control of policy by the Minister of Education. In this way students will receive full credit for the time so spent towards a university degree.\textsuperscript{593}

The active staffs of the normal schools were also transferred to the university faculty. For the normal schools, “it was a metamorphosis rather than a demise,” writes Bernard Keeler. “Staff members found themselves wearing the new dignity of academic rank and responding to the title of professor instead of looking over their shoulders to see who was being addressed.”\textsuperscript{594}

Following Alberta’s policy change, the four western provinces held a conference devoted to the topic of teacher education.\textsuperscript{595} At this conference, the delegates agreed to set up a forum for regular exchanges among the authoritative elite in Western Canada. Interprovincial migration also carried top officials across borders to take up positions in alternative ministries of educations and university faculties.\textsuperscript{596}

Like the University of Alberta, universities in BC, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had already initiated programs for initial teacher education and were willing to enter into cooperative agreements with their respective governments. The process of transferring teacher education was fairly open and amicable and the universities took over this component of education policy.\textsuperscript{597}

\textsuperscript{593} Alberta, ‘Speech from the Throne’, February 22, 1945. \textit{Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta} (Edmonton: King’s Printer, Volume XLVI), 11.
\textsuperscript{595} \textit{Western Canada Regional Conference on Teacher Education}. University of Alberta, Edmonton, May 20-22, 1954.
\textsuperscript{596} In March 1956, for example, the University of British Columbia appointed Neville V. Scarfe, then Dean of the Faculty of Education of the University of Manitoba as Dean of the new College of Education at UBC.
\textsuperscript{597} The Government of Saskatchewan had established a four-year undergraduate program for elementary and secondary teachers in cooperation with its universities in 1952, but continued to operate its normal school until 1964. The BC government formally allocated the responsibility in 1954, Saskatchewan in 1964, and Manitoba in 1965.
There was a completely different reaction to the policy idea in Eastern Canada. Political officials were content with the existing system and no other policy entrepreneurs demonstrated any strong interest in creating a new program.\textsuperscript{598} Universities in the eastern provinces exhibited little enthusiasm to take on the responsibility for initial teacher education and rarely initiated any of their own programs.\textsuperscript{599} Consequently, there was no move to follow Alberta’s lead and reconfigure the programs for initial teacher education east of the Manitoba border. What accounts for this aberration?

As late adopters of the normal school model, there was greater policy space for an alternative system of initial teacher education to take root in Western Canada. Permanent institutions for normal schools had only been created in the first decades of the Twentieth Century and were not great in number across the four Western provinces.\textsuperscript{600} Furthermore, universities across the western provinces had already begun to initiate teacher education programs that prepared candidates for provincial certification tests. Teachers’ federations supported these experiments and encouraged their members to enroll in the programs. Moreover, the Western provinces were more open to American ideas on education, which was the source of this particular policy innovation. The Western provinces also allowed Americans to teach in their schools who in turn encouraged the creation of new programs for initial teacher education.\textsuperscript{601}

Historical documents reveal that Ryerson and his peers were quite critical of American education scholars. Ryerson himself once charged: “The American writers present their works to the public as original, except acknowledging in the preface, that several useful thoughts have been suggested by such and such, or by some German

\textsuperscript{598} Some universities in Nova Scotia, for example, offered education courses and later extended the programs to culminate in a Bachelors of Education. The programs, however, were neither coordinated with the Department of Education’s normal schools nor efficiently connected to the existing certification regime in the province. As a result, the vast majority of prospective teachers in Nova Scotia continued under the normal school system (Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial Municipal Relations, 1974, Chapter 58).


\textsuperscript{600} The Putnam Weir Report, 1925.

\textsuperscript{601} Herbert Coutts, ‘Some Personalities in Alberta Teacher Education’, Teacher Education in Alberta: The Record and the Future (Lethbridge: University of Lethbridge, 1976), 27-36.
Authors.” Education officials throughout the Eastern provinces went to great lengths to minimize the influence of American educators; they actively rejected textbooks and enforced British Dominion citizenship on any wishing to teach in the area. Major education reports in Eastern Canada, such as the Hope Commission, displayed clear ambivalence towards the transfer of teacher education to universities: “We are unable to concur in the view that the training of teachers should be provided by the university.” Moreover, according to Michael Fullan and F. Michael Connelly, university administrators in such provinces as Ontario felt that university-led teacher training was too “American” or “Western” and therefore unsuitable in context of their provinces. If a university did initiate some initial teacher education programs the offerings were piecemeal at best, exclusively for secondary teachers, and were not coordinated with government programs. The result being, the idea of university-led teacher education did not take hold in Eastern Canada.

Developments in teacher education highlight how the diffusion of ideas is mediated by the internal policy context of the provinces. Provincial decision-makers from coast to coast were exposed to similar criticisms about the quality of the existing training regimes for prospective teachers and faced comparable problems with teacher supply. Moreover, provincial decision-makers in all of the provinces were also aware of the American innovation of university-led initial teacher education, due in no small part to reports and conferences held by organizations such as the Canadian Teachers’ Federation.

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602 Ryerson to Higginson, 30 April 1845, in Hodgins, Documentary History v. 240, 241.
603 MacNaughton, The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 24-25.
604 The Hope Commission, 571.
The conditions in Western Canada were more conducive for the new policy idea. The Western provinces accepted American-educated teachers who carried the idea and experience with them. University administrators, allowing the idea to percolate from below, did not shun the notion of providing initial teacher education in the advanced educational institutions and initiated their own programs. Finally, policy entrepreneurs within the provincial ministries of education provided the necessary political support to make the idea viable among authoritative decision-makers. Once Alberta implemented the policy change, the idea diffused across the policy community and the other jurisdictions gained from the experiences of the policy leader. By 1967, all provinces west of the Ontario border had thus formally transferred the responsibility for initial teacher education to universities while those to the east maintained their historical choice adhering to normal school tradition.

Conclusion
This chapter has examined the developments in Canadian education in the post-WWII period through to 1967. Inter-provincial education associations grew in strength and established more permanent lines of communication across the provinces. Inter-provincial conventions and conferences occurred with increased regularity, and the CEA was a crucial instrument of ideational exchanges across the provincial education policy communities. Where in the past ideas were primarily carried through the inter-provincial migration of individual policy entrepreneurs, the dissemination of ideas and practices became increasingly orchestrated and regularized by these organizations. Educators similarly recognized the importance of regular contact and interactions among the various members of the educational policy community:

In these meetings there can be no intention of developing a single philosophy or series of procedures in education for all provinces alike. On the other hand, this

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608 Newfoundland also introduced university-led teacher education during this period. Similar to the Western Provinces, Newfoundland was a late adopter of the normal school model. Until 1920, there was no teacher education program on the Island. That year, the Legislature created a program and in 1925, the program was physically integrated with the newly-established Memorial University College. While the normal school was formally separate, its physical proximity to the university helped to build bridges between the two institutions. By 1949, Memorial University introduced a Bachelor of Arts (Education) for students wishing to prepare for teaching and so seamlessly took over the responsibility for teacher preparation in the province. For more information, see: Newfoundland, Royal Commission on Education and Youth, Report (St. John’s: Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1967), Chapter 8.
rare opportunity to exchange ideas and experience between educators from widely-separated parts of the country has been mutually helpful. Consequently, the intensity of interprovincial exchanges of policy ideas increased throughout the post-war period.

Provincially-initiated royal commissions also contributed to the dissemination of ideas among the jurisdictions. Reflecting on the spread of the idea to consolidate local jurisdictions, the Hope Commission stated that:

This successful experiment on a large scale [in BC] convinced educators across Canada of the possibilities of the larger unit as a solution for the educational problems developed by social changes and aggravated by the depression. It resulted in legislation in Alberta, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario to enable the establishment of larger units of administration.

Studies commissioned by the governments thus contributed to the interprovincial learning process as examples and evidence from the other jurisdictions was used to inform the ensuing recommendations.

Despite the increasing density of networks for policy diffusion, the evidence of policy convergence across all ten provinces was mixed at best during this period. In central administration, Nova Scotia and Québec added to interprovincial similarity when the two provinces introduced individual ministerial responsibility to manage their respective sectors. In Nova Scotia’s case, the decision to change seemed propelled by the need to improve the sector by emulating regional trends that had appeared in the policy dimension.

For Québec, dramatic societal changes within the province had rendered the previous model of religious trusteeship obsolete and, given the common macro-institutional configuration, provincial leaders decided to adhere to the model set down through the rest of Canada. However, to mitigate opposition from the religious leadership, policy actors decided to introduce their own unique adaptation to align the

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610 The Hope Commission, 253.
administration of the sector with the internal conditions of the province thus slightly differentiating the Québec sector from the others.

The expansion and universalization through secondary school had risen as a core goal during this period. Provincial policy actors had determined that small boards lacked the necessary capacity to operate high schools. Therefore, to augment the capacity of local school boards, all ten provinces pursued the strategy of district consolidations. Faced with the common objective of expanding the provision of education, provincial policy actors and members of the policy community actively worked to disseminate the idea of district consolidation from coast to coast.

Interestingly, the implementation of this policy prescription varied with some provinces imposing it hierarchically, others with presumed consent, and one via local voluntarism. I suggested that each implementation strategy in part reflected and in turn reinforced alternative rules and norms in the educational regimes of the provinces. Furthermore, the provinces that waited to pursue consolidation used the results from these different implementation strategies to inform their own policy choices. I argued that this behaviour generated policy diffusion and subsequent interprovincial convergence on district consolidation driven by the engine of social learning.

Despite the overarching goal of universalizing secondary education, however, interprovincial policy convergence did not emerge. While many education experts fell behind the composite model, most political and bureaucratic officials remained unconvinced of the value of the alternative system and generally remained committed to the existing bilateral and/or multilateral practices. The CCF government in Saskatchewan was the sole administration to put a concerted effort into implementing the composite model in the province. However, even in that case, practical considerations such as the transportation of students from rural areas impeded the effective expansion of secondary programming. The federal TVTA Act also offered incentives to the provinces that attempted to draw them towards the bilateral or multilateral models. The result of these factors was a widespread patchwork in provincial efforts in secondary education.

Finally, a clear policy divergence appeared in the practices for teacher education. The western provinces, led by Alberta, spearheaded a new model of initial
teacher education in Canada. Breaking from the national tradition of the normal school, the western provinces reallocated the responsibility for teacher training to the universities. Aware of these developments, the provinces east of the Manitoba border nevertheless shunned the innovation and maintained their original course. I argued that the policy divergence was driven by differences in the policy contexts between the regions. As late adopters of the normal school model, the system was not as entrenched in western Canada. Policy actors in western Canada, moreover, were more receptive to American educational ideas and universities in the respective provinces had already initiated limited programs for initial teacher education. The climate in eastern Canada was not as hospitable. Dating back to the 1800s, the normal school model was highly institutionalized in eastern Canada. Policy actors had a long practice of marginalizing the ideas of American educationalists and universities exhibited little if any interest (and in some cases open hostility) in the idea of training teachers. Differences in the internal contexts therefore enabled a marked policy divergence in this dimension of the education sector.
1967 was Canada’s centennial year and a time of great optimism. The components of the Canadian welfare state were largely in place and the Canadian economy was at its post-war peak. Prosperity across the country was at all-time highs. However, this optimism proved to be short lived where, in the words of Pierre Burton, 1967 was “Canada’s last good year.”

By the 1970s, a significant economic downturn had occurred, spurred on by skyrocketing costs of oil and stagflation. The intergovernmental cooperation that had contributed to the development of the Canadian welfare state turned into intergovernmental conflict and acrimony. Competition between the two orders of government increasingly became the norm as both orders of government fought for public recognition of programs that had been developed and funded through cooperative agreements and joint efforts.

In the early 1960s, there was a growing chorus of dissatisfied voices about the state of public education in many countries. When reflecting on the critical commentary in the US, Diane Ravitch argued that:

The indictment of the school was overwhelming. In the eyes of the critics, the school destroyed the souls of children, whether black or white, middle-class or poor. It coerced unwilling youths to sit through hours of stultifying classes, breaking their spirits before turning them out as either rebellious misfits or confirming cogs in the great industrial machine. It neglected the needs of individuals while slighting the history and culture of diverse minorities. It clung to a boring, irrelevant curriculum and to methods that obliterated whatever curiosity children brought with them. It drove away creative teachers and gave tenure to petty martinet. For those who agreed with the critics, there was no alternative other than to change the schools or to abandon them.

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These perceptions radiated across the Canadian border and were echoed by university students, young teachers, academics, and others interested in the field.\textsuperscript{613} Where policy actors had previously been occupied with trying to universalize the opportunities for education and expand the provision of public schooling in Canada during the post-war period, their focus now turned towards seeing students as individuals and trying to provide educational programs for a growing diversity of needs and interests. This movement was known a child-centred schooling.\textsuperscript{614}

This chapter details the emergence of a number of new interprovincial similarities in a number of dimensions of education policy achieved through social learning in a state of increased connectivity (Table 6.1). Newfoundland abandoned its hybrid model of central educational administration in favour of exclusive individual ministerial responsibility. Provinces in eastern Canada adopted the western practice of university-led teacher education. In curriculum, all ten provinces reconfigured program requirements in line with the pedagogy of child-centred learning and consolidated the composite model of secondary education. However, as these similarities materialized, certain provinces diverged. Québec developed an alternative model for high school and created a hybrid between the composite and partite systems. Seven provinces decided to terminate the practice of universal exams, but Saskatchewan, Québec, and Newfoundland maintained some form of universal mandatory testing. And in education finance, many of the provinces in eastern Canada introduced the model of full-state funding, while west of the Ottawa River the shared-cost arrangements were maintained. The explanation for these alternative patterns turns on the interaction

\textsuperscript{613} For example, in 1972, Niall Byrne and Jack Quarter released an edited volume provocatively titled \textit{Must Schools Fail?} All of the papers expressed strong criticisms on the state of Canadian education, and some even asserting that, “schools should be abolished in total.” The editors continued saying that “There is little doubt that parents, teachers, and students are frustrated with the educational system. . . . One way or another, directly or indirectly, school experience is not ideal.” [Niall Byrne and Jack Quarter, ‘Introduction”, \textit{Must Schools Fail? The Growing Debate In Canadian Education} (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972), vii.]

\textsuperscript{614} Emerging from the progressive education movement, child-centred educationalists promoted the idea of seeing children as individuals, alternative approaches to learning through discovery, exploration and play, and planning the curriculum around children’s needs and interests. Later, as the idea of life-long learning gained currency, a new term emerged known as person-centred education. For more on this, see: Elizabeth Wood, ‘Reconceptualising Child-Centred Education: contemporary directions in policy, theory and practice in early childhood’ \textit{FORUM} 49, 1&2(2007): 119-133.
between developments in the policy climate and the internal policy contexts of the ten jurisdictions.


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* IMR = Individual Ministerial Responsibility
6.1 The Policy Climate

The 1960s ushered in a period of significant upheaval that affected the orientation of the public education enterprise. A powerful coalition of interests formed within the policy community towards recognizing children as individuals and seeing education as a means to enhance continuous personal growth. Known as child-centred education, these ideas were most clearly captured in three provincial reports: the Worth Report from Alberta, the Hall-Dennis Report from Ontario, and the Graham Report from Nova Scotia.\(^{615}\)

Education officials and stakeholders became increasingly committed to the notion of individualizing education programs to tailor them to the needs of the students, rather than making the students conform to specialized and inflexible programs.\(^{616}\) Teachers’ federations also adopted these ideas on the grounds that the decentralization of curriculum would increase the autonomy of local teachers so they could structure the programs to meet the needs of their students and classrooms.\(^{617}\) Consequently, there was a shared sense of direction and key policy priorities across the different components of the education policy community that ideationally reinforced the bonds among them as they actively promoted the transformation of educational goals to the political leaders of the sector.\(^{618}\)

Between 1967 and 1982, relations between the federal and provincial governments became increasingly strained. Indications of disharmony grew

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\(^{617}\) The Manitoba Teachers’ Society, for example, observed that in 1969, more than 40 percent of teachers in the province had university degrees and that “classroom teachers have an expertise which can be utilized beneficially to a far greater extent than now is the case.” [The Manitoba Teachers’ Society, *A Study of Education Finance in Manitoba: Analysis, Projections, Priorities, Recommendations*. (Winnipeg, MB: The Manitoba Teachers’ Society, 1970), 168, 170.]

\(^{618}\) The proposals of child-centred educationalists were not without controversy. There were members of the policy community, such as Hilda Neatby, who vociferously opposed these ideas. However, the agenda set by child-centred educationalists resonated with the broader public discourse of the day and thus managed to influence the direction of the sector.
incrementally as provincial “docility with respect to taxation agreements and shared
cost programmes began to evaporate.” Québec led the charge against the federal
government. “Québec’s Quiet Revolution,” according to Cameron and Simeon,
“unleashed a progressive nationalism that transformed Quebec and challenged
traditional assumptions about Canadian federalism.” This metamorphosis had a hand
in the mobilization of the sovereigntist movement, which rose to the forefront of the
political agenda with the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976. Pitched battles
between Premier René Lévesque and Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau took centre
stage, and culminated in the Prime Minister’s commitment to reform the constitution.

However, Québec was not the only province to challenge Ottawa. “Other
provinces”, writes David M. Cameron, “were also chafing under the growing influence
of the federal government.” The Western provinces became increasingly politicized
against Ottawa’s policy decisions. In no small part, the balkanization of Western
Canada can be attributed to the National Energy Program (NEP). A political
anathema, particularly in Alberta, the Program was designed to insulate the consumer
effects of the rising prices of oil in Eastern Canada at the expense of Canadian oil
producers in the West. These were but two examples of the growing animosity between
Ottawa and the provinces, as political friction and competition become increasingly the
norm between the two orders of government.

The federal government also made important adjustments to the system of fiscal
federalism that impacted the economic connections among the provinces. In 1966, the
federal government decided to redirect its efforts in technical and vocational training.
Rather than turning funds over to the provinces, Ottawa decided to deliver the

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619 Robert A. Young, Philippe Faucher, and André Blais, ‘The Concept of Province-Building: A
620 David Cameron and Richard Simeon, ‘Intergovernmental Relations in Canada: The Emergence of
621 David M. Cameron, ‘Collaborative Federalism and Post-secondary Education: Be Careful What You
(Accessed on January 9, 2009), 4.
622 Helen McKenzie, (Ed.) Current Issues in the System: Western Alienation in Canada (Ottawa:
Research Branch, Library of Parliament, Government of Canada, 1981); Roger Gibbins, Regionalism:
Territorial Politics in Canada and the United States (Toronto: Butterworths, 1982); Shawn Henry, ‘Re-
visiting Western Alienation’, Regionalism and Party Politics in Canada Lisa Young and Keith Archer,
Eds. (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2002), 77-91; Cameron and Simeon, ‘Intergovernmental
Relations in Canada’.
programs itself by purchasing spaces in training programs directly, either from various provincial institutions or from the private sector. 623 “By this federal initiative, the longest standing conditional grant relationship in the history of Canadian federalism was abruptly ended.” 624 This policy shift was motivated by a desire on Ottawa’s part to gain more public recognition for federal activities in various policy sectors and regain control of its spending habits.

By the 1970s, the federal government was “determined, if not to reverse the trend in growth of the provincial fiscal clout, at least to limit its own exposure to growing provincial programs through cost-shared transfers.” 625 To accomplish this objective, Ottawa introduced the Established Programs Financing (EPF) that detached the shared cost programs in health care and post-secondary education from actual provincial spending. As the federal deficits grew over the coming years, the funding formula became less oriented towards responding to provincial program needs and more towards the worsening federal financial position. Many provinces thus faced budgetary shortfalls that weakened their capacity to act in areas of provincial jurisdiction. 626

While vertical relations between the two orders of government endured conflict, horizontal relations among the provinces showed signs of cooperation. In 1967 a transformation in the organizational connections in the education sector among the provincial governments occurred. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, was formally established. The creation of the CMEC was the culmination of nearly a decade of efforts by provincial leaders. Their interest in creating the Council was spurred on by three considerations: a desire to increase provincial leadership; a fear of unilateral federal intervention in the sector; and the new requirements of the “knowledge economy.”

Since 1960, the provincial ministers of education had been meeting annually as a small subcommittee within the Canadian Education Association. When the Standing Committee of Ministers was established, various members of the policy community hoped that it would strengthen political leadership and interprovincial cooperation in education. Freeman Stewart, the Director-General of the CEA, expressed this sentiment when he said:

I am hopeful that this new Standing Committee of Ministers will be able to give us more of a sense of direction in Canadian education than we have previously been able to have. However what we can do will depend much on the willingness of the Ministers to look beyond their provincial boundaries to Canada as a whole.\(^\text{627}\)

The launching of the Standing Committee of Ministers was also a direct response to certain federal actions. Near the end of the 1950s, state officials from across the British Commonwealth were organizing the First Commonwealth Education Conference. Rather than consulting with the provincial ministers through the CEA, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Prime Minister unilaterally developed Canada’s program for the Conference. Provincial politicians did not miss this federal slight:

The Minister’s reply served to confirm rather than to allay our concern that the competent education authorities had been completely overlooked in the preparation for a Conference in which they should have been particularly involved. . . Related to my disappointment over the failure of the External Aid Office to be in a position to co-operate fully on our Convention program were comments by the External Aid Office on our further offer to co-operate. There has now been established a Standing Committee of the Ministers responsible for education and I suggested that if the External Aid Office had matters of important policy on the Commonwealth Program to discuss with the Ministers of Education, I would be glad to ask the Chairman of the new Committee of Ministers to arrange for a place on the agenda.\(^\text{628}\)


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The Standing Committee was therefore an effort to re-assert provincial primacy over education in the face of a perceived federal incursion into the field, albeit on the international stage.

Representatives from the policy community further reinforced the provincial drive to maintain control of the sector. The president of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation had initiated a public campaign to establish national uniform school courses across Canada. The Federation claimed that while “Canadians pay lip service to the goddess of equality . . . the inequalities in our schools are swelling into a national scandal.” According to the CTF, the federal government needed to create mandatory national standards in the policy field. Support for the CTF’s campaign was further reinforced by a growing sense among components of the education policy community that provincial education systems were not providing students with the adequate preparation to face the knowledge economy. And in 1965, the Bladen Commission even recommended the appointment of a federal minister of education. A Globe and Mail article by James Senter succinctly captured this feeling of the day:

A small but growing number of professional educators and school trustees have come to deplore the fact that, because of Canada’s system of government, it is generally assumed a Dominion Government department or office of education is unlikely . . . In a world where the yardstick of a nation’s strength is the number of its intellectual elite – the percentage of professional and skilled persons in its population – the idea has gradually grown in Canada that the time has come for educational leadership from Ottawa.

Provincial ministers of education recognized that these opinions could galvanize Ottawa into action and they needed to respond proactively.

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629 CEA Archives MG 28 I 472 Volume 24 – File X II Teacher Federation. ‘Teacher Bids Canada Unify Education’.
631 Even in 1967 the BCTF called for the creation of a Canadian Office of Education, jointly supported by the government of Canada and the governments of the provinces. [British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, The Cost of Education: Who should pay and why? (Vancouver: British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, 1967), 22]
The Standing Committee acted as a springboard for the organizational evolution that culminated in the CMEC. Expanding enrolments, increased spending, developments in vocational and post-secondary education, and intensified international activities in education altered the previous policy context of the education sector and motivated the political ministers to formalize their relations beyond the Standing Committee. Moreover, the heterogeneity of the CEA members, which was exposing the ministers to the competing interests of various education stakeholders, limited the political and bureaucratic officials from focusing their efforts on interprovincial initiatives in the sector. Therefore, in 1967 the CMEC was established.

