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Council of
Ministers
of Education,
Canada

Conseil des
ministres
de l'Éducation
(Canada)

**International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2016
“Teachers’ Professional Learning and Growth: Creating the Conditions to Achieve
Quality Teaching for Excellent Learning Outcomes”**

Berlin, Germany

March 3–4, 2016

Report of the Canadian Delegation



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1. Introduction

The sixth International Summit of the Teaching Profession (ISTP 2016) was held in Berlin, Germany, on March 3–4, 2016, under the theme “Teachers’ Professional Learning and Growth: Creating the Conditions to Achieve Quality Teaching for Excellent Learning Outcomes.”

The summit was co-hosted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), in cooperation with eight German private non-profit foundations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Education International (EI), and was moderated by Anthony Mackay, CEO of the Centre for Strategic Education (CES) in Melbourne, Australia.

Welcoming remarks were made by the following representatives:

- Claudia Bogedan, Bremen Senator for Children and Education, and President, KMK;
- Mari Kiviniemi, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD;
- Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary, Education International; and
- The Honourable Doug W. Currie, Chair of CMEC (host of ISTP 2015).

Minister Currie was invited to provide an overview of ISTP 2015, which Canada hosted in Banff, Alberta, on March 29–30, 2015.

Mr. Mackay offered reflections on the progress that countries have made since the 2015 summit and outlined the purpose and format of ISTP 2016.

Andreas Schleicher, Director, OECD Directorate for Education and Skills, presented the OECD background report for the 2016 summit, *Teaching Excellence through Professional Learning and Policy Reform: Lessons from around the World*.

John Bangs, Senior Consultant to the General Secretary, EI, provided a perspective from the teaching profession.

Over 400 participants attended the summit. The event brought together 36 ministers, deputy ministers, union leaders, and teaching professionals from 23 countries.

ISTP was born when US President Barack Obama and former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan came up with the idea of creating a forum in which ministers of education and leaders of teachers’ unions and associations could engage in frank, open discussions about how to improve the quality of education and the teaching profession. As a result, the first and second ISTPs were hosted by the US Department of Education and held in New York City in 2011 and 2012. The third ISTP was hosted by the Netherlands in 2013, the fourth by New Zealand in 2014, and the fifth by Canada in 2015.

2. Canadian delegation

The Honourable Doug W. Currie, Minister of Education, Early Learning, and Culture for Prince Edward Island, and Chair of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), was nominated to represent Canada as head of the delegation. The delegation also included:

- Susan Willis, Deputy Minister, Department of Education, Early Learning, and Culture, Prince Edward Island;
- George Zegarac, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Ontario;
- Heather Smith, President, Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF);
- Josée Scalabrini, President, *Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement – Centrale des syndicats du Québec (FSE-CSQ)*
- Cassandra Hallett DaSilva, Secretary General, CTF;
- Line Camerlain, Vice-President, CSQ;
- H. Mark Ramsankar, Vice-President, CTF, and President, Alberta Teachers' Association;
- Norman Gould, Vice-President, CTF, and President, Manitoba Teachers' Society;
- Chantal C. Beaulieu, Executive Director, CMEC; and
- Antonella Manca-Mangoff, Coordinator, International, CMEC.

3. Main issues discussed

The summit exposed vast differences between countries in terms of (a) the quality and nature of labour relations in education and the progress made since the last summit; (b) how countries seek to strike a balance between ownership and consensus to make education systems more resilient to political changes, on the one hand, and openness and responsiveness to new societal demands (collaboration, consultations, understanding of cultural differences, etc.), on the other; and (c) the delivery architecture through which countries can establish distributed leadership, consistency of focus, and priorities.

3.1. Reflections on ISTP 2015

Every year, participating countries are asked to submit summaries of their actions over the preceding year to follow up on the commitments they made at the previous summit. Drawing on these accounts at the start of the summit, Mr. Mackay provided a summary of the common key themes on which economies have made progress:

- Increased sharing of responsibilities between unions, teachers, and governments in developing practices;
- Deeper levels of commitment to collaborative practices within and between schools and in communities;
- Growth of partnerships as ways of working;
- Investments in learning from teachers practising the field, transferring knowledge, enabling and supporting learners, innovation, etc.;

- Stronger professional leadership, more teacher leaders within and between schools and across the system;
- Commitment to ongoing professional learning based on jointly developed professional standards, including career pathways;
- Greater investment in early childhood education and care (ECE);
- Explicit investments in digital technology and platforms for learning; and
- Given the plight of refugees, a stronger commitment to well-being and inclusiveness as an urgent, central issue for education.

3.2. OECD Background report – “2016: Teaching Excellence through Professional Learning and Policy Reform” – framing the issues

In his report, “2016: Teaching Excellence through Professional Learning and Policy Reform,” Mr. Schleicher outlined the broader expectations that teachers face in the 21st century, and what this entails in terms of the skills and qualities that teachers need; what is meant by continuous and effective professional learning and development for teachers; and the implications for policy. The report also emphasized how to engage the teaching profession in teacher learning and development and in education reform in general. He noted that good teaching is based on the implementation of good practices and attracting quality teachers. He also stated that the level of autonomy a teacher is given determines his or her level of satisfaction; it is a strong driver of professionalism and motivation.

Mr. Schleicher emphasized that successful reforms are based on the following key principles:

- Engaging teachers in the implementation and design of the reform;
- Using and evaluating pilot projects before proceeding with a full implementation;
- Supporting reforms with sustainable financing;
- Giving careful consideration to the timing of implementation; and
- Building partnerships with unions when designing and implementing reforms.

3.3. Plenary sessions

This year’s summit was divided into three sessions that addressed the following themes:

- Session 1: Drawing on the lessons from previous teaching summits: what competencies — skills, knowledge, and dispositions — do successful teachers require?
- Session 2: Which policies help foster teachers’ competencies so that they are effectively prepared for teaching?
- Session 3: Implementing policies that promote teachers’ professional learning and growth: what are the challenges and opportunities?

Based on Mr. Schleicher’s report, the discussions in all three sessions centred