The timing of the CMEC’s creation is significant for a number of reasons. First, a shared sense of national identity had spilled over from the Centennial celebrations in 1967. Caught up in the nationalist sentiment, provincial leaders were interested in demonstrating a cohesive front in key policy sectors. Education gained attention both domestically and abroad as studies connected economic development and productivity to educational attainments.\footnote{Economic Council of Canada, *Towards Sustained and Balanced Economic Growth: Second Annual Review of the Economic Council of Canada* (Queen’s Printer, Ottawa, 1965); J.E. Cheal, *Investment in Canadian Youth: An analysis of input-output differences among Canadian provincial school systems* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1963), Chapter 1.} Human capital theory, advanced by scholars such as Gary S. Becker,\footnote{Gary S. Becker, ‘Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis’, *Journal of Political Economy* 70, 5 (1962): 9-49.} had captured the minds of political leaders and education experts. As a result, the ministers of education wanted to establish a “clearer identity”\footnote{Malcolm MacLeod and Robert E. Blair, *The Canadian Education Association: The First 100 Years, 1891-1991* (Toronto: The Canadian Education Association, 1992), 36.} over the education sector.

Moreover, as Donald Smiley cogently argues, the late 1960s and early 1970s saw “a vast amount of effort expended in Ottawa and the provinces in pursuit of the rationalization and co-ordination of governmental operations on a jurisdiction-wide basis.”\footnote{Donald V. Smiley, *The Federal Condition in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1987), 21.} Executive federalism, or the on-going processes of intergovernmental negotiations, became the preferred arrangement for structuring the political relations among the different governments. Captured in Richard Simeon’s *Federal-Provincial...*
Diplomacy, these dynamics were analogous to those in international relations and played out not only vertically between the federal and provincial governments, but also horizontally among the provinces. The provincial ministers chose to establish a separate intergovernmental organization to enhance their capacity to achieve collective agreements and coordination in elementary and secondary education in Canada.

The impetus for one of the first major initiatives tackled by the CMEC came from the international arena. In the 1970s, the OECD initiated a series of reviews of the education policies of the member states. National governments compiled information and data on the various programs, policies, and financial arrangements for education in their respective states. In addition, the OECD deployed teams of independent reviewers to assess and evaluate the state of education in the member countries. In the absence of a national department of education, the CMEC orchestrated the compilation of material in Canada. The result of this initiative was the most comprehensive evaluation of the state of Canadian education to date and provided the provinces with unprecedented access to information on the activities of the other jurisdictions. In its final report, moreover, the independent reviewers offered the damning indictment of Canadian education that was quoted at the beginning of this dissertation. If the provincial ministers of education needed any further urging to nurture the CMEC, they found it in the evaluation of the OECD’s examiners.

The organized manifestation of regional connectivity also changed during this period. In 1972, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island created the Council of Maritime Premiers (CMP). Inspired by the conclusions offered in the *Report on Maritime Union* (The Deutsch Report), commissioned by the premiers of the three Maritime Provinces in 1968, the CMP was the first organization to establish a

legal framework for cooperation among the three provinces. The stated purpose of the Council was to coordinate the activities of the Maritime Provinces by creating regional organizations, harmonizing provincial policies and programs, and achieving common positions on matters that involve other parties such as the federal government. Admittedly, the educational impact of this change in regional connectivity was not realized until the 1980s; however, the creation of the CMP set the stage for important developments in the coming years.

Overall, between 1967 and 1982, the policy climate was marked by the coexistence of contradictory elements. An ideational consensus emerged on the philosophy of child-centred education that emphasized a humanistic vision of public education oriented towards the goals of diversified and individualized learning. Those committed to this renewed progressivism worked diligently to encourage governments from coast to coast to reconfigure their education sectors. Federal-provincial relations entered a period of intense acrimony as the two orders of government competed with one another over policy decisions and public recognition. Moreover, the federal government curbed its financial supports for provincial expenditures across various policy sectors. As conflict raged between the two orders, horizontal links among the provincial governments saw a marked transformation. The creation of the CMEC signaled the beginning of efforts to cooperate and harmonize provincial education policies. Moreover, Maritime Provinces initiated their own association that gave an institutional embodiment of the political synergies and common interests among the governments of the region. These changing elements in the connections among the provinces set the broader environment within which the subsequent policy developments in the provincial education sectors occurred.

6.2 Central Educational Administration – And then there was none . . .

Newfoundland was the last province to introduce ministerial responsibility for education. In 1935, a Commission government had announced a series of reforms that included the initiative to abolish the denominational superintendents and secularize
education on the Island. Religious leaders launched a campaign against the proposal and successfully garnered public support, forcing the government to retract the plan. In 1939, the Commission government managed to create a bifurcated Council of Education, with the leadership split between an elected minister and denominational superintendents. Under its rules of operation, all policy-related decisions were made by unanimous approval, and religious leaders circumscribed the authority of the minister. Religious superintendents engaged in complex negotiations among themselves and the results from these bargaining processes were often unsatisfactory. As one official from the Council of Education observed, “after the compromises between Superintendents the resultant decision is often nebulous and vague.” Nevertheless, the creation of the education minister facilitated communications between Newfoundland and the other provinces in the Canadian Education Association and empowered Newfoundland’s participation in the organization.

Under the leadership of Premier Joey Smallwood, the new Canadian province created social programs and built roads that connected the outport communities. Regional high schools were established and the government linked family allowance payments to school attendance. The result was improved participation rates. However, the bifurcated model of central educational administration of religious committees combined with ministerial accountability persisted.

In 1964, the government set up a royal commission to assess the educational conditions in the province. The Warren Commission concluded that, despite notable advancements, Newfoundland still lagged behind the rest of Canada. The Commissioners implicated the Council of Education and its supporting department as the key factor that inhibited educational development. According to the

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645 The Warren Commission found that: pupil retention rates were significantly below that of the other provinces; post-secondary participation rates were the lowest in Canada; the curriculum was overly rigid and emphasized traditional academic subjects rather than including vocational training; and the multi-confessional framework fragmented school boards and generated significant inefficiencies in the system. For more information, see: The Warren Commission, Volume 1.
Commissioners, the fragmentation of decision-making stymied effective leadership and hindered education advancement on the Island:

The Commission believes that the Department of Education as it now operates is a divisive force in our educational system. We believe that all officials of the Department should be fully committed to all the children of the Province, irrespective of their religious beliefs.  

After reviewing the models of central administration used in the other provinces, the Warren Commission determined that the Department should be reorganized along functional rather than denominational lines and that the Council of Education be reduced to an advisory body under the authority of the existing minister of education.

Upon receiving the Commission’s final report, Premier Smallwood took swift and decisive action. In May 1968, the government passed the Department of Education Act, which “ended the reign of the czars of Newfoundland education, the denominational superintendents.” The legislation instituted a clear model of individual ministerial responsibility backed by a more substantial, functionally organized, department of education. With its passage, inter-provincial uniformity in central educational administration was achieved.

There are broader insights that can be distilled from Newfoundland’s policy convergence in central administration with the rest of Canada. Changes to the connections of the formerly colony with the rest of Canada had a significant impact on Newfoundland society. Union with the national government and the other provinces had increased the financial resources of the province such that the Newfoundland government was able to increase its investments in education. Furthermore, entry into the Canadian Confederation increased the exposure of Newfoundland policy actors to the educational advancements in the rest of Canada. However, new information and increased financial resources still encountered the internal policy context of the Newfoundland education sector where, as the Warren Commission argued, the existing system of central educational administration hindered educational advancements on the Island. Driven to achieve comparable educational outcomes with the rest of Canada,

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646 The Warren Commission, Volume 1, 60.  
the Newfoundland government decided to follow the lead set by Ontario almost one hundred years ago and implement the model of individual ministerial responsibility.

Newfoundland’s policy transformation thus adhered to the second pathway of policy convergence. Increased connections among political units intensified the exchange of ideas between the former British colony and the Canadian provinces. Faced with certain problems in comparable settings (in this case, administering a policy sector in a parliamentary system), policy actors – such as the members of the Warren Commission - looked to the other provincial governments for options that could be viable in their own jurisdiction. Finding a workable option that demonstrated success, decision-makers moved to implement the policy change that subsequently increased the overall degree of similarity in educational administration among the Canadian provinces.

6.3 University-led Teacher Education Moves to the East

In the previous chapter, I argued that western Canada was fertile ground for the introduction of an innovation in teacher education. The relative youth of normal schools in the provinces and the willingness of universities to experiment with initial teacher education had created a positive environment to incubate and develop the new policy idea. The policy context in eastern Canada, however, was less conducive to the notion of university-led teacher education. The case of Ontario is instructive.

In March 1966, Davis informed the legislature of the Government’s intention to transfer teacher education to the universities. Based on the recommendations of the MacLeod Report, which had assessed the programs for teacher education in western Canada, Minister Davis believed that university-led teacher education was the most suitable course of action to improve the quality of instruction in the province. Warning Ontarians that “sweeping changes in teacher education cannot be made overnight”, Davis was nevertheless hopeful that within a few years, the responsibility for teacher training would be turned over to provincial universities.

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Negotiations in Ontario proved problematic for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the universities were reticent to the idea of providing teacher education, particularly for elementary teachers.\footnote{Michael Fullan and F. Michael Connelly, Teacher Education in Ontario: Current Practice and Options for the Future: A Position Paper (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1987), 11.} Secondly, Davis was adamant that normal school instructors should be employed in the new, or existing, faculties of education, similar to the arrangements made in Alberta. University professors represented by faculty associations, however, were concerned that normal school instructors did not have the necessary credentials to equip them for academia and resisted their inclusion under the auspices of the universities.\footnote{The MacLeod Report emphasized that two conditions needed to be met for the existing staff of the normal schools to transfer to the universities: (1) demonstration of scholarship; and (2) distinguished and successful teaching experience. The Ontario Government, however, did not make reference to these qualifications during the negotiation process. Concerned by the omission, the faculty association at Lakehead University issued a statement that the proposed allocation of initial teacher education was “potentially dangerous” and “an essential contradiction to the recommendation of the MacLeod Report, particularly with respect to the conditions of faculty transferal.” (Quoted in Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, ‘A Policy Statement on the Amalgamation of Elementary Teachers’ Colleges with the Universities’, November 1968, 9-10).} Finally, the universities felt that the provincial government would compromise the principle of university autonomy. Under the normal school system, the ministry of education controlled virtually every aspect of teacher education. University administrators were concerned that the Ontario Ministry would expect to maintain a similar type of policy monopoly, even after transferring the responsibility to them.\footnote{Davis sent signals to the administrators that gave credence to their fears. He insisted that the universities needed to organize a specific college or faculty of education and rejected the idea of having a department of education within a faculty of arts (which was the common arrangement in the US). Davis also issued a strong preference for a consecutive program and eschewed the idea of concurrent studies. For more on Davis’ policy preferences, please see: Douglas Myers and Saul, ‘How Not to Reform a Teacher Education System: Ontario 1966-1971’, Educating Teachers: Critiques and Proposals (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1974), 40.} These three issues slowed the negotiation process in Ontario. The challenges in Ontario were indicative of patterns in the other eastern provinces.\footnote{J. E. Picot, A Brief History of Teacher Training in New Brunswick 1848-1973 (Fredericton, NB: The Department of Education, 1974); Bernard Shapiro, Jean Clandinin, and Jane Gaskell, Teacher Education in Nova Scotia: An Honourable Past, An Alternative Future A report to the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education February 1994.}

Given the strong resistance from the universities and the existing policy legacy of normal schools, what factors encouraged the policy change in these provinces? Decision-makers in eastern Canada had been increasingly exposed to reports and publications that called for improvements in teacher education. The Hall-Dennis
Report for one stated: “the Committee is insistent that every teacher must have a longer and broader pre-service education, general and professional, at university and leading to a university degree.” Similarly, the Graham Report in Nova Scotia recommended that:

The programme for teacher education and training should lead to a degree granted by the affiliated university. The programme should include university-level general education, intensive professional training, and a year of internship during which prospective teachers would spend about eighty per cent of their time attached to the staff of a school and about twenty per cent in continued professional studies.

Government officials in the ministries of education were therefore receiving direct recommendations to follow the example set by the western provinces.

There was a sense among both university and government officials that the transfer of initial teacher education was inevitable. After conducting a detailed study of trends across Canada, the Committee on Teacher Education at the University of Prince Edward Island stated:

Within a very brief time, all teacher education will take place in universities. Teaching at all levels will soon become a degree profession involving up to five years of university studies for basic certification. The traditional distinction in status between elementary and secondary schoolteachers is fast disappearing as qualifications and pay are equalized. There is a growing recognition that elementary education is the most crucial stage of the educational continuum and that it is sheer nonsense to put the least prepared teachers in the early grades. Teachers are actively seeking professional status by demanding improved standards, increased length of preparation, greater autonomy, a share in educational decision-making, and better pay. Teachers’ organizations are seeking and gradually winning some control over the award of permanent teaching certificates. It is acknowledged that the achievement of a degree is only the first step in a continuous process of education and re-education. In-service education will be essential in the future for all teachers.

654 Hall-Dennis Report, 169.
656 Committee on Teacher Education University of Prince Edward Island, *Teacher Education: Perseverance or Professionalism* (published and printed in the Atlantic Provinces, 1971), 19-20.
This statement suggests that policy actors were sensitive to the proportion of other provinces that had already adopted the policy, which was being perceived as a positive innovation for the policy sector.

Drawing from the experience of their western counterparts, decision-makers in eastern Canada decided to adopt the same policy innovation. The pressures to enhance initial teacher education in each of the provinces, the trend in other parts of the country in favour of university-led teacher education, and the endorsements from the policy community, eventually pushed decision-makers to transfer the responsibility for initial teacher training from the central government to the universities across the eastern provinces. A cascading effect thus appeared as policy actors in eastern Canada committed themselves to the idea of university-led teacher education.

There is no doubt that the idea of university-led teacher education diffused from western Canada across to the eastern provinces. Ideational exchanges through conferences sponsored by the CEA, the CTF, and the Canadian Conference on Education, allowed decision-makers and education stakeholders to debate the merits of the policy option openly and learn from the examples set by others. When teacher education reform entered the policy agenda, bureaucrats and politicians looked to the systems at work in other provinces, and used them as benchmarks for their own activities. Virtually every provincial royal commission or special report on the subject contained sections that described the model of university-led teacher education at work in other parts of Canada. Therefore, the provinces acted as virtual laboratories of

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657 Prince Edward Island allocated teacher education to the University of Prince Edward Island in 1969; between 1969 and 1971 normal schools disappeared in Québec and universities took on the responsibility for initial teacher education; New Brunswick officials transferred teacher education to the universities in 1973; Ontario eventually solidified its arrangements in 1978; Nova Scotia, with its multitudes of universities and normal schools dedicated to teacher education took the longest, only finally transferring the responsibility in 1994, at which time the last normal school in Canada closed its doors.


659 In some cases, provincial commissions seconded experts from other provinces. The Warren Commission, for example, asked the Dean of Education from Alberta – Dr. Herbert Coutts – to assess the state of teacher education in Newfoundland: “The Commission considers itself very fortunate that Dr. Coutts agreed to undertake the study. Much of what is contained in this chapter and the next one is based on his findings and recommendations.” [The Warren Commission, 109].
policy experimentation with policy diffusion occurring through learning mediated through the internal policy context of the receiving jurisdictions. As a result, the policies for initial teacher education converged across the country and policy uniformity that had previously characterized this dimension under the normal school model re-emerged.

6.4 Policy Changes in Secondary Education
In the previous chapter, I argued that a consensus had emerged among the educational policy community on the idea of composite secondary education. The CEA and other associations had promoted the viability of the policy idea and encouraged its adoption across the Canadian provinces. Despite these efforts, however, an interprovincial policy convergence in secondary education was not achieved and provincial efforts in secondary education remained haphazard at best. I suggested that the lack of uniformity stemmed from three factors. First, the legacy of streaming students into specialized programs entrenched by the existing systems was difficult to overcome. Second, many political leaders remained biased towards the academic stream of secondary education and did not mobilize behind the idea of diversifying the available programs. Finally, the federal government’s TVTA Act fortified the bilateral and multilateral pathways in opposition to the opinions and recommendations of education experts and organizations such as the CEA.

Between 1967 and 1982, the resilience of the bilateral and multilateral models was overcome in favour of the composite model of secondary school. The policy transformation was engendered through the combination of two factors. Because new schools had already been built using federal funds, the implementation of the composite system did not put undue strain on provincial coffers. Furthermore, the coalition of support around child-centred education created a hospitable ideational climate for the ascension of the composite model. Each of these forces is outlined in further detail below.

The TVTA Act proved to be an inadequate device to encourage the provinces down a particular policy pathway. Once federal funds allocated under the TVTA Act were turned over to the provincial governments, the departments of education could
write their regulations for secondary schooling as they saw fit because there were no mechanisms for long-term oversight from the federal government. Schools that had been constructed with federal funds ostensibly for the purposes of vocational training were reorganized according to the principles of composite education. The TVTA Act thus could not maintain a strong influence over the direction of secondary education in Canada as the provinces chose to adhere to the principles of composite education.\textsuperscript{660} Despite the federal government’s efforts to coerce the provinces along one policy pathway, the provinces chose an alternative system for secondary education, based on the research and knowledge generated by and disseminated through the epistemic and policy community.\textsuperscript{661}

There was a synergy between the characteristics of composite schooling and the goals of child-centred educationalists. The widespread acceptance of composite education was in part a reflection of the “considerable ideological hegemony over elementary and secondary educational policy-making”\textsuperscript{662} that the theory of child-centred schooling had attained across the country. Alberta’s Worth Commission identified the goals of philosophy as enabling individuals to achieve personal “self-fulfillment . . . [and] the cultivation and enrichment of all human beings.”\textsuperscript{663} To meet these goals, experts from coast to coast declared that citizens needed to be “more than mere clients of the educational system. They must share in determining it.”\textsuperscript{664} With its emphasis on individual choice and flexibility, the composite model offered a viable option for policy actors that wished to allow citizens the opportunity to play a role in determining their own educational program. Provincial policy-makers therefore moved to diversify secondary school course offerings and eliminate (or dramatically reduce) aspects of streaming in secondary schools.\textsuperscript{665}

\textsuperscript{660} Manitoba, Department of Youth and Education, \textit{Annual Report, 1968} (Winnipeg: R. S. Evans, Queen’s Printer for Manitoba), 17.
\textsuperscript{661} Federal funds were nevertheless a vital factor in the expansion of secondary education in Canada. The funds provided the necessary fiscal support to enable the provinces to initiate capital expansions to rapidly increase the number of high schools and accommodate the children of the post-war baby boom.
\textsuperscript{662} Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, 154-155.
\textsuperscript{663} The Worth Commission, 28.
\textsuperscript{664} The Worth Commission, 39.
\textsuperscript{665} In truth, a perfect form of composite education, where students remained entirely in control of their own course selection, remained out of reach in the different provincial systems. For more on the problems that faced the composite model, see: Manzer, \textit{Public Schools and Political Ideas}, Chapter 9.
The policy convergence, however, was not absolute. As the majority of the provinces followed the composite model for secondary education, Québec developed an alternative system that persists today. The policy divergence stemmed from idiosyncratic conditions in the province that arose from both the historical legacy of the dual system fashioned by the Protestant and Catholic councils and the contemporary efforts to revolutionize the education sector at the time.

Like commissions in other provinces, the Parent Report recognized that Québec needed to diversify its high school offerings:

> Obviously secondary education cannot be the same for everyone. All will participate but not all will start out with the same talents, the same preparation, the same interests, and the same needs. All will not persevere to the end, and all will not seek identical training. Some intend to pursue later studies that vary greatly from each other and require widely different preparation. . . . The diversification of secondary education is still a goal to be attained, and it will considerably change the organization of programmes and courses.  

Rather than simply adhering to the practices of the other Canadian provinces, the Parent Commission advised the government to create a unique system in Québec.

The Commission argued that a student “is not yet ready to embark on specialized higher studies before reaching the age of eighteen or even nineteen.”

Impressed by the American junior college system, the English “sixth forms”, and the findings in the French report of the “Groupe d’étude des Grandes Écoles”, the Commissioners called upon the Government to establish separate 2-year postsecondary institutions to provide pre-university general academic education as well as postsecondary vocational education beneath the umbrella of the public education system. While informed by the examples and lessons from these other countries, the

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668 In coming to this realization, the Parent Commission was significantly ahead of its time. Education experts have increasingly recognized that the transition from secondary to tertiary education can be jarring for students. Individual students often find the change overwhelming and thus fail to complete a post-secondary program. Canadian educators are now looking to better understand the factors that contribute to a successful transition between the two levels of education and may eventually follow the model pioneered in Québec. For more information, see: P. Anisef and P. Axelrod, (Eds.) *Transitions: Schooling and Employment in Canada* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing); Burt Galaway and J. Hudson, eds. *Youth in Transition: Perspectives on Research and Policy* (Toronto: Thompson
Commissioners emphasized that their proposal had important differences from these existing practices. Specifically, the proposed system placed particular attention on maintaining flexibility by increasing the opportunities for students to transfer between different alternatives than the systems at work in the aforementioned countries.

In June 1967, the provincial cabinet issued an order in council that integrated the existing independent classical colleges and transformed them into public or state-subsidized private secondary schools and postsecondary institutions, known as Cégeps. By the end of 1968, 21 of the 30 scheduled institutions had been established, many of which were “instant institutions created out of an amalgamation of existing classical colleges, normal schools and institutes of technology.” The result of these activities was an increase in the number of 15-year-olds attending high school from 75 percent in 1961 to 97 percent in 1977.

The difference between the Québec model and the rest of Canada was straightforward. Students in a majority of provinces attend the same secondary school until they graduate from Grade 12 (or, in some provinces, Grade 13 for those that planned to go to university). In Québec, students graduate at the end of Grade 11 and then decide to attend either an institute that prepares them for university or entry into a technical profession. The Québec model thus combines aspects of both the composite and partite systems. And, unlike the four-year norm in the rest of Canada, the government of Québec expected its universities to reduce their undergraduate program from 4 to 3 years.

This policy innovation emerged due to a combination of factors. First, there was a new willingness among Québec’s political leaders to accept federal funding.

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669 For a statement of these differences, see: The Parent Report, Part II, Volume A, 176-177.
670 Norman Henchey and Donald Burgess, Between Past and Future: Québec Education in Transition (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1987), 100.
671 Québec, Ministère de l’Éducation, Statistiques de l”Éducation. Direction générale de la recherche et de la prospective, (Québec, 1985).
672 It is important to note that students that choose to pursue their studies in vocational training institution in the Cégep system, have the ability later on to transfer their credits into the university system if they choose to alter their original pathway. As a result, even if the Cégep system resembles the partite model, it still adheres to the principles of the composite system. For more on this, see The Parent Report, Part II, Volume A, Chapter 6.
While other Québec governments had shunned federal funds in the past, the government in the 1960s accepted Ottawa’s money for building and equipment grants dedicated to technical and vocational manpower-training programs.\textsuperscript{674} The result was a rapid influx of federal funds for education expansion that supported the new direction the provincial government was attempting to take. But federal funds under the TVTA Act were not only allocated to Québec. The fact that all provinces received them indicates that there was also something within the province itself that made it a viable space for this policy innovation.

Because the first public high school for French-speaking Quebecers only opened in 1956, private colleges that were separate from the public system had been providing the majority of secondary education.\textsuperscript{675} After evaluating the state of secondary and post-secondary education in the province, the Parent Commission found a patchwork of institutions that were strongly elitist and limited opportunities and accessibilities for students in the province.\textsuperscript{676} The reformers needed to create a system that would expand access to post-secondary education from public secondary schools, re-orient secondary education away from a focus on classical academics, reconcile the disparities between the Catholic and Protestant systems, and maintain the support of vested interests.

In its final prescription, the Parent Commission sought to capitalize on the institutional diversity within Québec:

Hence, owing their existence to fortuitous needs and to population pressures, a considerable number of elements are available out of which to erect a system of diversified education. The sum total of these, for the moment made up of unrelated parts, needs to be rethought and rationally coordinated into a harmonious whole, intended to correspond to the aptitudes and talents of all children and to prepare each of them for life.\textsuperscript{677}

Simply put, the province already had the physical infrastructure to house the necessary spaces and the personnel who could administer the alternative programs.

\textsuperscript{674} Henchey and Burgess, \textit{Between Past and Future}, 73.
\textsuperscript{675} Onésime Gagnon, \textit{Cultural Developments in the Province of Quebec: Minorities' Rights and Privileges under the Education System} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), 11.
\textsuperscript{676} The Parent Report, Part 2, Volume A, 127.
\textsuperscript{677} The Parent Report, Part II, Volume A, 47.
The implementation of the Cégep system also occurred during a critical juncture in Québec education. Unlike the other provinces that had been making incremental adjustments to education systems that were largely entrenched by the turn of the Nineteenth Century, the Québec government pursued massive revolutionary changes that reconstructed the education sector in the province. Once this alternative system was in place, it created an alternative policy legacy in the province that continues to differentiate Québec from the rest of Canada today.

6.5 Canceling the Provincial Departmentals

Universal exams had been a standard component of provincial regulations from coast to coast since the inception of mass schooling. Since the 1800s, grade 8 pupils in Ontario for example, had to write examinations to gain entry into secondary school.\(^{678}\) At the end of Grade 10, moreover, students in British Columbia who wanted to advance through the academic stream of high school had to write a Collegiate Academy Entrance Examination.\(^{679}\) In every province, students were subjected to intense ministry-approved examinations, colloquially known as “departmentals.” Across all provinces, admission to universities was contingent upon successful results in these exams, with provincially funded scholarships awarded to the top achievers.

The prevalence of examinations in Canadian public schools reflected a harmony between the practice and the needs of the education sector. Throughout the foundation and expansion of Canadian education, education officials and elected leaders valued provincial exams as a tool for central control and quality assurance. Departmentals provided a way for officials to gauge whether or not the provincial curriculum was being taught in schools. Moreover, before the methods of teacher training improved, standardized exams acted as a check to insure that students learned the mandatory requirements regardless of where they lived. This rationale was summed up in the Cameron Report:

Since they [provincial exams] are imposed from outside the school, they provide for both pupils and teachers a strong form of extrinsic motivation for better achievement of the type measured by written examinations. They provide also a

\(^{678}\) Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 20.
\(^{679}\) The Chant Commission, 231.
powerful means of central control over the curriculum, ensuring province-wide emphasis upon those parts of the curriculum considered by the central authority to be the most important.\textsuperscript{680}

Starting in the 1950s, provincial reports began to debate the merits of standardized exams. Interestingly, despite voicing some reservations around the practice of universal exams, all the commissions ended up favouring the preservation of provincial examinations.\textsuperscript{681} However, within ten years, the hegemonic support for this policy instrument came unhinged. The reasons for this policy transformation are fourfold.

First, provincial governments had consolidated local school boards and created larger districts to enhance the educational capacities of the local jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{682} Consolidations also created economies of scale that could support district level specialists who were capable of evaluating the local school and providing on-site guidance of teaching and learning.\textsuperscript{683} The implication was that the need for universal exams as a means for quality control was reduced.

Second, as more and more teachers attended university-led teacher education programs, the teacher certification requirements had increased through the 1960s. Even in provinces that had not yet transferred the responsibility for initial teacher education, the requirements for normal schools and certification standards had increased. This meant that teachers were augmenting their abilities as professional educators. The need for universal examinations was increasingly questioned as the professionalization of teachers improved. In the words of G.B Jeffrey, the former Chairman of the University Entrance and School Examinations Council of the University of London:

Our real problem, however, is not whether we should have examinations, but whether we should have external examinations. For a teacher, knowing his class and the ground he has covered, to set a test is one thing. As soon as anybody outside that classroom takes a hand in framing that test it is a different thing. Authority has passed from the teacher to some outside person or body, and the professional freedom of the teacher is to that extent limited . . . Let there be no

\textsuperscript{680} The Cameron Commission, 1959, 65. (Alberta)
\textsuperscript{681} The Hope Commission, 1950, 95; The Cameron Commission, 1959; The Chant Commission, 1960.
\textsuperscript{682} In Ontario, for example, the provincial government reduced the number of boards from 5,600 in 1945 to 1,600 in 1967 [The Hall-Dennis Report, 12].
\textsuperscript{683} The Hall-Dennis Report, 12.
Teachers, who wished to increase their standing in the education sector, started to openly challenge the provincial examination programs.

Third, larger school boards enabled a general movement toward administrative and policy decentralization that characterized Canadian education throughout the 1960s. Ministries of education from coast to coast reduced their control and influence over a variety of areas of public schooling, including curriculum and assessment. In Prince Edward Island, for example, the government decided to implement a phased extension of control over instructional content, program design, and supervisory processes to qualified professionals in certain districts. This trend was part of a broader international movement to decentralize government control over education and introduce some much-needed flexibility into the education sector.

Finally, in a marked re-assessment of standardized exams, a series of major provincial reports questioned the validity of their use. The landmark document that endorsed the termination of universal examinations was Ontario’s Hall-Dennis Report (1967). Told of “inflexible programs, outdated curricula, unrealistic regulations, regimented organization, and mistaken aims of education”, the Commission sought to re-invigorate education and recommended that the province institute un-graded classrooms. Premised on the philosophy of child-centred education, the authors of the

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687 According to the Commissioners, “The chastisement of pupils for not meeting set, rigid requirements, is almost a form of barbarism in our day.” (The Hall-Dennis Report, 62). Alberta’s Worth Commission echoed these sentiments: “It would be tragic . . . if school jurisdictions, singly or collectively, were to replace obligatory provincial examinations with local or regional examinations. A new tyranny would merely replace the old . . . It would be equally tragic if colleges, institutes and universities were allowed to administer their own entrance examinations. This would replace the present matriculation examinations with a set of externals unlikely to be compatible with the learning objectives of the schools. The cure would be worse than the disease.” (The Worth Report, 206).
688 The Hall-Dennis Report, 10.
Hall-Dennis Report argued that un-graded classrooms would be “disappointing if year-end examinations and competitive report cards were not abolished at the same time.”

The Ontario government decided to implement the policy change for the 1968 academic year and sparked a domino effect across the country. Almost immediately after Ontario’s decision was made public, BC indicated that it would no longer hold provincial exams; Manitoba and Prince Edward Island changed their regimes in 1970; and Nova Scotia and Alberta abolished their provincial exams in 1972. In a small deviation from this general policy trajectory, Saskatchewan maintained a limited form of standardized exams for students from small rural schools whose teachers did not have provincial accreditation. It seemed that, while the Saskatchewan government endorsed the child-centred philosophy, material conditions within the province made it impossible for the government to end the practice of standardized exams completely.

The exceptions to this national trend were Québec and Newfoundland; both provinces maintained the practice of mandatory exams at the end of high school. One potential explanation for this variation could be that provincial decision-makers and the education policy community rejected the principles of child-centred education or that they were unaware of the new policy developments in the other provinces. However, evidence drawn from the policy statements and reports in both provinces do not support this interpretation. The Parent Commission, for example, clearly endorsed these tenets throughout the series of volumes it produced, and the ideas similarly resonated through the recommendations of the Warren Commission.

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689 Ibid, 62.
691 To quote the Parent Commission: “We have outlined the pedagogical themes which have served as guidelines for this second section: the need for an activist pedagogy more completed centred on the child and the adolescent; the necessity for general training more available to all and for gradual specialization; the search for a more flexible system of electives which will avoid premature final choices; the desire for an education which will respect the intellect, the creative gifts, the spirit of inquiry; the development of a teaching less bookish, closer to direct observation, to social experience and to mass culture; the urgent need for training a highly qualified teaching personnel.” [The Parent Commission, The Pedagogical Structures of the Educational System Part Two, Volume A (Quebec: Pierre Des Marais, Printer, 1965), 19].
692 To quote the Warren Commission: “The Commission believes that the narrow academic programme which may have served Newfoundland students reasonably well in the past is woefully inadequate and unsuitable today. Radical changes must be introduced in curriculum policies, allowing greater flexibility
explanation for Québec and Newfoundland’s continuation of universal exams therefore lies elsewhere.

Much like reasons behind Saskatchewan’s policy adjustment to maintain exams for a limited group, the decisions in Québec and Newfoundland appear to be driven by practical considerations. The longevity of denominational control in the two provinces had seriously delayed expansion in secondary education and curricular reform.\(^{693}\) Moreover, in comparison to the extended efforts in the other jurisdictions, teachers were only beginning to increase their qualifications in the two provinces.\(^{694}\) The Warren Commission put it bluntly:

> The abolition of external examinations has been recommended by a number of Royal Commissions in Canada. It is the view of this Commission, however, that this Province is far from the point where such a recommendation can be seriously considered. The level of teacher qualifications in this Province, the proliferation of small school systems and small schools, the meager resources of local boards of education, the dearth of highly qualified administrators, supervisory personnel, department heads and subject consultants at the local level, and the general inadequacy of staffing regulations must surely indicate that the majority of schools and school systems are not prepared to receive this measure of professional responsibility and indeed would be reluctant to accept it.\(^{695}\)

Finally, where the governments of the other provinces had long enjoyed substantial control over the content of curriculum and the supervision of public schools, the state had only recently gained supremacy over the education sectors in Québec and Newfoundland. Given these conditions, the idea of ending provincial exams lacked the necessary internal validity to gain acceptance in these two provinces and they did not follow the general trend in evaluation that had swept across the rest of Canada.

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\(^{694}\) The Parent Commission, *The Structure of the Educational System at the Provincial Level*, 77.

\(^{695}\) The Warren Commission, *Volume One*, 186.
6.6 A New Model of Education Finance

Due to the multiplication of educational programs that followed the turn of the Nineteenth Century, education had rapidly become one of the largest public expenditures in Canada. By the 1920s, expenditures on public schooling outstripped government spending on all other social programs and teachers made up the largest group of public employees.\(^\text{696}\) During the Great Depression, provincial governments were forced to dramatically cut educational expenditures; however, educational spending began to rise through the 1950s and, by 1965, expenditures on public school as a percentage of total expenditures hit its highest point since 1926 at 28.7 percent (see Appendix 7).

Education finance was a frequent topic at the national conventions on the state of Canadian education. In 1961, for example, the Canadian Conference on Education released a report entitled, *Financing Education in Canada*.\(^\text{697}\) The report observed that since 1945, provincial grants for education had significantly increased relative to the costs covered by local property taxes, such that they now assumed a larger proportion of the gross expenditures. The report predicted that the overall costs of education would continue to rise “so long as public education is expected to widen its range of services, to raise the quality of its performance, and to serve a growing proportion of our population.”\(^\text{698}\) Factors that contributed to the rising costs included: expanding secondary education; increasing student-teacher ratios; rising capital costs; improved educational resources; rising administrative costs; and a marked increase in teachers’ salaries.\(^\text{699}\) Provincial decision-makers were therefore aware of the growing problem of education finance and needed to come up with a way to control the seemingly unsustainable expenditures.

Individual stakeholder organizations also engaged in the debate. In 1955, the CSTA released a report entitled *School Finance in Canada*. Among its recommendations the CSTA advocated the establishment of basic equalization grants

\(^{696}\) Manzer, *Public Schools and Political Ideas*, 118.
\(^{698}\) Ibid, 2.
\(^{699}\) Ibid, 24.
and uniform tax rates to finance the basic programs in all the provinces. In its own reports on education finance in Canada, the CTF highlighted the fiscal imbalance that faced the education sector:

the most important facts concerning the financing of education in Canada, namely, that support for education by each level of government is inversely related to the revenue available to it. The federal government, which has the largest and most broadly based taxation sources, spent only 4.0 per cent on education in 1962. The provincial governments, which have the second highest resources, spent 29.4 per cent of them on education. The municipal governments, with the smallest financial resources and the narrowest tax base, spent 35.3 per cent on education.

Given the significance of teachers’ salaries as a substantial cost in the education sector, the CSBA’s and the CTF’s attention to this dimension was not unexpected. The CTF even sponsored a series of conferences exclusively focused on the issue of education finance in Canada. Stakeholder associations thus propelled the spread of information on the state of education finance in each of the provinces to individuals and associations in the different jurisdictions.

In 1967, under a Liberal-led government, New Brunswick spearheaded a new way of thinking about educational finance in Canada. Breaking the long-standing traditions of local autonomy through property taxes bolstered by shared-cost arrangements, the New Brunswick government moved to centralize all education finance. According to the terms of Bill 22, the province reclaimed all taxation powers from the local districts and drew funds for public schooling from the general provincial revenues. Simultaneously, the province also radically restructured local administration

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702 In 1963, teachers’ salaries made up 69.8 per cent of the total school board operating costs. [Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Daily Bulletin, Vol. 35-181 (September 21, 1966) Reference 5, 39]
703 The CTF sponsored two conferences on education finance in 1965 and 1967. Prior to the conferences, the CTF commissioned Wilfred J. Brown (an expert of education finance in Canada) to prepare advance documentation that presented an analysis of trends and comparisons on various financial aspects of education from 1946 to 1962. [Wilfred J. Brown, Financing Education in Canada, 2nd Edition (Ottawa: The Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 1967)]. The Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities similarly offered their own interpretation of the state of education finance in Canada and echoed the observations on the fiscal imbalance recorded by the CTF. [Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, The Financing of Education in Canada (Ottawa: Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities, June 1967).
and reduced the number of school boards from 422 to 33. The result of these changes, according to Lawrence M. Bezeau, was that in 1967 “the only other North American jurisdictions with comparable levels of centralization of finance and governance in education were Hawaii and the Yukon.”\(^{704}\) New Brunswick became the first Canadian jurisdiction to implement full provincial funding.

Referred to as the equal opportunity program, the New Brunswick model was designed to accomplish two objectives. First, despite an internal equalization program run by the province to ensure equal access to funds across all districts, substantial fiscal disparities among the districts persisted. When introducing Bill 22 in the legislature, Minister of Education W. Wynn Meldrum declared:

> To us, in this session, is given the privilege of removing some of the generations’ old inequities which geography and economics have created and replacing them by an education system designed to fit our children for the challenges of the most vital and changing times in the history of mankind.\(^{705}\)

The provincial government therefore wished to achieve within-province equity in education to elevate the overall quality of education in New Brunswick.

Second, provincial leaders were acutely aware of critical problems in secondary education in the province:

> In this technological age where minimum educational requirements are steadily rising and where individuals lack adequate training which will enable them to secure satisfactory employment a greater emphasis must be placed on the importance of making available to every child the highest possible amount of education. The day of the unskilled worker is fast disappearing.\(^{706}\)

The Deputy Ministers of Education in New Brunswick knew that many of the local districts lacked the revenues to operate high schools for their residents. Even with earlier district consolidations that were recommended by the Royal Commission on the Financing of Schools in New Brunswick,\(^{707}\) various regions continued to suffer from


economic shortfalls. The educational elite within the Ministry of Education therefore supported fiscal centralization as a means to improve the provision of secondary education in the province.

Following the implementation of Bill 22, the fiscal disparities that had demarcated New Brunswick boards from each other disappeared almost overnight. Full provincial funding therefore achieved the government’s objective of equalizing districts in the province. Francophone communities particularly benefited from the policy change as their revenues were brought up to comparable levels with their Anglophone counterparts. The newly consolidated districts were also able to expand their high school programs improving the provision of secondary education in the province. In return for full funding, the New Brunswick government demanded close control over how it was spent. The provincial government also assumed the responsibility for collective bargaining and implemented a provincial property tax system, collected by the Department of Municipal Affairs that contributed to the overall revenues of the province. The introduction of full provincial funding thus accomplished the objectives identified by the Ministry of Education.

Following New Brunswick’s policy change, other provinces in eastern Canada moved in the direction of full provincial funding. West of the Ottawa River,

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708 In the Department of Education’s Annual Report from 1967, the Deputy Minister observed that in 1961, the average annual income for employed males across Canada was $3999, while in New Brunswick it was $3070. Moreover, the number of families in 1961 with an annual income of less than $1000 as a percentage of the total number of families across Canada was 4.5 percent, while in New Brunswick it was 7.3 percent. [New Brunswick, Department of Education, Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1967 (Fredericton, NB: Department of Education, 1968), 9]


710 Bezeau, ‘Structural Reform of the New Brunswick Education System in the 1990s’.


712 Nova Scotia was the exception to this regional policy shift towards full provincial funding. Discussed in further detail in the subsequent chapter, the resilience of the shared cost model in the province stemmed in part from a peculiarity in the province. Unlike the other jurisdictions, municipalities played a larger role in education finance and were thus an authoritative actor in the field. Moreover, provincial stakeholder associations such as the Nova Scotia Teachers’ Union supported the idea of local autonomy in education finance: “It is difficult to conceive of autonomy at the school board and school levels with a provincial take-over of educational finance. Here again a partnership implies a sharing of responsibilities and shared decision-making.” [Nova Scotia, Initial Statement of Position to The Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations (Halifax, NS: Nova Scotia Teachers’ Union, 1971), 75.
however, the model of full provincial funding received a different reception. What accounts for this policy divergence? The answer lies in differences in the economic health of the regions, extent of administrative and financial centralization, stakeholder activity, and differences in the political cultures of the provinces.

First, full provincial funding was also more viable in eastern Canada due to the relative economic weakness of the region compared with the other regions. As William J. McCordic wrote, “It was in poorer provinces such as New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia that inadequacies of some local school boards to support an adequate school program first became apparent.” In response to these problems, many of these provinces had already increased the centralization of educational finance relative to the other jurisdictions. For example, in both New Brunswick and PEI, teachers’ salaries were already being paid directly by the provincial governments rather than the local boards. Consequently, the autonomy of local boards was already more circumscribed in these provinces than elsewhere in the country making it easier for the provincial governments to reclaim the tax base.

Beyond the economic conditions, stakeholder associations across the western provinces doubted the benefits of full provincial funding that had been initiated in the eastern provinces and actively campaigned against it. The British Columbia Teachers’ Federation (BCTF), for example, stated its adherence to two principles that oriented its position on education finance. First, that every child is entitled to an education, and that second, every community should be able to offer a program beyond what the provincial government mandates. The Federation continued:

To achieve this freedom of action, fiscal independence, resulting in real management power and authority, has to exist at the school district level. The ability to tax and to expend monies must rest with the local citizens; otherwise, local autonomy is not possible.

The British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) reinforced these sentiments when it stated: “local control by school boards is exercised in making

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713 McCordic, Financing Education in Canada, 30.
714 Lawton, The Price of Quality.
716 Ibid, 3.
decisions whether to go beyond the basic program, in determining the complete expenditure budget of the school district, and in deciding how the basic program is to be implemented." The Manitoba Teachers’ Society (MTS) also argued that, “most authorities agree that the continuation of local autonomy is dependent primarily on some form of local discretion over expenditures.” Consequently, the stakeholders’ associations in western Canada advocated the continuation of shared-cost arrangements between the provinces and the local school boards.

Finally, the political culture of the western provinces did not seem amenable to full provincial funding. Events in Manitoba are instructive. Soon after New Brunswick had enacted the new fiscal model, the Manitoba government considered implementing a similar program. Consistent with its behaviour on the issue of district consolidations, the Manitoba government put the idea to a province-wide plebiscite. The initiative failed to gain public approval. The response from Manitobans was clear: they opposed the extensive centralization that would follow from full provincial funding. Unlike the educational elite in the minister’s office in New Brunswick, the citizens of Manitoba were unconvinced that the benefits of centralization would outweigh the costs to local autonomy and parental control. For these reasons, the previous uniformity in education finance ended as provinces west of the Ottawa River refused to follow the lead set by New Brunswick.

Conclusion

The chapter began with a discussion of the policy climate among the provincial governments, and highlighted a major development. The creation of the CMEC marked a revolutionary transformation in the organizational connectivity among the provincial governments. Specifically, the presence of a formal and permanent organization increased the potential for cooperation among the provinces. The possibility of cooperation did not immediately translate into concrete action, however. In part,

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719 New Brunswick, *Legislative Assembly Synoptic Report of the Proceedings of the Fifth Session of the Forty-Fifth Legislative Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick, 1967*. Volume 1, 64.]
competitive dynamics between Ottawa and the provinces throughout the 1970s may have dampened the political will to engage in formal collaboration. Moreover, the CMEC needed to balance the notion of cooperation against the strong commitment within the provinces to maintain their jurisdictional autonomy in the sector. The CMEC could not be seen as either an agent of centralization or an enforcer of mandatory policy prescriptions that would compromise the jurisdictional autonomy of the provincial governments in education.

Interprovincial policy uniformity rose in a number of areas. Faced with rising criticisms from home and abroad that challenged the rigidity of public schooling, provincial decision-makers and education professionals from coast to coast committed themselves to the idea of individualizing education. I argued that because the professionalization of teachers had improved and local boards had gained greater capacities through consolidations, ministries of education could devolve greater responsibilities to local levels and afford teachers a greater role in curriculum and assessment.

In central educational administration, Newfoundland converged with the rest of the country and eliminated its binary system in favour of individual ministerial responsibility. The province drew direct lessons on educational administration from the other Canadian jurisdictions and used this evidence to justify the new policy change. In teacher education, learning from the example set by the western provinces, Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island transferred the responsibility for teacher training to the universities. I suggested that the decision seemed motivated in part by a fear of being left behind those that had already made the change. The perception in some circles was the university-led teacher education programs increased the excellence of teachers. Therefore, decision-makers needed to choose between either maintaining the status quo and risk erosion in the quality instruction in their public schools compared with other jurisdictions or adopting the new innovation. The drive for higher standards eventually won out, and interprovincial similarity in teacher education policy was re-established.

The principles of composite education were widely implemented in secondary schools across the country. It appeared that the federal government’s efforts at soft
coercion to encourage particular principles in secondary education were largely ineffective. To be sure, federal funds were crucial to the general expansion of secondary education; however, its attempt to dictate policy prescriptions did not bear fruit as the province heeded the advice of education experts and followed the precepts of composite schooling.

A majority of the provinces also ended the practice of universal exams. I argued that the policies of external exams were not consonant with the new educational philosophy that had gained hegemonic standing in the minds of Canadian educators. Therefore, following Ontario’s lead, one by one most of the provinces put a stop to high stakes mandatory tests.

The tide of general trends, however, did not preclude the possibility of distinctive pathways and new policy experiments. Newfoundland, Québec, and Saskatchewan, maintained some form of mandatory examinations in opposition to the national movement to eliminate standardized tests. I argued that this policy variation did not arise from either differences in the problems or educational philosophies of these provinces, but from differences in the internal policy context. In addition, Québec created a unique form of secondary education that blended features from the composite and partite models. This alternative model created a lasting policy legacy that continues to distinguish the province today. Finally, led by New Brunswick, a number of provinces east of the Ottawa River broke from the long-standing model of education finance in favor of full state funding. Therefore, a marked policy divergence had appeared that stemmed from differences in the fiscal capacities and educational regimes of the provinces.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Standardizing Canadian Education
(1982-2007)

If the U.S school system resembles a homeless beggar on the streets of New York, Canada’s expensive counterpart defensively limps along in a state of humiliation and confusion. Our schools are far from what people expect them to be. . . My anger, which admittedly drives this polemic, comes from my awareness as a father of two boys that some parents have totally abandoned the public school system while others have been shut out of it by administrators.  

Throughout the evolution of Canadian elementary and secondary education, we have seen the pendulum swing between centralization and decentralization of education policies and practices. Through the foundation and expansion of the education enterprise, policy actors across most of the provinces dedicated themselves to establishing public, secular control over schooling housed in departments of education. In the previous period, we saw provincial decision-makers and education professionals attempt to transform their elementary and secondary sectors from ones of uniform and rigid practices to individualized programs tailored to the distinctive needs of students. Beginning in 1982, the pendulum started to swing again. Faced with mounting declarations that standards were declining in public schools and a general lack of accountability in the public sector, provincial decision-makers moved to regain control over public education. Provincial decision-makers thus introduced measures to standardize elementary and secondary education within their own jurisdictions and collaborate on a variety of interprovincial initiatives.

Whereas the previous period saw equity as a leading goal that propelled the direction of education policy informed by the prescriptions of child-centred educationalists, “quality emerged as the focal priority in the 1980s.”  

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720 Andrew Nikiforuk, School’s Out: The Catastrophe in Public Education and What We Can Do About It (Toronto: MacFarlane Walter and Ross, 1993), xi.
education officials, and members of the public became committed to a new “educational orthodoxy” geared towards improving the economy by tightening the connections between schools, employment, trade, and productivity. With quality as the new priority, policy actors needed to reconfigure instruments and settings to achieve this alternative goal. In broad strokes this meant centralizing aspects of decision-making and introducing new tools for accountability. This imperative for quality and standardization permeated all aspects of the education sector, from administration right through to the teaching profession.

Changes to the education sector were incorporated within a broader government-wide agenda of reform. Public confidence in government and public services appeared to be on the decline and there was a growing perception that citizens no longer trusted the political institutions of the state. Citizens, stakeholders, and elected officials criticized the public service as an inefficient and ineffective tool to accomplish collective goals and, in the words of B. Guy Peters, it became “fashionable to malign government, and the people working in it, and to point out gleefully all their failures, real and imagined.” The prescribed remedy for these administrative shortfalls emerged in the philosophy of New Public Management (NPM).

This period proved to be a tumultuous one for the education sector. The changes to the sector are summarized below in Table 7.1. Full state funding was taken up by eight of the ten provinces, all of the provinces developed their own internal assessment programs, and all of the provinces introduced outcomes-based education (OBE). During this period we find the first evidence of formal interprovincial cooperation in the education sector. All ten provinces participated in an initiative to create a pan-Canadian assessment program and began to cooperate in curriculum development. Regional curriculum initiatives appeared on both sides of the country.

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with the four provinces of Atlantic Canada moving to full harmonization of their curriculum. Many of these transformations in the policies and the processes in the education sector emerged from changes in the policy climate, presented in detail below.

Table 7.1: Policy Developments in Canadian Elementary and Secondary Education, 1982-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Education</th>
<th>Policy Developments</th>
<th>Type of Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Intermediary</td>
<td>- 10 provinces consolidate boards</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces introduce minority language boards</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>- 8 provinces with full state funding</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2 provinces with shared cost</td>
<td>- No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>- Elementary</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces with OBL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>- Testing</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 9 provinces have exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assessment</td>
<td>- Convergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10 provinces have assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Profession</td>
<td>- Certification</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2 provinces create professional association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2 provinces recognize qualifications</td>
<td>- Divergence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1 The Policy Climate
The 1980s ushered in a new set of priorities and objectives for state and societal actors alike. The efficacy of the education system and the broader public service met intense criticism. Policy actors and the public moved away from the 1960s era of identity
politics towards a period dominated by the discourse of efficiency and effectiveness. Within this swirling ideational climate, important changes in the relations and connections among the provinces developed. These changes to both the ideational and relational context altered the policy climate and influenced both the transmission of ideas and the potential for subnational policy similarity to emerge.

Reacting to concerns about “the widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system”, in August 1981, US Secretary of Education T.H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education to assess the quality of teaching and learning in American schools. In 1983, the Commission released its report, entitled A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. It determined that America’s “once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world.” The Commissioners attributed the decline to four general factors: the directionless content of public schooling (referred to as the “curricular smorgasbord”); low expectations and demands put on students; limited time spent in the schools and classrooms; and weak teacher preparation programs and a general unacceptability in the professional working life of teachers. To rectify these problems, the Commission recommended a number of changes, which included: the creation of a New Basics curriculum; the adoption of more rigorous and measurable standards and higher expectations for student conduct; a longer school day; and a seven-part plan to improve teaching standards. A Nation at Risk garnered international

726 Ibid.
727 The Commission found that too many teachers were being drawn from the bottom quarter of graduating high school and college students and that many of new teachers, particularly in the math, science, and English were not actually qualified to teach those subjects. The Commission suggested that part of the problem lay in the low salaries being offered and the lack of influence teachers had over their teaching resources: “The average salary after 12 years of teaching is only $17,000 per year, and many teachers are required to supplement their income with part-time and summer employment. In addition, individual teachers have little influence in such critical professional decisions as, for example, textbook selection.” Given these conditions, in the opinion of the Commissioners, it was difficult to attract top candidates to the profession.
attention and became a keystone in calls for education reform, particularly among Anglo-American democracies.\textsuperscript{728}

The OECD’s Directorate for Education further reinforced the cause of educational reform. The Directorate had committed itself to identifying best practices in education and disseminating them across the member states. The Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) continued its work pioneering educational research, uncovering emerging trends, and promoting new educational agenda items.\textsuperscript{729} The primary message that emanated from the OECD was that states needed to refocus their educational efforts and forge stronger connections between education programs and the economy through investments in key sectors and the development of human capital. Concomitantly, the OECD encouraged countries to “make learning a lifelong activity, rather than concentrated around the years of initial education.”\textsuperscript{730} As active participants in the OECD through the CMEC, the Canadian provinces were exposed to critiques and general trends that moved across the international community.

Beyond the research and policy agenda promoted by the OECD, in 2000 the Directorate for Education launched the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Experts in the OECD recognized that “valid and reliable measures on outcomes at the student, institutional and system levels are critical . . . International surveys of educational achievement can be a valuable instrument for education policy analysis.”\textsuperscript{731} The Programme was designed to assess how well students near the end of compulsory education had acquired “some of the knowledge and skills essential for full participation in society.”\textsuperscript{732} To date, three cycles of the assessment have been


\textsuperscript{729} Publications released by the CERI included: connecting education with the labour market, school leadership and school improvement, curricular reform, life-long learning, introducing information technology in the classroom, and citizenship education.


\textsuperscript{731} Ibid, 39.

completed in reading, mathematics, and science. Each province provides a representative sample so that Canadian decision-makers and experts can use the data to gain a comprehensive and comparable picture of the state of education in each jurisdiction. Many provincial politicians and education officials highlight the significance of PISA as a crucial evaluative tool that facilitates the dissemination of information across the subnational jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{733}

The agenda of educational reform developed beneath a wave of administrative reform that targeted the entire public sector. Labeled by Christopher Hood as New Public Management (NPM),\textsuperscript{734} its themes included:

- a shift away from traditional bureaucracies to loosely coupled, quasi-autonomous units and competitively tendered services;
- a shift away from an emphasis on development and investment towards cost-cutting;
- allowing public managers greater “freedom to manage” according to private sector corporate practice;
- and a shift away from classic command-and-control regulation towards self-regulation.\textsuperscript{735}

NPM promoted a business approach to government, an improvement of public service delivery and seeing citizens as clients, a general reduction in the size of government bureaucracies, and the idea of choice and improved accountability in government services.\textsuperscript{736} By 1995, the OECD argued that NPM constituted a “new paradigm for public management . . . aimed at fostering a performance-oriented culture in a less

\textsuperscript{733} Provincial decision-makers take note of the performance of other jurisdictions. During the course of interviews, for example, many respondents made mention of the strong performance that Saskatchewan recorded on the equity indicator of the most recent round of PISA. These respondents indicated that they were either planning to or had been reviewing the policy changes that Saskatchewan had implemented to improve their results. [Phone Interview, April 10\textsuperscript{th} 2008; Personal Interview, May 13\textsuperscript{th} 2008; Phone Interview, May 14\textsuperscript{th} 2008; Phone Interview, June 25\textsuperscript{th} 2008].


centralized public sector.” Particularly influential among the Anglo-American democracies, the discourse and policy prescriptions of NPM rose on the Canadian political agenda throughout the 1990s.

Many of the themes of NPM penetrated the education sector and influenced the direction of policy reform. NPM reinforced the notion that policy makers needed to improve the efficiency and accountability of the sector while simultaneously maintaining (or augmenting) the flexibility and responsiveness of the public system. Among other things, this buttressed the trend in curriculum policy for central governments to loosen “hold over inputs, opportunity and educational content” in favour of directing “attention to the specification of goals for education and the setting of performance standards for students, schools and education systems as a whole.”

In 1982, a revolution occurred in the Canadian legal framework. Together with nine of the ten provinces, the federal government patriated the Canadian constitution and ratified the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter established a system of nation-wide rights, where Canadian citizens were now empowered to demand access to common programs and standards across various areas of public policy that created a momentum towards centralization. The Charter explicitly included the guarantee of mobility and reinforced the limited “common market” clause in section 121 of the

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740 Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Education at a Glance, 39.
Constitution Act, 1867.\textsuperscript{743} The Charter thus intensified the constitutional bonds among the provinces that had been first established in 1867.

Included among the sections was a clause dedicated to the education sector. Under the terms of Section 23, “where the numbers warranted”, English or French linguistic minority populations of the province in which they resided were guaranteed the right to educate their children in their language in publicly funded schools. For many provinces, this provision confirmed existing practices. For others, provincial decision makers needed to create minority language schools and comply with the provisions of the Charter. And all the provinces, including those that already had minority language programs, faced mounting pressure from parents and citizens to reconfigure educational administration and include formal representation for minority language groups in school boards and the public sector. Because of the Charter, all ten provinces created separate school boards to administer minority language schooling.

Economic relations between the federal and provincial governments saw important changes that had contradictory implications. Starting in 1976, to reduce its fiscal burdens, the federal government disconnected the value of its transfers from actual provincial spending.\textsuperscript{744} In 1990, the federal government imposed a unilateral ceiling on payments to the richer provinces under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), colloquially referred to as the “cap-on-CAP”.\textsuperscript{745} The cap-on-CAP sparked a provincial legal challenge led by British Columbia. The BC government argued that the federal government could not change its fiscal arrangements without first obtaining the consent.


\textsuperscript{745} The Canada Assistance Plan was established in 1966 to allow the federal government to provide funds for provincially administered social assistance programs. While not used for education directly, the cap-on-CAP had important implications for education finance by reducing the overall fiscal capacities of the provinces. What is more, the cap-on-CAP arrived just at the beginning of a severe recession that exponentially intensified the financial burdens for the provinces. The cap-on-CAP thus had spillover effects whereby the provinces were forced to reduce their expenditures on education. For more information on this, see: Paul A.R. Hobson and France St-Hilaire, ‘The Evolution of Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements: Putting Humpty Together Again’ \textit{Canada: The State of the Federation 1999/2000 Towards a New Mission Statement for Canadian Fiscal Federalism} Harvey Lazar, Ed. (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 159-188; Michael Baker, A. Abigail Payne, and Michael Smart, ‘An empirical study of matching grants: the ‘cap on CAP’’ \textit{Journal of Public Economics} 72, 2 (May 1999): 269-288.
of the provinces. In its decision, the Supreme Court disagreed. The Court ruled that the federal government did not act illegally and was under no obligation to gain the consent of the provinces in its fiscal affairs.\footnote{Reference Re Canada Assistance Plan (B.C.), [1991] 2 S.C.R. 525.} The Supreme Court confirmed that the provinces could not rely on consistent funds from the federal government and thus increased the fiscal uncertainties for the Canadian subnational governments.

The significance of the cap-on-CAP was quickly overshadowed. In 1995, the federal government declared that the time had come “to complete the gradual evolution away from cost-sharing to block funding of programs in areas of provincial responsibility”,\footnote{Department of Finance, \textit{Budget Plan} (Ottawa: Department of Finance, 27 February 1995), 52 – quoted in Hobson and St-Hilaire, ‘The Evolution of Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements’, 167.} and introduced the Canadian Social Transfer (CST) that later became the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). Couched by federal officials as a way to free the provinces from unnecessary rules and entanglements with the national government, the CST also imposed substantial cuts in federal transfers over the next few years that amounted to almost 5\% of total annual provincial spending.\footnote{Joseph Facal, ‘Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations in Canada: Understanding the Failure of SUFA from a Quebec Perspective’, \textit{SIPP Public Policy Paper No. 23} (April 2005), 2. [On-line publication] Available at: \url{http://www.uregina.ca/sipp/documents/pdf/PPP32_Facal.pdf} [accessed on August 27, 2008].} The federal government carried out all of these actions without consulting the provinces.

Disturbed by the loss of stable funding for provincial programs, the provinces began to ask for “greater decentralization through more autonomous tax policy and a more secure, rules-based relationship with the federal government.”\footnote{Doug Brown, ‘Fiscal Federalism: The New Equilibrium between Equity and Efficiency’, \textit{Canadian Federalism: Performance, Effectiveness, Efficiency} Herman Bakvis and Grace Skogstad, Eds. (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2002), 69.} Their efforts culminated in the ratification of the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) in 1999. The SUFA attempted to clarify the roles of the two orders of government in health care, social services, post-secondary education, social assistance and training signed by the federal government, nine provinces and the territories.

In spite of the efforts of the two orders of government, the subsequent evaluation of the Agreement has been less than glowing. First, Québec refused to approve the Agreement. The Government of Québec indicated that it would only accept the SUFA if it included the unconditional right for any province to opt out with
full financial compensation if it wanted to assume responsibility in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. At the annual premiers’ conference in Saskatoon in August 1998, the other provinces had agreed to this principle and presented a united front to the federal government. However, in later negotiations, the other nine provinces dropped the opt-out clause and chose to ratify the SUFA without Québec.

On its own, Québec’s exclusion was a significant black mark for the Agreement. However, beyond the isolation of Québec, many experts of Canadian politics have questioned the effectiveness of the SUFA. They argue that not only did the Agreement fail to take into account Québec’s view, the SUFA also failed to satisfactorily clarify the roles of the orders of government in social policy. The result was that the SUFA did not create useful rules to address the balance of fiscal powers in the Canadian federation and the fanfare that surrounded the ratification of the Agreement was premature.

These changes in fiscal federalism weakened the economic connections among the provincial governments and increased their financial uncertainties. Federal support for social programs run by the provinces had diminished and the provinces had little recourse to oppose federal unilateralism. Some of this destabilization in economic relations was nevertheless counterbalanced by two factors.

All the governments of Canada, both federal and provincial, reaffirmed their commitments to equalization. During the negotiations to patriate the Constitution, “Canadian governments and legislatures made a commitment to the equality of regional economic opportunity and to the principle of equalization payments in Section 36 of the Constitution Act of 1982.”

Unlike other federal-provincial transfers,

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753 Despite considerable fanfare, including some who heralded the SUFA as a transformative agent for Canadian federalism, the impact of the Agreement to date has been minimal. [David Cameron and Richard Simeon, ‘Intergovernmental Relations in Canada: The Emergence of Collaborative Federalism’ Publius: The Journal of Federalism 32, 2 (2002): 56, 57.]
equalization payments “were spared the relentless cuts in either the growth rate or the actual cash of intergovernmental transfers after 1981.”755 Less affluent provincial governments, therefore, were not forced to disproportionately reduce education spending compared with their more wealthy counterparts and similarity in the levels of educational investments was maintained (see Appendix 8). Had equalization been cut, provincial investments in education would likely have diverged with richer provinces accelerating ahead and poorer provinces falling further behind. 756

In 1994, the federal and provincial governments ratified the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). The AIT included a wide range of commitments subsumed beneath the seminal objective for: “Parties to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services and investments within Canada, and to establish an open, efficient and stable domestic market.”757 While the AIT committed the governments to the principle of strengthening economic integration, due to the principle of parliamentary sovereignty, “it has no direct legal effect on legislatures at the provincial or federal levels.”758 Notwithstanding its non-binding status, the AIT implanted a normative obligation among the governments of Canada to minimize the barriers to interprovincial trade and mobility and increase the strength of the economic union.759

The CMEC had superseded the Canadian Education Association as the preeminent inter-governmental organization in the education sector. Interestingly, despite the caustic political relations between Québec and the rest of Canada, Québec’s ministry of education maintained its commitments to the CMEC. In addition to the

755 Ibid, 73.
756 In his assessment of education investment in the United States, Mark Carl Rom reveals this type of policy divergence where more generous states become more generous and less generous states become less generous. He argues that it appears that some states “are willing to increase educational spending, perhaps to increase their competitive edge.” However, I would argue that this divergence does not stem for a difference in “willingness” but a lack of effective equalization in the United States. [Mark Carl Rom, ‘Policy Races in the American States’, Racing to the Bottom: Provincial Interdependence in the Canadian Federation Kathryn Harrison, Ed. (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 229-256].
757 Agreement on Internal Trade, Chapter 1, Article 100, 2.
758 Eugene Beaulieu, Jim Gaisford, and Jim Higginson, Interprovincial Trade Barriers in Canada: How Far Have We Come? Where Should We Go? (Calgary: The Van Horne Institute, 2003), 35.
pan-Canadian association, initiatives to enhance regional organizational bonds began to emerge. In eastern Canada, the ministers of education of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, created the Maritime Provinces Education Foundation (MPEF) in 1982. On September 20th, 1995, the MPEF was replaced by the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF), and now included the province of Newfoundland. In 2004, the APEF was re-constituted into the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) and formally includes both ministers of education and ministers of training from the four signatory provinces.

On the opposite side of the country, assisted by the Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat (CICS), the Western Premiers’ Conferences began meeting with increased regularity. Increased connections among the premiers tricked down through the separate departments, and ministers of education in western Canada also regularized their encounters. However, in contrast to the developments in eastern Canada, the ministers of education in western Canada have not established a permanent secretariat to coordinate their policy activities.

The Canadian provinces thus experienced a number of changes to their legal, economic, and organizational connections. What, if any, were the changes to their cultural connections? It is clear that Québec and the rest of Canada continued to drift apart. The patriation of the Constitution was achieved without Québec’s consent and future efforts to bring Québec back into the constitutional fold failed. Moreover, in 1995, Québec came within a whisker of separating from the rest of Canada when the results of the Québec referendum came in at 49.42 % in favour of secession: “Quebec’s relationship with the rest of Canada in the second half of the twentieth century has been largely shaped by a culture of antagonism and resistance that owed much to Quebec’s multifaceted but sustained bid for national self-affirmation.” However, as I will demonstrate below, despite these corrosive dynamics in the higher order politics, relations between Québec and the rest of Canada in the education sector remained positive.

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7.2 Education Finance

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the issue of education finance dominated the education agenda. Faced with declining revenues, rising costs, and shrinking birthrates, the provinces that had retained the shared-cost model of education finance began to reconsider their options and draw upon the lessons from the eastern provinces. By the 1990s, eight of the ten provinces had implemented full state funding. However, Manitoba and Saskatchewan decided to maintain the traditional shared-cost arrangement. What explains these inconsistent patterns of policy convergence? I start with the provinces that converged.

In 1974, the Report of the Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations (The Graham Report) in Nova Scotia found that there were “considerable and unacceptable variations in the level of education services from municipality to municipality.” Like the intra-provincial disparities recorded in other provinces, the financing and provision of education in Nova Scotia exhibited internal differences that compromised equity in the province. The Graham Report, moreover, echoed the sentiments of other provincial commissions, when it stated that, “education is a service of general concern to provincial society as a whole, and not merely to the particular community or region in which a student resides or attends school.” It was therefore critical for the government to ensure that high quality education be made available to all citizens of the province, regardless of their place of residence. The findings of the Graham Report were re-affirmed by the Royal Commission on Public Education Finance (the Walker Report), released in 1981. The Walker Report advised the provincial government to embark on a round of district consolidations, establish mandatory provincial levies, and create a detailed foundation program endowed by the province.

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761 Declining birthrates do not translate into cost savings for education. Capital expenditures, such as school plant operations, remain the same even if enrolment is down; fewer students does not translate into reductions in teachers’ salaries; and administrative costs are similarly unaffected by declining birthrates. Costs therefore remain high even with fewer students.
Following the tabling of the Walker Report, the Nova Scotia government decided to incrementally centralize education finance in the province. By 1990, the province was providing more than 80 percent of the necessary funds to support education programs leaving less than 17 percent up to the local ratepayers. Since the province had set up a uniform tax rate, full financial control was in the hands of the central government. Nova Scotia thus implemented a *de facto* system of full state funding.

On the opposite side of the country, in the early 1980s, British Columbia met with a significant economic decline. To respond to the economic downturn, the BC government introduced a series of fiscal reforms to curb public spending and introduced four changes in education finance. First, the government shifted non-residential property tax from the local to the provincial level. Second, the province implemented a resource cost model with the education program set by the province and costs determined by a survey of local market conditions. The third component of the reforms was a government-imposed system for reviewing wage settlements in the

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765 The reaction begs the question: Why didn’t the Nova Scotia government implement the recommendations of the Graham Commission? The problem lay in the scope of the changes proposed in the Report. Beyond centralizing education finance, the Graham Report called for a complete restructuring of the Department of Education and the introduction of school councils to decentralize authority away from the province; elimination of the graded elementary and secondary system in favour of individualized instruction; and the establishment of separate vocational schools as specialized training centres. Because these recommendations demanded change across the entire sector, it would have been impossible for the government to implement one without the others. Moreover, the recommendations issued a fundamental challenge to all members of the policy community in the province, from the bureaucrats through the administrators and to the teachers. Taken together, these two factors encouraged the government to shelve the report. Aware of the negative reactions to the Graham Report, the Walker Commission focused exclusively on education finance and timed the release of its report a few months before an election. The sitting Government simply added the recommendations as a component of its election campaign, which gave the Government the mandate to implement the reforms following the election. For more on these two commissions, see: P.J. Atherton, ‘Education: Radical Reform in Nova Scotia’, *Canadian Public Policy* 1, 3 (Summer 1975): 384-392; James E. Skivington, ‘Nova Scotia’s Walker Report’, *Education Canada* 22 (Winter 1982): 17-21; and Eric W. Riker, ‘Nova Scotia’s New Deal in School Finance: The “Walker Report” as a Response to a System in Decline’, *The Costs of Controlling the Costs of Education in Canada* Proceedings of a Symposium on Educational Finance in Canada at the 1983 Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal April 12, 1983 (Toronto: OISE, 1983), 65-83.


767 At the time, this RMC model was gaining ground in the United States, advocated by such experts as Chambers and Parrish, financial consultants from California. The RMC model had been adopted by a number of US states, but in Canada, it had only been considered by Manitoba and Ontario.
public sector to control increases in teachers’ salaries. Finally, the government unilaterally suspended the right of school boards to levy taxes to raise local revenues above the level established by the province.

On paper, BC continued to use a cost-sharing arrangement for educational finance. The province covered 60 percent of the costs, shared 35 percent depending on local wealth, and required the local boards to independently cover the remaining 5 percent. However, since the province determined all the rates and set the expenditure levels, like Nova Scotia, the system was a *de facto* form of full provincial funding.768 Local autonomy was therefore circumscribed under the reforms implemented by the province and BC became the first province west of Québec to adopt this model.

Over the next ten years, provincial financing arrangements remained stable. At the end of the 1980s, however, state and non-state actors increasingly questioned the fiscal health of the provinces. Economists and politicians deemed ballooning deficits as dampers on economic development,769 and provincial ministers of finance needed to find a way to cut spending and limit the rising costs of social programs. Ministers of education across the country were also aware of growing concerns among taxpayers regarding the effectiveness and accountability of the education system:

> Recent years have witnessed the strengthening, in Canada and elsewhere, of a trend to translate traditional concerns about educational quality into concrete plans for evaluation. Such actions, generally considered under the heading of accountability, are frequently linked to taxpayer concern about the cost-effectiveness of school systems, and to employer dissatisfaction with the skills, knowledge and attitudes of their graduates.770

Debates on the system of education finance therefore rose on the political agenda in Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

Under the leadership of Ralph Klein, the Alberta government embarked on a complete restructuring of education finance. During the debates on the proposed legislation, the Minister of Education Halver Jonson declared that:

> The current system is inequitable both in terms of the tax burden borne by the residential and nonresidential property owners across the province and with

respect to the moneys individual school boards are able to spend to provide provincially mandated education. Local expenditure mill rates vary from 3 mills to 18 mills with a resulting difference in expenditure per child ranging from $4,010 to $21,346.\footnote{Alberta Hansard, April 12 1994, 1135.}

The minister cited recommendations received through public consultations, which demanded that: “changes in education and spending reductions must achieve efficiencies in the administration of the education system and minimize the effect on the student in the classroom.”\footnote{Ibid, 1135.} Minister Jonson also argued that full state funding would be an effective system in Alberta given that it “is a model of funding used by the majority of the provinces in Canada.”\footnote{Ibid, 1136.} Jonson thus decided to justify the policy change in light of developments in the other provinces inspired by the example set by the other jurisdictions.

Policy actors in Ontario considered the same option almost simultaneously. In 1994, the Bégin Commission stated:

> Equity in education requires financial equity. Although the very complex issue of education funding in general was not a specific part of our mandate, we are convinced that our goal of providing an excellent education for all learners cannot become a reality unless the way education is funded in Ontario is changed radically.\footnote{Royal Commission on Learning, \textit{For the Love of Learning: Report of the Royal Commission on Learning}, Volume 4 (Toronto: The Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 1994), 126 [hereafter The Bégin Commission].}

The Commission found that provincial school boards collectively raised more than half of their total revenues from property taxes. The remaining funds were provided by the province through a series of grants earmarked for specific purposes. According to its research, the figures masked significant disparities between the local boards.\footnote{Ibid, 128.} To rectify these circumstances, the Commission called for the centralization of education finance in the province.\footnote{Ibid, 132-133.}

In 1997, led by Conservative Premier Mike Harris, the Ontario government decided to implement full provincial funding. When introducing the legislation in the
provincial assembly, Minister of Education John Snobelen stated that: “Ontario has not kept pace with the other provinces or countries. The Globe and Mail recently described Ontario as the caboose at the end of the education train.”\textsuperscript{777} The Ontario government was also motivated by a desire to equalize the financial burden carried by provincial ratepayers. In the words of Minister Snobelen:

A uniform rate structure for residential property taxes is fair and is consistent with this government’s plan to ensure that students across the province have equal access to high-quality education. It makes sense to pay tax at the same rate for a common service that benefits us all. This approach would solve the problem of spiralling (sic) education taxes. School boards would no longer need to be in the taxing business.”\textsuperscript{778}

Under the terms of Bill 160, the Ontario Government ended the practice of school board taxation and fully centralized education funding in the province.

What factors led to the diffusion and implementation of full state funding? Convergence on the policy was not simply the product of independent problem solving by policy actors. Connective networks among the provinces facilitated the spread of the model of full state funding. Policy actors, facing similar problems, looked to each other to find an appropriate solution. The evidence presented here suggests that decision-makers intentionally drew lessons from their provincial counterparts in other jurisdictions. The consequence of this was that eight of the ten provinces converged on a common system of education finance.

In spite of this national trend to full state funding, Manitoba and Saskatchewan continue to use the shared-cost model. The persistence of the shared-cost model in the two provinces cannot be explained by differences in the identified problems. Like the other eight provinces, Manitoba and Saskatchewan had internal variations in the revenue raising capacities of local boards.\textsuperscript{779} As the scope of education expanded, both provinces endured comparable difficulties covering the rising costs.\textsuperscript{780} Manitoba and Saskatchewan saw similar deteriorations in their birthrates that reduced the numbers of

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\textsuperscript{777} Ontario Hansard, September 22 1997, 12252.
\textsuperscript{778} Snobelen, Statements by the Ministry and Responses, Ontario Hansard, September 22 1997, 12253.
\textsuperscript{779} Aldo Santin, ‘Panel focused on inequities’ Winnipeg Free Press (04 February 1995), City Page.
\end{footnotesize}
children in schools but did not decrease the education costs overall.\textsuperscript{781} And, reports from both provinces indicated that there were similar questions on the accountability of school boards for public monies.\textsuperscript{782} The problems in Manitoba and Saskatchewan were therefore akin to those in the other provinces. Policy actors in the two provinces, moreover, were well acquainted with the actions taken in the other provinces.\textsuperscript{783} Provincial stakeholders in Manitoba even actively promoted the installation of full provincial funding.\textsuperscript{784} Given these conditions that would seem to encourage convergence, why have the two Prairie Provinces resisted the policy change?

Part of the answer can be traced back to a government report from Saskatchewan in 1933:

By far the largest measure of school support comes from local taxation. This is as it should be. It is one of the essential features of our democratic order that our citizens should, in large measure, control the tax rate and the expenditures of money raised locally. So long as the present system of school districts is continued, local support should remain a fundamental principle of the financial administration of schools.\textsuperscript{785}

Manitoba and Saskatchewan have long demonstrated their commitment to local control. Whenever either province considered policy options that would substantially re-balance the allocation of authority in the education sector rather than enacting change through legislative fiat (as was the means in the other provinces) both Manitoba and Saskatchewan put the issues to provincial plebiscites. While the commitment to democratic tests may have had a dampening effect on the potential for radical change,


\textsuperscript{782} Paul Samyn, ‘Manness puts kids to the test’ \textit{Winnipeg Free Press} (25 January 1995), City Page.

\textsuperscript{783} Policy actors’ awareness of these activities in Ontario seems to have influenced Saskatchewan in the opposite direction. Reflecting on the actions of the Harris government, Al Klassen, president of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association observed: “Finally, as we've just witnessed in Ontario, when education comes off the property tax base, inevitably, something else goes on. In Ontario, those who wanted education removed thought they got the monkey off their back. Little did they suspect it would be replaced with a gorilla.” [\textit{The School Trustee} (Saskatchewan School Boards Association) 2, 1 (January 1997).


\textsuperscript{785} The Reid Report, 1933, 24.
it nevertheless respected the principle of democratic populism and established a distinctive educational regime in the two provinces.

The implementation of full provincial funding also requires a willingness among political actors to confront resistance from citizens and school boards alike. For the Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments, however, centralizing education finance went squarely against the interests of their main electorate. The case of Manitoba is instructive.

The primary voter base for the Gary Filmon government in Manitoba was the rural communities that treasured their local autonomy. The Filmon government was reticent to challenge its main supporters and extinguish the power of local districts to levy taxes. Determined to reduce the provincial deficit, in 1994, Filmon decided to freeze school funding for five years that eliminated 600 teaching positions across the province, or approximately 5 percent of the total teaching force. School boards also had to raise property taxes to try to sustain their local programs. Consequently, between 1994 and 1999, “local education property taxes in Manitoba rose overall by more than $90 million, nearly 30 percent, and the province’s share of funding dropped from 66 percent in 1994 to 60 percent in 1999.”

In 2000, the NDP took office in Manitoba, having campaigned on a promise to restore the proportion of provincial funding to pre-Filmon budget levels. Despite the lobbying efforts of the MTS, however, the new government did not publicly

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786 Richard Johnston and his co-authors characterize this interpretation of referendums as the “voters as curmudgeons” argument. It is the idea that voters may be unwilling to accept even modest changes that are necessary to realize their own preferences. For more on this, see: Richard Johnston, André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, and Neil Nevitte, *The Challenge of Direct Democracy: The 1992 Canadian Referendum* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), Chapter One.


791 In opposition to Filmon’s budget cuts, the MTS developed a position on school funding inspired by the policy changes in other provinces. The MTS encouraged the government to implement full state funding, similar to the other Canadian provinces. [Manitoba Teachers’ Society, *The Retreat from Equity: A Study of the Impact of the Public School Funding Model of the Government of Manitoba – The Schools Finance Program 1992-1999* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Teachers’ Society 2000)].
contemplate introducing full provincial funding. Like the Filmon government, the NDP government recognized that it would face resistance from its own voter base. Officials within the department of education, moreover, were concerned about the potential outcry from “those districts that would be the biggest losers.”\textsuperscript{792} Backlash from key districts and negative public opinion would undermine the long-term electoral chances of the NDP government and compromise its capacity to govern. Beyond these societal interests, the implementation of full state funding often requires a large increase in educational expenditures and a concomitant increase in income or sales tax, or further cuts to education programming in the province.\textsuperscript{793} Given the political climate of the day, neither option was appealing to the new government.

This analysis of the politics of education finance in Manitoba can be easily applied to Saskatchewan. Influenced by similar electoral concerns, political parties in Saskatchewan were cool to the idea of full state funding. One former minister of education from Saskatchewan reported that he considered implementing full state funding based on the system that had been implemented in Alberta and Ontario. However, seeing the political conflicts that stemmed from the decision in the two provinces, “We decided it simply wasn’t the best option for our government to pursue. The citizens of Saskatchewan are committed to local control and we knew that reclaiming the power of local taxation wouldn’t fly.”\textsuperscript{794} Unlike teachers in Manitoba, moreover, the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation never endorsed a move to full provincial funding.\textsuperscript{795} Even if some elected leaders and education officials wanted to change the system of education finance, they did not have allies within the policy community. The policy context in Saskatchewan was therefore not conducive for the model of full provincial funding.

This continued policy divergence highlights how policies that diffuse across provincial borders do not encounter a clean slate. Rather, the policy legacies and educational regime at work within each province mediates the introduction of a new

\textsuperscript{792} Levin, Governing Education, 134.
\textsuperscript{793} Personal Interview, November 12\textsuperscript{th} 2007.
\textsuperscript{794} Personal Interview, May 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2008.
idea. For eight of the provinces, full funding demonstrated the necessary congruence with the existing conditions. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, however, the model of full state funding failed to resonate in the parameters of the active educational regime. The result is that the two Prairie Provinces have maintained of a distinctive policy pathway, despite being exposed to the policy trend at work in Canada and experiencing similar policy problems with the rest of the provinces.

7.3 Provincial Exams and Pan-Canadian Assessments

By the 1980s, provincial governments had begun to reconsider their decisions to end universal exams for high school students. Policy actors, aware of the criticisms raised against child-centred education in the United States, saw signs the Canadian public believed public education was in decline. Following up on surveys it had conducted in 1979 and 1984, the Canadian Education Association commissioned a poll of Canadian public opinion in 1990. The survey found that while 29 percent of Canadians believed that their schools had improved, 42 percent of respondents had not seen much change and 20 percent thought that schools had worsened. Business interests and expert panels also voiced concerns about the quality of Canadian education. In 1988, the Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy pronounced that illiteracy costs Canada approximately $10 billion a year, and a report commissioned by the Toronto Board of Education found that Canadian students do less homework than students in most European countries. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney emphasized these apprehensions when he said that the public education system was “shortchanging many

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796 These perceptions were not uniform across the provinces. In surveys from 1983 and 1989 respectively, a significant majority of Newfoundland residents reported that they thought the quality of education had improved in the province when compared to the education they received. For more information on this, see: P.J Warren, Public Attitudes Towards Education in Newfoundland and Labrador (St. John’s, NL: Department of Educational Administration, 1983); Task Force on Mathematics and Science Education/Task Force on Educational Finance, Public Opinion on Education: A Newfoundland Survey Research Report # 7 (June 1989).


799 John Ferri, ‘Canadian students hit books less than Europeans, study says’, The Toronto Star 10 August 1986, A2.
Canadians and imposing a severe burden on our national competitiveness.” Reports also suggested that high school education was not preparing students for the challenges of university learning and that teachers had been artificially inflating grades. Finally, the practice of universal exams dovetailed with the wider priority of increasing accountability in the public service. These factors raised the issue universal exams on the political and policy agenda.

The Alberta government was the first province to reinstate mandatory Grade 12 exams in 1984. The exams covered three years of material in English, history, social studies, math, biology, chemistry, and physics. Throughout the 1990s, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia re-instated their Grade 12 exams and Ontario and New Brunswick created mandatory literacy exams for students in Grades 10 and 9 respectively. Nine of the ten provinces have therefore adopted the similar practice of universal exams for high school students as a means to guarantee the achievement of certain standards across the public education system. To be sure, each province has its own system and there are differences in terms of the scope and stakes of the exams. However, the majority of the provinces have converged along the common policy pathway in favour of universal exams.

Debates on standardized tests also generated interest in the idea of universal assessments. Under the leadership of Minister of Education David King, Alberta created one of the first provincial assessment programs in the 1980s:

> We created cohort tests that sampled groups of students from across the province to gather diagnostic information on the quality of education in Alberta. Results were not used for the purposes of individual grades but simply for ministry officials to see how different regions in the province were faring.

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800 Quoted in Rosemary Speirs, ‘Schools shortchanging youth of Canada, Mulroney says’, *The Toronto Star* 26 August 1989, SA2.
802 See Appendix 2 for details on these programs.
803 Prince Edward Island is the lone exception to this trend of re-introducing mandatory examinations in high schools. Unfortunately, there is no formal statement as to why the Ministry has not followed the other provinces in this policy change. However, during interviews, some respondents suggested that parents and teachers’ did not endorse the idea of mandatory exams in secondary school, seeing them as an unnecessary and ineffective use of resources given the size of the populations in the schools. [Phone Interview, April 8th 2008; Phone Interview, April 10th 2008].
804 Personal Interview, April 7th 2006.
By introducing this new program, Alberta led the assessment agenda in Canada.

The idea of a pan-Canadian assessment program arrived on the CMEC’s docket in the late 1980s. In September 1989, the CMEC approved the School Achievement Indicators Project (SAIP). The Project was designed to produce annual reports on the levels of educational attainments across Canada, with representative samples drawn from every province and territory to provide comparable data to decision-makers from coast to coast. When announcing the initiative, the CMEC declared:

Recent years have witnessed the strengthening, in Canada and elsewhere, of a trend to translate traditional concerns about educational quality into concrete plans for evaluation. Such actions, generally considered under the heading of accountability, are frequently linked to taxpayer concern about the cost-effectiveness of schools systems and to employer dissatisfaction with the skills, knowledge and attitudes of their graduates. Calls for more stringent evaluation of both school programs and student achievement have drawn responses from ministries and departments of education across Canada, and have led to consensus that the issue of quality in education needs to be addressed in a national context.

The CMEC Secretariat thus embarked on the most demanding project of its history to gain the cooperation of all the provincial and territorial governments and establish a formal pan-Canadian assessment program. Most of the provinces (including Québec) quickly signaled their willingness to participate in the program. By 1996, all the provinces and territories were fully engaged in the SAIP initiative and today, the CMEC continues operate the project through the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program.

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805 According to one source, the idea of a national testing program was almost an afterthought: “One of the senior provincial ADMs was drafting the final agenda for the annual meeting of the ministers. He thought that the current version didn’t seem particularly substantive. So, he said, “Aren’t people talking about the idea of looking at educational indicators? Why don’t we put that on the ministers’ agenda to consider?” And so, almost as a random thought, the idea of a national testing program was put to the ministers and, surprisingly, most of them liked the idea and put the Secretariat on the task.” (Phone Interview, May 24th 2007).


807 Only two provinces briefly held out. Saskatchewan was just in the process of creating its own provincial assessment program and did not wish to compromise the integrity of its project. However, by 1996, Saskatchewan decided to engage in the pan-Canadian program. In 1990, the newly elected NDP government announced that it was withdrawing Ontario from the CMEC project because it felt that more consultation was required with stakeholders and that testing needed to take better account of socio-economic and cultural differences. However, in 1992, Ontario’s Minister of Education, Dave Cooke, became the Chair of the CMEC and the province re-instated itself into the program.
(PCAP). It seems that pan-Canadian assessment was, to use Kingdon’s imagery, an idea whose time had come.  

Following the creation of the SAIP, universal assessments rose on the policy agendas of all the provinces. Proponents of the idea found support in a number of provincial commissions and political committees. For example, in general terms, the New Brunswick Commission on Excellence in Education argued:

We believe that an effective evaluation and monitoring system is essential to a strong curriculum and to excellence in education. . . Competing against high but reasonable provincial standards could help teachers and students alike to find a common cause so conspicuously absent at present from many classrooms.

Echoing these sentiments, the Ontario Bégin Commission stated: “We believe it’s absolutely essential that the progress of all students be monitored systematically and thoroughly from the very beginning of their school careers, with an eye to constant improvement both of the individual and the program.”

Nova Scotia’s Select Committee on Education moreover explicitly connected assessments with teacher accountability: “The public expects teachers to teach and be accountable. . . We should have provincial examinations at grade 6, 9, and 12. Parents should have a means of judging school results with a common measure.”

Assessment initiatives nevertheless met resistance from some quarters. Some observers questioned the efficacy of the programs that the provinces were creating and raised concerns about the structures of the assessments. Others argued that the costs of standardized tests, both in terms of financing the programs and the psychological impact on individual students, simply outweighed the potential benefits to be reaped. Finally, teachers associations generally opposed standardized testing. The CTF, for

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example, was stalwart in its opposition to large-scale testing programs and preferred to see classroom teachers conducting all assessment.\textsuperscript{814} And, while not rejecting exams and assessments altogether, the Alberta Teachers Association for example gave only conditional support for the Alberta government’s assessment initiatives.\textsuperscript{815}

It is therefore clear that divisions appeared within the policy community on the idea of universal assessments. Despite the lack of consensus, however, throughout the 1990s, most of the provinces either expanded existing assessment programs or established universal assessment programs where in 2005, Prince Edward Island became the last province to create such a program.\textsuperscript{816} What generated this complete policy convergence?

According to a survey conducted by Lenora Fagen and Dana Spurrell, decision-makers identified a number of factors that drove the establishment of provincial and pan-Canadian assessments, including:

- the present fiscal climate, which demands proof of quality and performance for dollars spent, the need for Canada’s education systems to be internationally competitive, the extensive public demand for performance and accountability, the need to improve student achievement in Canada, the need to make assessment relevant to the needs of the classroom teacher, and the issues surrounding the reliability of large-scale assessment results for high stakes purposes such as promotion, selection, and certification.\textsuperscript{817}

One former minister of education put it most succinctly: “Why did all the provinces create these programs? We were all responding to the same information that kids weren’t doing well – and so this was part of why the comparable wave of education reforms across the country with parallel options that cut across partisan lies.”\textsuperscript{818} This analysis was virtually echoed by one official from Québec, who stated: “Assessments were part of wider international trends and we were all getting the same information on

\textsuperscript{814} Personal Interview, April 21\textsuperscript{st} 2008; Bernie Froese-Germain, \textit{Standardized Testing: Undermining Equity in Education} (Ottawa: Canadian Teachers’ Federation, 1999).


\textsuperscript{816} See Appendix 3 for the details of these programs.

\textsuperscript{817} Fagen and Spurrell, \textit{Evaluating Achievement of Senior High School Students in Canada}, 51.

\textsuperscript{818} Phone Interview, May 9\textsuperscript{th} 2008.
the quality of education in Canada and knew we needed to do something about it.”

It therefore seems that similar information encouraged the provinces to adopt similar policies.

Beyond these considerations, provincial officials had also seen the value of the comparative data that were published by the CMEC. However, decision-makers and experts recognized that the SAIP could not provide comprehensive data on the strengths and weaknesses at work within each of the jurisdictions. To gain this type of information, the provinces needed to establish their own programs that focused exclusively on their students. This argument was captured in the New Brunswick report, *Schools for a New Century*:

As noted in Issues Paper 1, New Brunswick is an active participant in the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) of the Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC). This initiative is designed to assess how well thirteen- and sixteen-year old students are doing in reading, writing, and mathematics and to what extent achievement increases between thirteen and sixteen. . . . It is the Commission’s view that the SAIPs will be a valuable tool in taking a measure of the performance of New Brunswick schools compared to those in other provinces in the areas tested. They cannot, however, fill the need for universal assessment of New Brunswick students.  

Provincial policy actors thus drew upon the experience and expertise they had gained through cooperating in the SAIP and transferred the lessons when developing their own provincial assessment programs.

Exposure to the pan-Canadian program and the OECD’s PISA helped allay, or at least lessen, fears among professional educators regarding standardized assessments. The case of PEI is instructive. As noted above, PEI was the last province to create a universal assessment program. Education scholar Jerry Paquette attributes this delay to the political philosophy of the Liberal government headed by Catherine Callbeck between 1993 and 1996. However, even when the Conservative Party (a traditional...

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819 Phone Interview, May 10th 2008. (Translated from French by the author)
supporter of standardized assessments) took office in 1996, the new government did not initiate a province-wide assessment program. Instead, sources reported that professional educators in PEI were strongly opposed to any proposal for such a program. However, teachers could not prevent the Government from participating in external assessment programs, such as SAIP and PISA. According to one official:

It became evident that there was real value in this new type of province-wide assessment program. Assessment, in this form, became more acceptable in this province after the implementation of PISA and SAIP (large scale international and national assessments). In addition, we could see through our neighboring provinces some real improvements in achievement attributed to strong testing programs. We just needed time to build a culture of assessment in PEI among our teaching force.822

Gradually, provincial officials in PEI nurtured the idea and convinced teachers that assessments would not be used to rank or compare either individual students or specific schools.823 By taking the time to frame the policy in a manner consonant with the existing educational regime, the PEI government established a universal assessment program in 2005.

These developments in testing and assessment demonstrate a number of important aspects of the policy process. Interprovincial cooperation under the CMEC to create the SAIP contributed to the diffusion of ideas on universal assessments across the provinces. Through cooperation, moreover, provincial decision-makers gained valuable experiences about the challenges and benefits of universal assessments. Programs such as the SAIP helped normalize the idea of universal assessments for key stakeholders, including professional educators. It is also doubtful that the unanimous penetration of this policy trend would have occurred if the idea had not resonated with the broader political climate of the day. The ideas and principles that underpin universal assessments fit well both within the precepts of the new education paradigm that emphasized quality, and the prescriptions of New Public Management that had emerged in the 1980s. Standardized tests provided decision-makers with a tool to re-

822 Phone Interview, April 10th 2008.
orient the sector towards the new goal of quality by creating instruments that could consistently evaluate all students under a common rubric. Together, the establishment of universal testing and assessment programs created the necessary conditions for provincial decision-makers to transform elementary and secondary curriculum.

7.4 Outcomes-Based Education and Cooperative Initiatives in Curriculum

In 1988, the OECD’s Centre for Education Research and Innovation asked the CMEC to prepare a report on curriculum reform at the elementary and secondary education levels. Following its survey of provincial policies, the CMEC declared:

Today in Canada, the predominant trends in curriculum reform are toward infusing school programming with a stronger sense of direction, and concomitantly, subjecting its outcomes to a more rigorous and systematic assessment. These trends, which might be seen as representing two sides of the “back to basics” coin, embody a desire for greater coherence and substance in the curriculum, and for assurance that stated objectives are actually being met.\textsuperscript{824}

As with the spread of child-centred education, all ten provinces uniformly adopted the model of outcomes-based education (OBE).\textsuperscript{825} Under the precepts of OBE, the focus in curriculum development changed from inputs to outcomes where ministries of education set down the learning expectations that each child is supposed to achieve in each of the subjects across the various stages of schooling.\textsuperscript{826}

For OBE to work, however, students and programs need to be under constant evaluation to determine whether they are actually achieving these outcomes and


\textsuperscript{825} A number of factors facilitated the spread of OBE. First, the acceptance of child-centred education during the previous period was not entirely uncritical. Many education experts, officials, politicians, and members of the public, challenged its principles. Northrop Frye, for one, publicly denounced the various aims of child-centred education. These contests over the appropriate configuration of educational aims created the policy space for a new framework to take root. Second, the internal consistency of an educational paradigm is often weak due in no small part to the multiplicity of interests that are engaged in public education. Consequently, this increases the potential for internal debates to emerge and create additional openings for policy actors to reshape the paradigm. Finally, like child-centred education before it, OBE demonstrated the necessary viability given the broader policy climate and the internal policy contexts of each of the provinces. For these three reasons it spread quickly throughout the Canadian educational enterprise.

whether the outcomes themselves are appropriate. The Bégin Commission, for example, issued the following statement on the viability of OBE:

One of the newfangled theories that’s gained some currency in recent years is known as outcome-based education.” While somewhat more intricate and controversial that you’d expect, we use it here to mean that schools describe what students are expected to know when they graduate, and then rigorously assess their success in doing so. As one long-time Canadian educator commented, “This seems so eminently sensible that there must be something wrong with it.” We couldn’t have said it better ourselves.  

The problem was that prior to the creation of standardized assessments provincial governments did not have the tools to maintain the necessary evaluation of students and the curriculum. Therefore, changes in assessment practices were connected to the agenda to reform curriculum.

As standardized exams and assessments became a reality, OBE gained strong currency across Canada. The penetration of the policy option is a reflection of the congruence between OBE and the broader ideational climate of the day. Throughout the 1970s, ministries of education had decentralized control over curriculum to increase the flexibility in the programs offered in public schools. During the course of the 1980s and into the 1990s, however, many observers of Canadian education increasingly questioned the efficacy of this policy choice. According to one poll, the majority of the public believed that schools were “not preparing young people to meet the challenges of current economic realities,” and that young people would be better off learning a trade or skill rather than obtaining a general education. Wishing to respond to these criticisms, policy actors had little desire to return to the previous system of centralized and rigid educational practices. A compromise between these two conditions was necessary, and OBE seemed to offer a workable alternative. In the words of one source: “There was an outcomes based mood right across the US and we [Canadian educators] all got caught up on the educational bandwagon.”

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828 Angus Reid Group, Inc. *B.C. Reid Report* (Summer 1993), 67.

829 Phone Interview, April 18th 2008.
The interprovincial consensus on the principles of OBE set the stage for collaborative initiatives in curriculum development. Had all the provinces not endorsed the precepts of OBE, collective action would have been difficult if not impossible. Developing a curriculum is a challenging task even when there is a common point of departure; trying to reconcile conflicting or alternative models of curriculum would have added yet another obstacle. Because all the provinces had adopted OBE, the idea of collaboration in curriculum became more feasible. During the 1990s, three initiatives rose on the policy agenda. The first emerged in Atlantic Canada, the second in western Canada, and the third was of pan-Canadian scope.

Under the auspices of the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF), Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick collaborated in a project on curriculum development. Starting out as a small project among the three Maritime Provinces to create a common Maritime Studies course, in 1993, Newfoundland joined the consortium and the scope of the initiative was widened to include additional curricular areas. Through their collaboration, the Atlantic Provinces first developed a statement on essential graduation learnings and engaged in a period of comprehensive consultations with education stakeholders across the four provinces to determine common curricular outcomes. The APEF then ratified a series of foundation documents across six curriculum areas: mathematics, language arts, and French as a second language in 1996; science and social studies in 1999; and, most recently, arts and technology education. These documents laid the groundwork to develop harmonized programs that were subsequently approved in five of the six

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830 The development of Atlantic curricula adhered to a defined process: “Each project requires consensus by a regional committee at designated decision points; all provinces have equal weight in decision making. Each province has established procedures and mechanisms for communicating and consulting with education partners, and it is the responsibility of the province to ensure that stakeholders have input into regional curriculum development. . . Essential graduation learnings and curriculum outcomes provide a consistent vision for the development of a rigorous and relevant curriculum.” [Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education, Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education Branch, Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Technology Education Curriculum, 1 [Online publication] Available at: http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/sp/foundations/tech_edu/te_found_nf-lab_full.pdf (Accessed on August 28, 2008)].

831 Phone Interview, October 12th, 2007; Phone Interview, June 25th, 2008; Phone Interview, May 14th, 2008.

832 Phone Interview, October 12th, 2007.
The consequence of these policy activities was that all four provinces in Atlantic Canada now use the same curriculum.

In December 1993, the ministers responsible for education in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories signed the Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education (WCP), Kindergarten to Grade 12. Under the WCP, a common curriculum framework with learning outcomes in mathematics was released in June 1995, followed by a common framework with learning outcomes in English Language Arts in 1996. Two additional frameworks were released in 2000 that addressed international languages and Aboriginal language and culture programs. Finally, in 2002, a social studies common curriculum framework for K-Grade 9 was established. The individual ministries of education can use these documents when revising their own curriculum, but there is no common curriculum across the Western provinces.

The CMEC adopted the Pan-Canadian Protocol for Collaboration on School Curriculum in 1995. Provincial ministers and officials decided to focus on science as the first area for collaboration. In its official statement, the CMEC argued that:

In identifying science as the first area for collaboration under this new protocol, ministers recognized that, as Canada moves into the twenty-first century, it is essential that all jurisdictions provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for scientific literacy.

However, beyond this principled justification, one could also speculate that science also offered a pragmatic choice for the elected leaders. Other areas of curriculum, such as language arts or social science, could have easily descended into a morass of

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833 Full harmonization was not ratified in the arts and technology stream. Nova Scotia had just recently revised its arts curriculum and did not want to redo work it had already done. Similarly, Newfoundland had recently established a new technology program and did not want to repeat the process. The provinces therefore decided to exchange information and create a foundation document that, in time, may lead to harmonization in the area. In other words, timing influences the achievement of curriculum harmonization. As one source stated: “Coordination is in part driven by what is a common need in a particular timeframe.” (Phone Interview, June 25th 2008).

834 In February 2000, Nunavut also joined the WCP. For more information, see “Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Education” [online publication] Available at: http://www.wncp.ca/ (accessed on August 4, 2008).

interprovincial bickering spurred by ideological and cultural differences that would have hindered the establishment of common learning outcomes.\textsuperscript{836}

British Columbia was the English-language lead jurisdiction and the French-language lead was Manitoba. Both of these provinces were building upon their experiences with interprovincial collaboration refined under the western protocol. Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland joined these two provinces as additional members of the central steering committee.\textsuperscript{837} Draft vision statements and specific learning outcomes were submitted to the participating jurisdictions for review by stakeholders and were revised in light of the comments received. In subsequent drafting sessions, teachers were seconded from the participating jurisdictions to assist in the development of the collective statement.\textsuperscript{838} Over the next two years, a series of meetings was held to further stakeholder participation and consolidate a position that all the provincial governments could agree to. Finally, on October 17\textsuperscript{th} 1997, the CMEC released the \textit{Common Framework of Science Learning Outcomes}.\textsuperscript{839} The \textit{Framework} marked the first formal statement of pan-Canadian standards in curriculum. In keeping with the standard practices of the CMEC, it was up to the individual provinces to decide whether or not they would actually use these outcomes when developing their own science curricula. Since the release of the science framework, however, further advancements in pan-Canadian curriculum collaborations have not occurred.

The policy actors were driven by four considerations that can be divided into underlying and proximate causes. First, provincial policy actors wished to “maximize jurisdictional resources, teacher expertise, and stakeholder involvement”\textsuperscript{840} in

\textsuperscript{836} During an interview, one source commented on a long-standing proposal to develop a course in Canadian history that all students across the country would be required to take to graduate. In his opinion, “Such an initiative is completely undoable. Writing this curriculum and getting all the provinces to agree on its content would be impossible.” [Personal Interview, February 1\textsuperscript{st} 2008].


curriculum development. By combining the capacities of multiple jurisdictions, it was reasoned, the provinces could increase the quality of their curricula. Harkening to the adage that two heads are better than one, a Nova Scotia official observed that: “There is a synergy between four curriculum experts from different provinces that are highly qualified and committed to their work; by bringing them together, at least in theory, we should end up with a higher quality project.”

Second, all the provinces recognized that the ratification of common learning outcomes would help facilitate the transfer of students moving between jurisdictions. If all the provinces adhered to a common framework, the difficulties that students encounter when moving between provinces would be reduced. “We’re very much concerned that high schools in Atlantic Canada will have consistent standards,” said Byron James, an assistant deputy minister of education in New Brunswick. Consistent standards, moreover, would help reassure employers that all students had comparable training regardless of their place of residence.

Both of these considerations, however, have previously appeared in the provincial education sectors without cooperation emerging. These underlying factors gained new salience in the 1980s, sparked by changes in the overarching policy climate. A number of sources, particularly from Atlantic Canada, implicated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as an immediate trigger of regional cooperation in curriculum. Section 23 presented a major challenge to the small Atlantic Provinces. The ministries in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, for example, lacked the necessary capacity to develop French language curriculum for the small linguistic minority populations in their territories. Provincial decision-makers therefore turned to the expertise of New Brunswick, which already had a bilingual public education system, and fashioned collaborative projects in the Francophone division. Seeing the value of resource sharing, curriculum collaboration diffused beyond the Francophone division.

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841 Phone Interview, June 25th 2008.
843 See discussion on the creation of the Dominion Education Association in Chapter Four.
844 Phone Interview, October 12th 2007; Phone Interview, June 25th 2008.
Economics, and more specifically the fiscal downturn of the early 1990s, provided the second trigger. Policy actors saw collective curriculum development as a potential cost-saving instrument by redistributing the expenses incurred across a greater number of jurisdictions. “It’s becoming increasingly a direction for all governments to think about how to share to get more bang for their buck,” said Roger Palmer, assistant deputy minister of education in Alberta. “We are all too poor to do things separately.”

Commenting on PEI’s engagement with the MPEF, deputy minister Keith Wornell stated:

The emphasis is on developing common curriculum in specific subject areas so as to improve quality within ever diminishing resources. Regional cooperation is very important to the development of curriculum for this province.

These underlying and proximate causes therefore provided the motivation for the provinces to cooperate in curriculum development.

Despite the similar foundations and goals of the curriculum collaborations, there are stark differences in the subsequent outcomes of the three initiatives. The impact of the pan-Canadian protocol has been limited at best. To be sure, many provinces give a tacit nod to the Common Framework in their own individual science curricula. The harmonized curriculum of the Atlantic Provinces, for example, acknowledges “the educators who contributed to the development of the Common Framework of Science Learning Outcomes K-12 under the auspices of the Pan-Canadian Protocol for Collaboration on School Curriculum.” However, as one official stated: “Looking at the Pan-Canadian framework on science, it has way too many outcomes because of the number of provinces believing what is important – so you still need to filter from what’s there to shrink it to a doable size.” Therefore, the Common Framework seems to have had an indirect rather than direct impact on the ratification of common learning outcomes.

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847 Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Science Curriculum, iii. [online publication] Available at: www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/curriculum/camet/foundations-science.pdf (accessed on August 30, 2008).
848 Phone Interview, June 25th 2008.
Furthermore, as noted earlier, there has been no headway in other areas of curriculum, indicating that the process of interprovincial collaboration in curriculum development has stalled. In the words of one official: “Working through the CMEC is often an unwieldy process. Getting all of the governments to agree is a real challenge and the results are frequently watered-down.” Provincial officials realized that the costs involved in ratifying pan-Canadian outcomes did not outweigh the benefits received. Consequently, the CMEC has, for the moment, decided to shelve the pan-Canadian process in favour of focusing on other agenda items.

Undoubtedly, regional curriculum initiatives demonstrate greater success than the one shepherded under the CMEC. Common foundations in education outcomes were ratified across a wider array of subject areas under both protocols. However, the western provinces still develop their own curriculum independent from the other partners in the Protocol. The four Atlantic Provinces, in contrast, have harmonized their curriculum in five major areas. The explanation for this variation turns on differences in the organizational and cultural connections, and in the educational regimes and interdependence among the provinces.

The APEF (which later became the CAMET) provided crucial support throughout each stage of the curriculum initiative in Atlantic Canada. The permanent secretariat offered vital administrative assistance to facilitate the regional collaboration. One respondent put it most succinctly: “Without the CAMET, the harmonized curriculum would never have been achieved.” There was and continues to be no comparable organizational support among the Western provinces. As one former minister of education stated:

In Western Canada, the relations among the ministers of education are more like an informal working group with irregular meetings and haphazard efforts. Our relations are simply not as formalized as those in Atlantic Canada. Another even observed, “There is not even a separate caucus dedicated exclusively to the education ministers of Western Canada.” Policy actors in Western Canada

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849 Phone Interview, May 14th 2008.
850 Phone Interview, May 14th 2008
852 Phone Interview, May 16th 2008.
therefore do not have the organizational capacity that seems to be necessary to achieve policy harmonization.

From a cultural standpoint, the three Maritime Provinces have demonstrated a long history of affinities that frequently manifested in similar policy choices and a general proclivity to look to one another when considering educational reform. While some scholars argue that there are parallel bonds in Western Canada, they are undeniably weaker. For example, during the wave of district consolidations through the 1940s, British Columbia and Alberta decided to act unilaterally and impose the amalgamations without local consent; Manitoba and Saskatchewan chose to engage the public and worked towards gaining the consent of those affected. Manitoba and Saskatchewan thus have alternative rules and norms that structure relations in the sector that fashion distinctive educational regimes from those at work in British Columbia and Alberta.

Beyond these broader differences between the educational regimes at work in Western Canada, sources reported that Alberta was the key province that drove the curriculum protocol in Western Canada. At the time, under Ralph Klein’s leadership, the Alberta government was pursuing an agenda of radical change in public education. One prominent proposal involved strengthening choice in education by creating public-private partnerships and establishing charter schools. These ideas became lightning rods in heated debates that stretched beyond Alberta’s borders. On the one side were proponents of neo-liberalism who believed that the scope of government operations and activities needed to be dramatically reduced; on the other side were advocates of public education, who argued that these ideas undermined the integrity of public schooling. Despite the emerging consensus around a variety of education reforms, this impulse towards privatization clashed with ideas held by some

853 Personal Interview, April 8th 2007; Personal Interview, November 12th 2007; Personal Interview, May 13th 2008; Personal Interview May 14th 2008.
of the other signatories of the Protocol, particularly in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.\footnote{Personal Interview, April 10\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, November 12\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, May 13\textsuperscript{th} 2008.} Policy actors therefore did not see the benefit of pushing the frameworks to comprehensive harmonization.

Finally, since the late 1960s, policy actors in the Maritime Provinces have debated the merits of increasing collective action in the region. On March 26, 1968, the premiers of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, called upon Dr. J.J. Deutsch to head a special study on Maritime union “including the possibilities for economic and other forms of regional co-ordination and co-operation.”\footnote{The Maritime Union Study, \textit{The Report on Maritime Union} (Fredericton, NB: The Maritime Union Study, 1970), 2.} Arguing that the most serious challenge for people in the Maritime Provinces was “the threat of slow economic growth and a continued inferior level of participation in the economic and political life of the nation”,\footnote{Ibid, 10.} Deutsch outlined three basic approaches to ameliorate the situation: informal cooperation, formal cooperation, and some form of Maritime union. While the ratification of an official union remains out of reach, political and policy actors drew inspiration from Deutsch’s proposals and created the formal councils. Following the approval of the Free Trade Agreement, moreover, provincial premiers such as Frank McKenna put increased emphasis on provincial cooperation in the region.\footnote{Canadian Press, ‘Atlantic premiers seek free-trade zone’, \textit{Toronto Star} (26 September 1989) C3.} Policy actors in Atlantic Canada therefore had greater economic and political incentives that encouraged cooperation and collaboration. Put differently, the four provinces demonstrate a higher degree of interdependence than their counterparts in the rest of Canada.

The variations in the results of these initiatives highlight important factors that influence both the spread of ideas and the potential for the adoption of similar policies. First, a change in the context of connectivity can alter the causal processes of diffusion. Here, changes in the legal and economic contexts engendered the process of provincial cooperation that generated policy diffusion. Formal organizations moreover increased the potential for collaboration. This is not to say that cooperation is completely impossible without a formal organization; indeed, the learning outcomes frameworks
established among the Western Provinces demonstrate that a formal intergovernmental organization is not a necessary condition for cooperation. However, all respondents universally agreed that without the CMEC and the APEF, collaboration and harmonization would have been impossible.

Second, the extent of cooperation seems to be influenced by variations in the degree of interconnections among the various parties. Of the three initiatives, the pan-Canadian project produced the weakest results creating only a single framework. Despite the absence of a formal organization, the western provinces managed to establish a larger number of curricular frameworks, but did not end up harmonizing their policies. It was the four Atlantic Provinces that achieved the strongest results, comprehensively harmonizing elementary and secondary curriculum. The weaker fiscal capacities of these four jurisdictions encouraged them to pool their resources and work together; collaboration helped offset costs and enabled the provinces to potentially develop better curriculum than they would have on their own. Moreover, the four provinces could build upon the historical cultural synergies among the Maritime Provinces that created a firm foundation upon which to build the collective action. In other words, the Atlantic region was more tightly interdependent, which in turn increased the potential for deeper cooperation.

Finally, it is safe to suggest than none of these projects would have occurred had they not resonated with the internal priorities and educational regimes at work in each of the provinces. For the reasons outlined above, the precepts of OBE were consonant with the internal policy contexts of the 10 provinces. OBE thus demonstrated the necessary viability to be universally adopted in all of the jurisdictions. Moreover, all of the projects involved provincial education stakeholders throughout the various stages to engender their support. Ministry officials did not simply unilaterally impose the outcomes frameworks. Instead, teachers were seconded to participate throughout the process. Consequently, cooperation among the provinces in curriculum development could be advanced.
7.5 A National Agreement on Teacher Certification?

Since the foundation of Canadian education, provincial governments have preserved their autonomy in certification. In the past, piecemeal efforts at harmonizing certification rose on the policy agenda.\textsuperscript{860} The Canadian Teachers’ Federation sponsored various conferences to examine the problems encountered by teachers moving from one province to another. In 1977, its members even agreed on the following resolution: “THAT each province recognize, on a reciprocal basis, the certification of persons with degree standing who hold permanent certificates.”\textsuperscript{861} Despite these efforts, it was not until the 1990s that the provincial governments made a determined effort to eliminate barriers to teacher mobility and reconcile the relevant standards.

In 1994, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments ratified the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT). Interprovincial barriers to labour mobility had “long been considered an important barrier within the Canadian union,”\textsuperscript{862} and there was a growing political will to eliminate them. Under the terms of Chapter Seven, the AIT should: “enable any worker qualified for an occupation in the territory of a Party to be granted access to employment opportunities in that occupation in the territory of any other Party.”\textsuperscript{863} One of the principal mechanisms for reducing or eliminating barriers identified under the AIT was the harmonization and/or mutual recognition of standards and regulations.\textsuperscript{864} Signing the AIT, however, did not mean that all barriers to mobility would be eliminated overnight.\textsuperscript{865} Instead, sector-by-sector negotiations

\textsuperscript{860} At one of the CEA’s conventions, for example, representatives from Saskatchewan noted that the variations in certification regimes hindered teacher mobility and argued that the provinces should at a minimum harmonize the terms used to classify the different certificates. To start the process, Saskatchewan said it would adopt Alberta’s terminology. In spite of these statements, even bilateral harmonization between Alberta and Saskatchewan was never realized.

\textsuperscript{861} Canadian Teachers’ Federation, \textit{The 1971 Conference on Teacher Certification.} (Proceedings of the Meeting Held at Hotel Vancouver, BC, June 7-8, 1971), 2.

\textsuperscript{862} Eugene Beaulieu, et.al., \textit{Interprovincial Trade Barriers in Canada: How Far Have We Come? Where Should We Go?} (Calgary: The Van Horne Institute for International Transportation and Regulatory Affairs, 2003),3.

\textsuperscript{863} Agreement on Internal Trade, 1994, Article 701.


\textsuperscript{865} G. Bruce Doern and Mark MacDonald, \textit{Free Trade Federalism: Negotiating the Canadian Agreement on Internal Trade} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
were required. Due to the principle of parliamentary sovereignty, moreover, the AIT did not include any mandatory deadlines and was explicitly unenforceable by the courts. Nevertheless, as Katherine Swinton suggests, “there is still room for the agreement to have an important normative or “legal” effect, even if no sovereign body has the power to compel compliance.”

Political pressures have been placed on the teaching profession to achieve conformity with the AIT. Teachers make up one of the largest professions in Canada and, compared to other occupations, are heavily controlled by the state. Politicians and bureaucrats thus have stronger levers at their disposal to influence the standards and regulations of teacher certification. Political leaders hope that an accord for teachers will set an example for other sectors. As one source reported:

The folks in the labour department have a big stake in the process and they really wanted a winner to serve as an example to the other professions. Since teachers are the largest profession, if we get an agreement, it puts more pressure on the other groups to work towards a collective agreement.

Provincial premiers committed to the idea of labour mobility therefore encouraged their ministers of education to focus on the teaching profession and ratify a comprehensive memorandum of understanding to harmonize certification across the provinces.

On September 29th, 1999, the CMEC ratified an Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) on the Labour Mobility Chapter of the AIT. Developed in conformity with Chapter Seven, the AIP aims to reduce barriers to teacher mobility in Canada. Like the AIT, the AIP simply provided a general rubric for future negotiations and not a comprehensive agreement among all the provinces. Given the political pressures for the teaching profession to standardize certification policies, it seems that all the pieces were in place for comprehensive harmonization to be achieved quickly. However, to date an agreement has not been reached. The challenges to harmonization are three-fold.

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867 Personal Interview, November 12th 2007; Personal Interview, December 20th 2007; Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Phone Interview, February 7th 2008.
868 Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Phone Interview, February 7th, 2008.
869 Phone Interview, February 7th, 2008.
First, the definitions, terms, and basic requirements for certification are noticeably different across each of the jurisdictions. Teachers in Alberta, for example, are certified from K-12 inclusive, where in the other provinces certificates are distinguished according to grade levels. Decision-makers and stakeholders in each jurisdiction tend to believe that their certification regime is the most appropriate. Therefore, negotiating an effective compromise to reach a coherent taxonomy is a difficult and time-consuming process. As one respondent observed, “Everyone agrees to the idea of labour mobility, but the real issue across the country is the way that we certify the teachers and the qualifications are really different – and we don’t all agree on the components.”

Second, provinces have different labour market conditions, migration patterns, and student enrolment, all of which can affect certification standards. The Atlantic Provinces frequently report an over-supply of teachers while Alberta consistently needs more teachers to accommodate the growing population. It is therefore easier for the Atlantic Provinces to increase their requirements for certification while Alberta may tend to lower its requirements to ensure a sufficient supply. There is a perception (or perhaps a fear) among some members of the policy communities that pan-Canadian harmonization may fall to the lowest common denominator and reduce the overall standards from coast to coast.

Finally, as autonomous institutions, universities exercise considerable control over the programming elements for initial teacher education. The characteristics of these programs influence the certification requirements set down by the provinces. Sources note that, like those engaged in certification policy, university officials tend to believe their program for initial teacher education is the best and demonstrate little...

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870 Phone Interview, May 14th 2008.
872 Personal Interview, December 20th 2007; Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Phone Interview, February 7th 2008; Phone Interview, May 14th 2008.
873 In Ontario, for example, the NDP government attempted to encourage the faculties of education to change their initial teacher education programs from the provincial standard of one-year, to the national norm of two years. However, the faculties of education successfully resisted the pressure from the provincial government and most of the programs continue to be completed in one year. [See: Ministry of Education and Training, *New Foundation for Ontario Education*, 7-8].
874 Personal Interview, February 1st 2008; Phone Interview, February 7th, 2008; Phone Interview, February 19th, 2008.
willingness to alter their requirements.\textsuperscript{875} While recognizing that compromises are necessary, finding a common ground among all the players is therefore a challenge. These three factors have impeded the establishment of a pan-Canadian agreement in teacher certification.

In spite of these challenges, there are some indications that a pan-Canadian agreement will be reached in the not-so-distant future. Frustrated with delays in the pan-Canadian AIT process, in 2006, Alberta and BC ratified the Trade Investment Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) and signed a bilateral agreement to eliminate barriers to teacher mobility in December 2007. Teachers were the first profession to achieve compliance under the TILMA. Provincial education officials, supported by an administrative staff with expertise in labour market coordination, worked towards finding common ground and definitions in teacher certification between the two provinces. The negotiation process, moreover, was limited to the Alberta and BC registrars for teacher certification, and left aside other potential stakeholders such as the deans of education and the teachers’ federations:

The deans and teachers do not play a formal or authoritative role in certification and so they were excluded from this part of the process. It was already difficult enough to get the authoritative parties to all agree – having additional voices at the table would have just made it that much harder.\textsuperscript{876}

The bilateral agreement between Alberta and BC now sets a clear example for the other provinces and the expertise developed in those ministries regarding the intricacies of mutual recognition may help in furthering the pan-Canadian process.

The faculties of education have also begun to symbolically support the pan-Canadian initiative. In 2006, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education (ACDE) issued a general statement on the common objectives of initial teacher education.\textsuperscript{877} Signatories to the agreement recognize a set of normative principles that creates a “framework of diversity with broad characteristics.” This type of framework is consistent with the General Accord of the ACDE, which states: “The ACDE has no

\textsuperscript{875} Personal Interview, October 15\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, November 12\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, December 20\textsuperscript{th} 2007; Personal Interview, February 1\textsuperscript{st} 2008; Phone Interview, February 7\textsuperscript{th} 2008.

\textsuperscript{876} Phone Interview, February 7\textsuperscript{th} 2008.

\textsuperscript{877} Association of Canadian Deans of Education, \textit{Accord on Initial Teacher Education} [online publication] Available at: \url{http://www.csse.ca/ACDE/TeacherAccord.pdf} (accessed on September 3, 2008).
wish to impose a system of national standards that would erode the important local and regional characteristics of initial teacher education or education more broadly.” The Accord on Initial Teacher Education, nevertheless signals willingness among the Canadian deans of education towards mutual recognition of basic principles in teacher education that in turn may assist the pan-Canadian process.

Finally, teachers themselves support the principle of labour mobility. It is in teachers’ interests to have mutual recognition of their credentials to enable smooth transfer between provinces. Because they are not engaged in the AIP negotiation processes, the CTF and the provincial teachers’ associations find themselves in a reactive rather than proactive position on the labour mobility file. However, as one source stated, “Overall we find the approach that the CMEC is taking is a reasonable one and will end up benefiting teachers.” Furthermore, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation recognized that pension portability could become a problem in an open labour market and helped the CMEC Secretariat to broker a multilateral pension agreement in 2003. A crucial group of interested stakeholders thus endorses the policy initiative meaning that compliance with the AIT may soon be achieved.

**Conclusion**

This chapter concludes my study of the development and evolution of the Canadian elementary and secondary education sector. During this period, policy actors were captured by a new educational orthodoxy. In a dramatic reversal from the previous period, provinces from coast to coast introduced policies to standardize practices and recentralize governmental control over public schooling. Many of these reforms were motivated by the intense criticisms that had been launched both in Canada and abroad against the policies of child-centred educationalists and dovetailed with the precepts of New Public Management that had captured the minds of decisions makers everywhere. This new orthodoxy became the switchpoint mechanism for many decision-makers from coast to coast.

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879 Personal Interview, April 21st 2008
880 Personal Interview, April 21st 2008.
This chapter demonstrated how changes in the legal bonds among the provinces created powerful incentives that drove policy diffusion and convergence. The entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms introduced new requirements in minority language education. This requirement compelled all the provinces individually to create minority language school boards to administer the new system. The Charter also indirectly brought about new types of interactions among the provinces. Needing to create new minority language programs in the context of declining resources, the provinces looked to each other for assistance when developing the new curriculum. I suggested that targeted cooperation in one area of curriculum laid the groundwork for cooperation in other subjects.

The evidence presented here nevertheless suggests that cooperation becomes more likely in certain conditions. As exemplified in the case of curriculum development in Atlantic Canada, formal organizations and strong cultural ties increased the probability of cooperation that led to policy harmonization. Weaker cultural and organizational bonds deterred the achievement of similar results in western Canada.

There was also a dramatic policy about-face in evaluation: seven of the eight provinces that had eliminated universal exams reinstated some form of high stakes testing. The penetration of this policy change was a testament to the widespread acceptance among policy actors of the new educational orthodoxy that emphasized quality control and accountability. Universal exams resonated with the goal of improving (and assuring) standards in provincial public schools and so were administered, despite some opposition from the policy community.

The novel practice of universal assessments also gained a foothold in the Canadian education system. Initiated by Alberta and then taken up by the CMEC, the dissemination of this policy shows how inter-provincial cooperation on one initiative can generate policy diffusion and inspire decision-makers to adopt a similar policy within their own jurisdictions. Provincial participation in the SAIP exposed policy actors to the value of standardized assessments and inspired them to create their own programs within each of their jurisdictions. Using their new expertise in universal
assessments, decision-makers transferred the lessons from the national level and integrated them into the provincial systems.

There are strong indications that, within a short time, a comprehensive agreement on teacher certification that fully complies with the AIT will emerge. Many of the previous barriers to credential harmonization have been dismantled and strong political pressures are being exerted on the field to set an example for other professions. Symbolic and practical support has come from pertinent components of the policy community, and the bilateral agreement between BC and Alberta sketches out a viable framework that could be deployed across the country.

Finally, this chapter also detailed the spread of full-state funding to other provinces. Faced with similar problems, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario drew from the examples set by New Brunswick and others in eastern Canada and implemented the same policy option. However, Manitoba and Saskatchewan resisted this national trend. The persistence of the shared-cost model in these two provinces further reinforces a central message of this thesis. Policy ideas that diffuse across provincial borders encounter the internal policy context of the receiving jurisdiction. For Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the idea of full state funding lacked the necessary congruence with the existing policy contexts. Decision-makers therefore decided to stay-the-course in education finance and maintained the policy divergence in this dimension.
CONCLUSION

Pulling the Threads Together

In a country so diverse as Canada, uniformity is the exception rather than the rule. This is particularly true in educational matters wherein, added to our manifest differences in historical and cultural backgrounds, in urbanization and industrialization, in topography and resources, what uniformity does exist comes more by diffusion than by invention. Education is a provincial matter; provinces may borrow and trade ideas among one another or from without, but in the final analysis the educational system of any one province is the working out of its own inventiveness.\textsuperscript{881}

The provinces, though wholly autonomous in educational affairs and differing greatly socially, industrially and economically, have evolved systems of education very similar in their general patterns though differing greatly in detail.\textsuperscript{882}

This study has tracked the development and evolution of the Canadian elementary and secondary education sectors from the 1840s to the present day (Table 8.1). Analysing four periods of policy development, I have shown how the interplay between changes in the policy climate among subnational governments influences mechanisms of policy diffusion and the probability of policy convergence. The growth of the provincial education sectors has been described, and the processes by which these policies were disseminated and consolidated have been assessed. My central finding advanced here was that policies diffused, not through coercion and competition, but rather through learning and cooperation. In analysing this policy sector, I have shown how autonomous governments can fashion highly similar education policies and practices in the absence of national standards and documented the shifting patterns of policy convergence and divergence throughout different historical periods of Canadian educational development. The basic conclusion of my work is that despite Canada’s highly decentralized federalism, there is a remarkable degree of similarity among the education sectors of the Canadian provinces.

Two matters are addressed in this conclusion. First, I return to the central questions posed in this thesis. Is a national authority a necessary condition for the


achievement of policy similarity in a decentralized policy sector? How do policy ideas move among autonomous units? How do systems of coordination and cooperation emerge in decentralized policy sectors over time? And, under what conditions will autonomous actors adopt similar policies? In revisiting these central questions, I distil the central themes and the main conclusions drawn throughout this thesis. Looking beyond the parameters of this particular case, I also consider the broader lessons that can be learned from this study of Canadian education. Second, I address some of the limitations of this study and sketch out some avenues for future research.

Table 8.1: Summary of Changes to Interprovincial Policy Similarity, Elementary and Secondary Education, 1840-2008

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<td>- Central</td>
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<td>- Intermediary</td>
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<td><strong>Finance</strong></td>
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<td>- Model</td>
<td>Increased</td>
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<td>- Level</td>
<td>No change</td>
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<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
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<td>- Elementary</td>
<td>Increased</td>
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<td>- Secondary</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
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<td>- Assessment</td>
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<td><strong>Teaching Profession</strong></td>
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8.1: Revisiting the Central Questions

A fundamental goal of this dissertation was to examine the necessity of national standards in facilitating the achievement of subnational policy similarities. Previous chapters revealed that national standards are not a necessary condition for subnational policy similarity to emerge. Confounding the expectations of students of federalism and social policy, the Canadian provinces invest in elementary and secondary education at comparable levels, record strong achievements (measured both in terms of graduation rates and performance on international tests), and deploy many of the same policies across the various dimensions of the education sector.

To determine the necessity of national standards in a field of social policy, Chapter 1 focused on two questions. First, relative to other countries, does Canada under-invest and under-perform in elementary and secondary education? Second, relative to other countries, does Canada exhibit greater subnational variation in investments and achievements in elementary and secondary education? In educational investments and achievements at the national level, the evidence revealed that Canada spends only slightly less than others on education, and records comparably high achievements both on international tests and in graduation rates. Looking within the country, the Canadian provinces, which all spend at relatively similar levels and record comparably high achievements, thus exhibited relatively minimal internal variations. These findings led me to conclude that national standards are not a necessary condition for subnational similarity in a social policy sector.

Three contextual factors accounted for these puzzling findings. I argued that provincial governments face strong pressures from citizens and stakeholders to maintain high quality public education programs. All of the provinces thus face comparable societal demands that encourage them to provide equivalent programs in the policy sector. However, as Richard Simeon and Christina Murray have emphasized, without comparable economic capacity, subnational governments would be unable to devote the necessary resources to the sector. Drawing from the insights of students of fiscal federalism, I suggested that the way fiscal resources are

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redistributed among subnational governments is a crucial determinant of internal similarities in educational investments. It is likely that without the federal government’s equalization program, subnational divergences in educational investments would begin to appear.\textsuperscript{884}

This research thus highlights the importance of the means of economic redistribution in federal states. The findings suggest that the form of fiscal federalism deployed in Canada is a crucial determinant of subnational similarities in investments. Moreover, it reinforces Paul Peterson’s assertion that the national government must have the power to move fiscal resources among the subnational jurisdictions.\textsuperscript{885} The signal is clear. While national standards may not be a necessary condition for subnational similarity, the national government can nevertheless play a crucial role in assuring the comparability of subnational policy sectors by indirectly mitigating disparities in provincial economic capacities through unconditional programs such as equalization. The Canadian case thus testifies to the fact that a federal government can indirectly support the creation of a “national” policy sector by reinforcing the fiscal capacity of the subnational governments, which enables them to make comparable investments in the policy field.

The impact of fiscal redistribution can be clearly seen through an examination of the longitudinal trends in educational investments across the provinces (see Table 8.1, Appendix 7 and 8). From the 1950s onwards, the gaps among the provinces have progressively narrowed as they converged towards each other. The case of Newfoundland is illustrative. Once the Island entered Confederation, access to equalization funds enabled the provincial government to dramatically increase its investments in public education and accelerate educational achievements for its citizens. These outcomes are a testament to the value of equalization in Canada.

These findings lead me to cautiously offer one prescriptive implication generated by this thesis for federal and non-federal countries alike. Unconditional

\textsuperscript{884} The validity of this supposition is also supported by Mark Rom’s research on educational investments in the US. He found that wealthier states are racing ahead while economically weaker states are falling behind. See: Mark Carl Rom, ‘Policy Races in the United States’ Racing to the Bottom? Provincial Interdependence in the Canadian Federation. Kathryn Harrison, Ed. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006).

redistributive programs like Canada’s equalization program may be better suited to facilitate subnational similarities in policy sectors than systems that are exclusively conditional. In contrast to patterns that have appeared in the US, Canadian provinces have been able to maintain comparable investments in the education sector rather than recording divergent trajectories with rich provinces racing ahead and poorer provinces falling behind. The organization of fiscal federalism in Canada thus seems to help balance out the tensions between the logic of diversity and the logic of social citizenship.

But similar investments do not necessarily lead to comparable achievements. To account for the comparable achievements, I turned to a third contextual factor. Building on the work of new institutionalists, I suggested that the norms and values that are embedded in the policy sector contribute to the observed similarities in educational achievements across the Canadian provinces. Specifically, the common commitment to destratify educational opportunities shared by all the provinces seems to have translated into high results on international tests and elevated graduation rates from coast to coast. Furthermore, the absence of the federal government from the policy sector may have bred alternative interactions in intergovernmental relations. Unlike other policy areas where the federal government tends to intervene, when the provinces work together in education they can do so without fear of being committed by external forces to certain programs or having certain policy priorities imposed from above. This may help clear the way for more positive and constructive intergovernmental collaborations and ideational exchanges that have led to the observed similarities across the provinces.

The minimal variations among the provinces in the education sector demonstrated that the subnational governments have created a *de facto* national system of elementary and secondary education without the direct engagement of the federal government. Most broadly, this thesis attunes scholars to the fact that overarching

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886 Bruno Therét has argued that the lack of equalization in the US has increased the competitive dynamics among the subnational governments while Canada’s equalization program has minimized the exposure of the provincial governments to the effects of economic competition. For more on his argument, see: Bruno Théret, ‘Regionalism and Federalism: A Comparative Analysis of the Regulation of Economic Tensions between Regions by Canadian and American Federal Intergovernmental Programmes’ *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 23, 3 (1999): 479-512.
standards are not a panacea for the achievement of substantive interjurisdictional similarities in public policies. A supplemental lesson from this dissertation is that any proposal to create either a national department or ratify national standards might upset the constructive balance that has been struck among the provincial governments. Particularly in multinational federations, the drive to ratify national standards typically requires the expenditure of significant political capital and can degenerate into intense debates on national unity that sidetrack policy actors’ attention away from the substantive policy issues. Consequently, political leaders and components of the policy community should tread cautiously when advocating the ratification of national standards and should instead consider the alternative routes to “national” policy systems that have been documented here.

This dissertation also sought to better understand the mechanisms and processes that contribute to similarities and differences in the social policy outputs of subnational governments. To accomplish this goal, the education sector was broken down into five components to appreciate the range of options that face decision-makers. I then took a contemporary snapshot of Canadian education to catalogue the extent of similarities and differences in the policy outputs that appeared among the 10 provinces. Rather than uncovering a sector rife with major policy variations, I found an unexpected degree of interprovincial similarities in Canadian elementary and secondary education. Provincial education sectors were by no means uniform. My survey also identified that differences remained in certain dimensions. How had substantive policy similarities in certain components of elementary and secondary education policy in Canada been achieved over time? What insights can be gained by understanding why the provinces are similar in certain areas but different in others?

887 While such proposals have become increasingly muted, one organization that continues to press for national standards is the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL). In one recent publication, for example, the CCL declared: “Other countries, including the United Kingdom, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Japan and Australia, have recognized and seized upon the importance of lifelong learning and are devising ambitious strategies to help their citizens become lifelong learners. Canada does not have a lifelong learning system in place, nor a plan to transform the rhetoric of lifelong learning into a coherent vision and a plan for action.” The CCL’s implicit prescription is for the federal government to intervene in the sector and devise a national strategy. For more on this, see: Canadian Council on Learning, State of Learning in Canada: Toward a Learning Future. (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Learning, July 2008). [Online publication] Available at: http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/StateofLearning?Language=EN (Accessed on April 7, 2009).
To answer this question, I constructed a model of policy action that drew from the insights of the policy diffusion literature to grasp how policy ideas move across political borders. It started with a presumption of interdependence and connectivity among policy actors, where the decisions of one jurisdiction can influence the decisions of others. I suggested that connective networks and mutual dependence among the jurisdictions create incentives and pathways through which policy diffusion occurs. Four processes of diffusion were also considered: coercion, competition, learning, and cooperation.

Students of federalism often implicate coercion as a powerful motor of policy diffusion in federated states. This historical study, however, has demonstrated that in the case of Canadian education coercion rarely entered into the equation. Illustrated in Chapters 4 through 6, the federal government’s piecemeal attempts at compelling the provinces to pursue certain policy pathways generated limited results. The federal government’s first foray in education came when it imposed religious trusteeship as the system for educational administration in Manitoba in the late 1800s. Following changes in the Manitoba population base, however, provincial policy actors quickly decided to abolish the system of religious trusteeship in favour of the model of civic trusteeship pioneered by Ontario. Ottawa’s policy directives thus failed to establish a lasting policy legacy in Manitoba as provincial policy-makers decided to pursue their own policy pathways that suited their own needs and interests.

The federal government also attempted to shape the direction of Canadian secondary education. Efforts began in the early Twentieth Century when Ottawa established the Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education. Based on its recommendations, Ottawa offered the provinces a series of conditional grants to encourage the establishment of technical training institutes consistent with the partite model of secondary education within each of the provincial systems. These

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889 Canada, Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education, Report (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1913).
890 In Chapter 2, I outlined the four models of secondary education: partite, bilateral, multilateral, and composite (or comprehensive). The first three models involve strict streaming of students between those destined for university and those who were destined for vocational training or general education. The
grants, however, proved to be an ineffective device as most of the provinces were unable to take advantage of them.\textsuperscript{891} Ottawa’s actions were not appropriately calibrated to provincial capacities.

In the 1960s, Ottawa once again offered conditional grants to the provinces that privileged the continuation of a stratified system for secondary education. This time, Ottawa’s policy priorities did not resonate with provincial officials who had become convinced of the value of an alternative model for high school. And so, despite receiving conditional grants from the federal government that favoured stratification, the provinces simply redeployed federal funds to suit their own agendas that uniformly preferred the principles of composite or multilateral schooling. Both outcomes in these dimensions of educational administration and curriculum were a testament to the fact that provincial decision-makers enjoyed considerable autonomy from Ottawa and pursued their own policy options as they saw fit regardless of interventions from the national government.

Coercion need not always come from the federal government. Coercion could also arise if one province or group of provinces actively encourages the others to implement the same policies ostensibly against their will. However, there was little evidence of certain provinces attempting to compel the other provinces to follow particular initiatives. Ontario, for example, despite taking an early lead, never tried to cajole the other provinces to adhere to its policy options; the other jurisdictions simply decided on their own accord to emulate certain practices and benefit from the advancements made by the larger province. Moreover, all of the intergovernmental organizations (such as the CMEC) and the subnational activities (such as the various curriculum initiatives) are premised on the principle of voluntary participation, meaning that policy actions cannot be compelled. Succinctly captured in the case of the Western Protocol for curriculum development, Chapter 7 detailed how Saskatchewan and Manitoba resisted the initiative to fully harmonize course materials in the region due to certain ideological differences with Alberta. Even when collaborating, the

\textsuperscript{891} In Chapter 4 I argued that the size of local jurisdictions acted as a barrier to secondary school expansion.
provinces maintain the ability to adhere to their own principles and goals and pursue independent activities from the other jurisdictions. This signals that coercion is not the mechanism in policy diffusion at work here.

The evidence presented in this thesis also indicates that horizontal competition among the subnational governments was an infrequent generator of policy diffusion. I expected that competition would be more likely in the regulatory components of the education sector, such as teacher certification. Interestingly, horizontal competition only arose in one area: teacher education. Chapter 6 documented the eastern provinces deciding to follow western Canada’s lead and implement university-led teacher education. I argued that policy actors in eastern Canada were partially motivated by the fear that the quality of their teachers was in decline relative to those in western Canada. To ameliorate this perceived disparity, policy actors in Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and PEI decided to discontinue the normal school system and converge with the other provinces. Despite facing considerable resistance from pertinent components of the policy community, eastern policy officials devolved the responsibility for teacher training to the university. The eastern provinces did not want to risk damaging their reputations and compromise the perception of the relative quality of their education systems next to the western provinces. Therefore, in terms of teacher education, the diffusion of the new policy practice appeared to be in part motivated by competitive pressures among the subnational jurisdictions.

Evidence of diffusion through competition did not emerge in other dimensions of education policy. Despite my expectations that competition would be more likely in regulatory areas such as in teacher certification, provinces continued to use their own systems irrespective of alterations made by neighbouring jurisdictions. Their decisions were based on maximizing their own benefits given internal labour market conditions rather than calibrating with the policy choices of the other jurisdictions. Subnational competition also did not instigate the policy changes in mandatory testing or education finance nor did it stimulate reform in educational administration.892

892 No clear evidence either through interviews or policy documents indicated that education officials decided to re-instate mandatory provincial high school exams on the basis of subnational competition with each other. Instead, provincial officials appeared galvanized by internal public opinion and prescriptions from the international community. In the words of one official: “Why did we do it? We...
My research thus challenges the federalism literature’s proclivity to stress the causal processes of coercion and competition in policy diffusion among subnational governments. This thesis instead found consistent evidence that learning acted as a powerful driver of policy diffusion. Right from the outset of Canadian educational history, provincial policy actors demonstrated a strong commitment to take in and reflect upon the examples set by other jurisdictions.

Chapter 4 revealed that the pattern of social learning dates back to Confederation. Initially piecemeal and carried out through informal and irregular channels, such as the migration of policy entrepreneurs between the former colonies, policy makers and members of the policy community gradually formalized mechanisms to facilitate interjurisdictional learning. Organizations, such as the Dominion Educational Association (DEA), expedited this process by gathering and disseminating information across the different provinces. Regional and pan-Canadian conferences brought policy actors together and exposed them to the ideas and programs from alternative jurisdictions. Over time, these initiatives created a highly integrated and dense network that enabled the diffusion of educational ideas by interlinking both state and non-state policy actors in the sector. Participation in these networks meant that the connections among the subnational jurisdictions were increased and policy actors had greater opportunities to consider the policy choices of each other when making their own decisions.

I also identified an additional mechanism of policy diffusion: cooperation. Where students of diffusion tend to view intergovernmental organizations as platforms for coercion, producers of particular policy paradigms, or passive venues for ideational exchanges, I offered an alternative interpretation on the impact of these bodies. I suggested that intergovernmental organizations create the conditions whereby independent policy actors can pursue collective actions, ratify comprehensive agreements, formally harmonize policies, and generally cooperate. Unlike diffusion through learning, which generally follows a linear chain of leader-follower-laggard, cooperation involves constant interactions among the pertinent players. For those

were faced with the same evidence, the same public pressures, and arrived at the same conclusion that we needed to do this.” (Phone Interview, April 23rd 2007).
engaged in the process, learning may occur in areas beyond the particular initiative, but in this instance learning is a by-product rather than the result of deliberate action.

Chapter 7 chronicled the provinces engaging in a number of activities to work together to fashion regional and pan-Canadian programs in different dimensions of education policy. By working together, provincial decision-makers gained new information and expertise that they transferred down into their own individual jurisdictions. The case of provincial assessments in PEI was instructive. Working with the other provinces in the pan-Canadian assessment program, provincial officials from PEI acquired the necessary experience to develop a comparable program for the province itself. Inter-provincial cooperation thus enhanced the policy capacity of the province. Moreover, by participating in the program, PEI officials were able to mitigate the opposition of teachers and convince them that results from the assessments would not be used to track and evaluate individual accomplishments (of both students and teachers). Cooperation at the pan-Canadian level thus created a by-product learning effect that facilitated the spread of a policy idea from coast to coast.

Formal intergovernmental organizations undeniably enhanced the potential for subnational cooperation. These organizations provided a stable arena for cooperation, thus creating the conditions for this new mechanism for policy diffusion and increased the potential for policy convergence among political communities. Exemplified by the Council for Ministers of Education Canada and the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, I argued that both organizations provided the vital support to bring about and expedite subnational cooperation. In the words of one former minister of education, “Without the CMEC there, dare I say, it would be chaos – dragons in fact!” The causal significance of these organizations, moreover, was further confirmed by the limited success of the Western Protocol for collaboration in curriculum. In the words of one respondent: “Without a permanent coordinative secretariat, it is really difficult to move beyond ratifying learning outcomes. Unlike our

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893 First known as the Student Achievement Indicators Program and later the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program.
894 Phone Interview, May 16th, 2008.
counterparts in Atlantic Canada, we in the west don’t have the important institutional supports.”

Interdependence and three nodes of connectivity – legal, organizational, and cultural – were identified as important in this thesis. When put together with the dominant ideational trends of the day, these elements contributed to the policy climate among the policy actors of the individual jurisdictions. By breaking down the context of connectivity into these components and tracking developments over time, I was able to unpack how changes in the policy climate generated alternative incentives that influenced both the processes of diffusion and the possibilities for policy convergence.

Evidence of the interactive impact of the policy climate was seen in a variety of ways. The establishment of the legal regime fashioned by the Constitution Act 1867 stimulated provincial officials and education professionals to establish formal interprovincial organizations like the DEA that were dedicated to the education sector. These organizations helped forge connective networks among political officials, bureaucratic decision-makers, and members of the policy community from coast to coast. The result was increasing the possibility for subnational learning to occur. As a redistributive regime, equalization helped the economically weaker provinces catch up with the stronger ones and invest at comparable levels in the policy sector. The entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in particular the provision for minority language education spawned a dedicated initiative among the Atlantic Provinces in curriculum development that eventually led to policy harmonization. I argued that pre-existing organizational frameworks and cultural synergies in the region helped to expedite this collaboration. Despite pursing a similar initiative, in Chapter 7 I also suggested that weaker organizations and cultural connections in western Canada hindered the achievement of a similar outcome. Finally, as a formal agreement among the constituent governments, the Agreement on Internal Trade has incited a dedicated initiative to harmonize teacher certification from coast to coast.

My efforts to deconstruct the overarching policy climate served to demonstrate that context and timing matters. The findings of this dissertation thus propel the policy diffusion literature to better appreciate the types of connections that appear among

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895 Phone Interview, May 23rd 2008.
political communities. They press forward existing studies in the field that take the connections of the communities as given and pinpoint particular features that influence both processes of diffusion and dynamics in intergovernmental relations. They also signal how institutional changes that pertain to one particular issue, such as the entrenchment of minority language educational rights that contributed to the harmonization of curriculum in Atlantic Canada, can generate shockwaves and spill-over effects that influence developments elsewhere. Finally, my research demonstrated that subnational similarity in Canadian education policy did not emerge through sudden convergence in the 1980s and 1990s, but rather through long-term causal processes that trace back to Canada’s earliest years.

My efforts thus followed the approach Paul Pierson recently advocated. In his words, context “has become for many in the social sciences, a bad word – a synonym for thick description, and an obstacle to social scientific analysis.” Pierson argues that this perception has led to a decontextual revolution that has allowed social scientists to miss crucial elements that are important to understanding social processes. Here I have attempted to specify in greater detail particular factors that shaped social outcomes, and draw associations between the processes and mechanisms that connected the variables to the outcomes.

Just because policies diffuse across provincial boundaries, does not mean that the new ideas will be taken up by the receiving jurisdiction, increasing the extent of subnational policy similarity. Policy diffusion can lead to either convergence or divergence. My research thus sought to build bridges between the policy diffusion and policy convergence literatures and better understand the pathways, contexts and features that make convergence more likely once diffusion has occurred. Following Keith Banting, Richard Simeon, and George Hoberg, I considered three pathways to convergence: parallel problems; intentional exchanges; and interdependence.

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Chapter Four showed how Québec and Newfoundland decided independently to adopt the same system of central administration and implement religious trusteeship. These two provinces appeared to make choices without reference to each other and in light of similar internal factors. Religious leaders dominated the political landscapes of both provinces and were therefore able to assert control over the sector. In this situation, subnational similarities emerged not from policy diffusion but rather from independent problem solving of parallel situations. However, in the overall history of the development of elementary and secondary education in Canada, the instances of this pathway to policy convergence were rare. Alternative routes to convergence played a greater role.

Much of the subsequent interprovincial convergence appeared from provinces finding the policies and practices of each other attractive. Frequent engagement in the policy network fashioned among the policy community exposed decision-makers to alternative policy options. Once they were exposed to the new ideas, decision-makers determined whether or not the options were suitable to particular contexts. If the options proved to be a good fit, decision-makers could implement them and thus increase the extent of policy similarity that appeared among the provinces.

The history of education policy in Canada revealed that certain elements eased the learning process. Engagement in the active and integrated policy community made subnational policy convergence through learning more likely. Cultural affinities among the different jurisdictions also expedited interjurisdictional policy learning, as actors appeared more willing to draw from within their own self-identified peer groups. Cultural connections provided quick cognitive shortcuts for decision-makers to sift through the universe of potential policy options and narrow down the range of choices. For example, members of Ontario’s policy community deployed culturally based arguments when they initially rejected the idea of university-led teacher education for being too “Western” and too “American.”\(^{899}\) Similarly, Manitoba and Saskatchewan’s refusal to fully harmonize their curriculum with Alberta was based in large part on ideological and cultural differences among them.

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Variations between Québec and the other provinces also help to reinforce the validity of these two suppositions. Since Confederation, components of the Québec education sector have remained aloof from the pan-Canadian education policy community. Francophone teachers, for example, do not engage with the Canadian Teachers Federation. Moreover, the province demonstrates significantly greater cultural distinctiveness from the rest of Canada. Québec thus tends to exercise greater independence from the Canadian educational networks. In the words of one Québec official: “We prefer to look towards the international community, in particular the Scandinavian states for new educational ideas, rather than the other Canadian provinces.” The consequence is that Québec exhibits a number of interesting, albeit often subtle, policy variations including differences in the configuration of secondary education and the organization of educational administration.

While convergence through learning networks provided the predominant pathway, there is emerging evidence that interdependence is generating increased subnational policy similarities. I argued in Chapter 7 that in contrast to the more independent western provinces, stronger interdependence in Atlantic Canada contributed to the complete harmonization of curriculum in the region. It also appears likely that all the provinces will ratify a comprehensive agreement in teacher certification in the near future. In no small part, the Agreement on Internal Trade acted as a slow catalyst for this policy initiative. The power of interdependence, therefore, cannot be ruled out as a driver of interprovincial policy convergence in education. When identified goals cannot be achieved without coordinated action, it seems plausible to predict that convergence is likely to occur if the initiative rises on the policy agenda.

A number of contextual factors emerged as important elements in convergence. The dissertation shows that macro-institutional factors establish common situations that encourage the provinces to pursue similar policies. I argued that the gradual convergence on the same model of central administration was due in no small part to the logic dictated by parliamentary government. Provincial decision-makers also appeared to be influenced by the sheer number of jurisdictions that had already made a

900 Phone Interview, May 24th 2008 – author’s translation.
certain policy choice. Tipping points emerged, for example, in both teacher education and education finance where officials publicly justified policy changes in light of the prevalence of certain options at work in other provinces. As certain policy choices delivered some success, they provided useful examples and shortcuts for policy actors in the other jurisdictions. Touched on above, cultural affinities between certain provinces also appeared to increase the likelihood of policy convergence. Stronger bonds among the Maritimes increased the willingness of policy actors to look within their regional subgroup, while weaker bonds among Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba tended to hinder policy collaborations.

Regardless of these various contexts and pathways, features of the policy ideas themselves play an important role. Across all the periods, policy ideas needed to demonstrate an alignment with the problems of the day, fit with historical and administrative experiences, and be promoted by an active entrepreneur within the receiving jurisdiction.

Given the trends towards similarity, will complete subnational policy uniformity appear among the provinces in the education sector? The answer to this question is no. First and foremost, provinces have consistently demonstrated the ability to exercise independent policy action. While undulating patterns and trends of convergence appeared within each time period, provincial decision-makers and members of the broader policy community frequently pursued alternative policy pathways that established distinguishing features, some of which persist today. The establishment of the Conseil supérieur de l’éducation (CSE) by the Government of Québec in the 1960s, the variations in the details of provincial assessment programs, differences in university teacher education programs, and provincial educational finance programs all provide a clear elucidation of this analysis. Simply put, just because they participate in connective networks and are nestled within a common policy climate, does not mean that provincial policy decisions will mirror each other consistently. Policy actors still retain the ability to act as independent agents and pursue experimental and innovative policies in the field.
Secondly, following Ronald Manzer,\textsuperscript{901} the internal educational regime fashioned within each of the provinces also acts as an important determinant of policy divergence and continued diversity. Differences in implementation strategies, for example, simultaneously reflect and reinforce differences in the educational regimes that fashion particular policy legacies in the different provinces. Pointed out in a number of chapters, Manitoba and Saskatchewan frequently employed populist measures when considering major changes for the education sector. The use of these populist measures provided one of the most important illustrations of the role played by the internal educational regime in the policy process as a potential route to variety.

The central message of this thesis is therefore clear. The Canadian provinces have managed to defy the odds in a crucial area of social policy. Without national standards, other factors enabled the subnational governments to work together and fashion a \textit{de facto} national policy system where citizens from different regions are able to access comparable programs and benefits. This dissertation has also reinforced the message that equifinality (different causal patterns lead to similar outcomes) and contingency (the institutional settings, cultural contexts, time periods, and situational contexts) matter.

Finally, one of the crucial benefits of the case study approach is the generation of testable hypotheses that can further the advancement of theory.\textsuperscript{902} I have suggested that there are certain conditions under which subnational similarities are more likely to be achieved:

(1) Common societal pressures where there is a high degree of public support and substantial cohesion across the policy community;

(2) A conducive configuration of fiscal federalism; and

(3) Strong connective bonds among the subnational jurisdictions, specifically, overarching legal requirements, formal organizations, and cultural affinities contribute to policy diffusion and may influence the likelihood of convergence.


These hypotheses or propositions provide a viable foundation upon which to pursue a fruitful research agenda that will contribute to bettering our understanding of policy dynamics in settings of multilevel governance.

8.2: Limitations and Future Directions
All research projects nevertheless suffer from certain weaknesses, and this one is no exception to that rule. These limitations, however, help flesh out avenues of future research to set out a promising agenda.

To assess the necessity of national standards, this dissertation used Canada as a crucial case. The findings of this dissertation did succeed in demonstrating that national standards are not a necessary condition for the achievement of subnational policy similarity. Rather, subnational governments can defy the odds through social learning, cooperation, societal pressures, and institutional features of the sector and state. However, by focusing only on Canada, I could not assess the relative significance of alternative forces of policy convergence. Therefore, a comparison with the United States offers a natural extension of my research and would allow a test of the impact of alternative sources of policy convergence. The comparison, for example, would permit an examination of the relative significance of national standards as a source of diffusion and convergence relative to learning and cooperation.

Under a conventional classification schema, Canada is regarded as a decentralized federation. Given the extensive autonomy exercised by the subnational governments, researchers classify the elementary and secondary education sector as highly decentralized. However, looking within the provinces themselves, each jurisdiction has established strong central control over the direction and management of public schooling. Indeed, Canadian education analysts frequently lament what they see as the over-centralization of education policy in the hands of the provincial departments of education at the expense of local school boards. It may therefore be

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that the centralization of the policy sector at the subnational level has enabled the achievement of policy similarities across the Canadian provinces. A comparison with the US could see if centralization at the subnational level acts as a crucial factor that better enables policy diffusion and establishes more conducive conditions for policy convergence.

In seeking an explanation for the substantial similarities that appear among the Canadian provinces, this thesis has implicated the configuration of fiscal federalism and in particular the federal government’s equalization program as a crucial proximate factor. I have also offered a preliminary prescriptive implication of this finding and suggested that unconditional redistributive systems are better suited to achieving subnational similarities in policy sectors. To conclusively support this claim, a deeper analysis of both equalization within Canada and the fiscal arrangements of other states needs to be pursued. Following the trail blazed by such scholars Wallace Oates, Ronald Watts, and Jonathan Rodden, next steps in this research agenda should therefore engage the subject of comparative fiscal federalism.904

While it was not the task of this dissertation to evaluate the substantive benefits of particular configurations of education policy, the successes recorded by the Canadian provinces may offer some useful examples and highlight particular pathways that may be valuable for other countries and subnational political communities. Andreas Schleicher, head of the Indicators and Analysis Division at the Directorate for Education in the OECD, has suggested that the undifferentiated system of secondary school that has been embraced by all the Canadian provinces is a significant factor behind the strong educational results achieved by the country.905 Further research on the determinants of positive outcomes, and in particular how specific education policies achieve certain results would undoubtedly be a fruitful path to take.


There are also implications for students of public policy and historical institutionalism. I have suggested that timing and the commitment among policy actors to destratifying the system were important determinants of subsequent policy change in favour of composite high school. This finding raises consideration of what factors might impede or delay the implementation of a similar policy option in other countries, such as Germany. Such a focused comparison would offer an excellent opportunity to pursue some of the groundbreaking work pioneered by Wolfgang Streek and Kathleen Thelen on understanding the determinants of institutional change.906

This study focused exclusively on the elementary and secondary education sector. To help increase the observable implications, I adapted the policy sector approach and broke the education sector down into five dimensions. This allowed me to see that the processes of policy diffusion can vary among the different dimensions of education where policy actors can be motivated by alternative incentives depending on the subject matter. Some evidence of competition did make an appearance, but the predominant mechanisms of policy diffusion were learning and cooperation. As an area of developmental policy, it could be that the education sector is more amenable to these alternative processes of policy diffusion. To determine the factors that facilitate certain pathways of diffusion, we would need to expand the number of policy sectors under investigation.

Building on the work presented by scholars such as Kathryn Harrison,907 future research should directly compare education with other policy sectors to determine if there are certain features or characteristics that are intrinsic to particular policy sectors that expedite learning and cooperation over coercion and competition, or bring about policy convergence over divergence. For instance, areas of regulatory or redistributive policy such as the environment or unemployment insurance may have difference incentive mechanisms that underpin policy exchanges and developments. Policy actors engaged in these sectors may, for example, face greater pressures to intentionally coerce other communities into certain policy options or pay closer attention to the

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balance of a particular market share that certain policy options generate. Broadening the scope of policy sectors that are investigated under a comparative analysis can help determine if these dynamics are at play.

This raises a simple question: What kind of case is Canadian education? Is the education sector *sui generis* and completely unique where similar findings will never appear elsewhere? Admittedly, few policy areas in Canada share a similar configuration with education. In health care, for example, the federal government plays a more direct role, operates a national department, and maintains national, albeit minimal standards. However, in securities regulation, unlike any other federation, Canada does not have a national regulator operated by the central government. Rather, like education, each of the 13 jurisdictions operates its own securities commission. Collectively, the provinces and territories have managed to fashion a fairly coherent system that has been ranked by both the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank Group as one of the best in the world. Replicating a similar study on Canadian securities regulation could therefore determine the validity of my analysis and flesh out the generalizability of my findings presented here.

This study of Canadian education allowed me to identify the presence of different pathways and factors that led to subnational policy convergence. It seemed that the dense and interconnected networks of policy actors engaged in the education sector promoted the diffusion of ideas and the subsequent interprovincial policy convergence. In each period of Canadian educational development, moreover, the formulation of an ideational consensus – or policy paradigm – became widely accepted across the policy community. This raises an interesting set of questions that cannot be answered here. How does a policy paradigm emerge? What facilitates the spread and acceptance of a paradigm by independent actors and jurisdictions? What factors generate the breakdown of an accepted paradigm? What leads to the replacement of a policy paradigm? These questions could perhaps be answered by drawing upon the insights of such scholars as Peter Hall, Neil Bradford, Will Coleman, and Mark

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In light of the growing interest in ideas and paradigms as causal forces, these are pertinent questions that merit future study.

**Conclusion**

This thesis set out to answer a fundamental question: How is it that Canada developed a “national” education system without federal directives and mandates? In answering this question, I uncovered a remarkable story of subnational learning and cooperation which allowed the Canadian provinces to defy the odds in contrast to the expectations of domestic and international education experts and students of federalism. Since Confederation, education professionals and provincial policy actors dedicated themselves to learn from each other. Their collective efforts were helped along by different types of organizations which developed workable interactions among the various players. Faced with similar problems and embedded within a common policy climate, provincial officials drew lessons and examples from each other when making policy choices. When supported by a functioning intergovernmental organization, moreover, provincial officials increased their capacity to formally cooperate which generated a new mechanism of policy diffusion and elevated the potential for subnational policy similarity.

In completing this study, I have made some important revisions to views of Canada, the investigations of federal systems, and the study of public policy. In contrast to many popular perceptions, when left alone by the federal government, provinces can achieve remarkable accomplishments. When supported with sufficient fiscal capacity, provincial policy actors are powerful agents capable of meeting the needs of their particular citizens while keeping the interests of the country as a whole.

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in mind. By uncovering the significance of learning as a driver of diffusion, my research suggests that the traditional focus on coercion and competition in federal states may require reconsideration. Moreover, I have attempted to show that cooperation should itself be viewed as a mechanism for policy diffusion. Finally, by combining the insights from both the diffusion and convergence literatures, I have sought to better connect mechanisms, factors, and outcomes en route to specifying how context – here known as the policy climate - matters.
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Appendix 1: Odds ratios of the likelihood of students with the lowest socio-economic status to be lowest mathematics performers relative to the likelihood of students with the highest socio-economic status to be lowest mathematics performers (2003)

▲ – country odds ratio is significantly higher than the OECD average odds
▼ – country odds ratio is significantly lower than the OECD average odds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>S.E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>(0.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>(0.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>(0.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>(0.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>(0.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>(0.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>(0.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>(0.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>(0.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>(0.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>(0.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OECD Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>(0.08)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Countries are ranking in ascending order.
Source: Adapted from OECD, *Education at a Glance*, 2006. Table A6.1. p. 91
Appendix 2: Summary of province-wide examinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination and Level</th>
<th>Subjects, sources</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Gr. 10, 11, and 12 students enrolled in courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Gr. 12 students enrolled in course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

911 Adapted from: Ross Traub, *Standardized Testing in Canada: A Survey of Standardized Achievement Testing by Ministries of Education and School Boards*. (Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1994); Marita Moll,
## Appendix 2: Summary of province-wide examinations, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination and Level</th>
<th>Subjects, sources</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MB</strong> Provincial Standards Test</td>
<td>Various core subjects and graduation requirements listed at <a href="http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/docs/pol_proc/pol_proc_07.pdf">http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/assess/docs/pol_proc/pol_proc_07.pdf</a> (accessed on March 19, 2008)</td>
<td>30% of final grade</td>
<td>Locally graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ON</strong> Literacy Test Grade 10</td>
<td>Literacy Test administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office designed to assess whether students have the literacy (reading and writing) skills needed to meet the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Further information listed at <a href="http://www.eqao.com/pdf_e/08/Xe_Framework_07.pdf">http://www.eqao.com/pdf_e/08/Xe_Framework_07.pdf</a> (accessed on March 18, 2008)</td>
<td>Must pass to receive diploma; opportunities to re-write</td>
<td>Centrally graded at EQAO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Summary of province-wide examinations, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination and Level</th>
<th>Subjects, sources</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QU Uniform Ministry Exams</td>
<td>Must pass two levels of languages (language of instruction and second language – FR/ENG) a history, a math, and a science course (From: <a href="http://www.maritamoll.ca">www.maritamoll.ca</a>)</td>
<td>50% of final mark, unless school mark is out of line with exam mark, in which case the exam mark has a higher value</td>
<td>Central grading for multiple choice items; remainder marked locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB Provincial Literacy Assessment</td>
<td>English Language Proficiency Assessment French Immersion Literacy Assessment</td>
<td>Must pass to graduate; opportunities to re-write</td>
<td>Centrally graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 9</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gnb.ca/0000/anglophone-e.asp#e">http://www.gnb.ca/0000/anglophone-e.asp#e</a> (accessed on March 19, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Summary of province-wide examinations, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination and Level</th>
<th>Subjects, sources</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
<th>Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>No System</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>Public Exams</td>
<td>Various subjects listed at <a href="http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/pub/sample.htm">http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/pub/sample.htm</a> (access on March 19, 2008)</td>
<td>50% of final grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 3: Summary of Provincial Assessment Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program and Frequency</th>
<th>Grade level/ students tested</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marking</th>
<th>Purpose of Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Foundation Skills Assessment</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Reading, Writing, Numeracy</td>
<td>Centrally graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Reading, Writing, Numeracy</td>
<td>Individual student results released to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Achievement Testing Program</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>English, Math</td>
<td>Locally first graded and then centrally graded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>English, Math, Science, Social Studies</td>
<td>(both grades contribute to the student’s final mark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>English, Math, Science, Social Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>Social Studies, Knowledge and Employability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3: Summary of Provincial Assessment Programs, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program and Frequency</th>
<th>Grade level/ students tested</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marking</th>
<th>Purpose of Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SK</strong> Assessment for Learning Program</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Locally graded</td>
<td>Locally-determined improvement in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- voluntary participation</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional samples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>English/French</td>
<td>Locally graded</td>
<td>Provincial Averages Released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>English/French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional samples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MB</strong> Provincial Assessment Program</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Reading Lecture</td>
<td>Student Assessment</td>
<td>Summative assessment to show student’s attainment on each level of key competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Lecture Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Schools must submit results to the Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Locally graded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Reading Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Summary of Provincial Assessment Programs, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program and Frequency</th>
<th>Grade level/ students tested</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marking</th>
<th>Purpose of Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ON</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Quality and Assessment Office</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Reading Writing Math</td>
<td>Centrally Graded at EQAO</td>
<td>Student Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Exams</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Reading Writing Math</td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual results released to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provincial, District, School level data publicly released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QU</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory exams</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Language of instruction</td>
<td>Locally graded</td>
<td>System assessment – not for internal board evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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### Appendix 3: Summary of Provincial Assessment Programs, continued

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<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Marking</th>
<th>Purpose of Tests</th>
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Appendix 3: Summary of Provincial Assessment Programs, continued

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Sources for Assessment Programs:
QU: Marita Moll
Appendix 4: Provincial universities offering an education degree

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<td>Simon Fraser</td>
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<td>University of Calgary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concordia University</td>
<td>Consecutive</td>
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<td>King’s University College</td>
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<td>University of Saskatchewan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>University of Regina</td>
<td>Concurrent and Consecutive</td>
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<td>College universitaire de</td>
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<td>Consecutive</td>
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912 Information gathered from a web-based scan of Canadian universities offering a bachelor of education program, searched by individual province and university. Cross-listed this scan with the members of the Association of Canadian Deans of Education. Because membership in the ACDE is not mandatory, it is possible that this list is not comprehensive and the author apologizes for any omissions. Table also does not cover differences in terms of the degree structure, such as generalist (K-12 inclusive) versus a specialist (ECE, Elementary, Middle School, High School, special education, languages, etc.) program.

913 Concurrent programs range between 4 and 5 years; consecutive programs are 2 years with the exception of the Ontario universities, St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, which only take one year to complete.
Appendix 4 – Provincial universities offering an education degree, continued

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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### Appendix 4 - Provincial universities offering an education degree, continued

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<td>Sainte Anne</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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* two-year program completed in 11 months with students specializing in elementary, secondary, or French language
** consecutive program open only to Concordia graduates students
*** either two-year or one year intensive

**NOTE:** Québec universities tend to offer highly specialized programs with separate degrees for ECE, Special Education, French/English as a second language, mathematics, science and technology, history and geography, and social and cultural development. Moreover, consecutive programs have been effectively abandoned. So, if an individual with a BA in history wishes to become a teacher, they must return to university and complete the four-year Bachelors of Education program as opposed to individuals in other provinces who can complete a 1 or 2-year consecutive program that centres on pedagogical training.
Appendix 5: Province of birth of native-born internal migrants in Canada, census dates, 1871 to 1971 \((\text{thousands of persons})\) – Migrants by province of birth.\(^{914}\)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>NS</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>QU</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>MB</th>
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Appendix 6: Province of residence of native-born internal migrants in Canada, census dates, 1871 to 1971.915

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>PEI</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>NB</th>
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<th>MB</th>
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Appendix 7: Government expenditures on public elementary and secondary schools as percentages of total provincial and local government expenditures, selected fiscal years 1913-14 to 1989-90

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<th>NB</th>
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<th>SK</th>
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* The statistical series for provincial government expenditures is broken at 1937-8 and 196506. Hence, two sets of statistics are given for these fiscal years to permit comparison of long-term trends.

** Canada includes the Yukon and Northwest Territories and excludes Newfoundland before 1950-1.

---

Appendix 8: Average government expenditure per pupil on public elementary and secondary schools, selected school/fiscal years, 1900-01 to 1989-90.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/fiscal year</th>
<th>Average expenditure per pupil in current dollars</th>
<th>Coefficient of variability</th>
<th>Average real expenditures per pupil in 1986 dollars</th>
<th>Average annual increase during preceding period (%)</th>
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<td>160</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915</td>
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<td>1945</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>0.33</td>
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917 Source: Manzer, *Public Schools and Political Ideas*, Table 7.9, 129 (all calculations from original author).
Appendix 9: Ratios of enrolments in public elementary and secondary schools to full-time teachers, selected school years, 1895-6 to 1990-1

<table>
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<th>NB</th>
<th>QU</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>MB</th>
<th>SK</th>
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<th>Coefficient of Variability</th>
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</table>

* Canada includes the Yukon and Northwest Territories and excludes Newfoundland before 1950-1

---

918 Source: Manzer, *Public Schools and Political Ideas* Table 7.10, 130 (all calculations from original author).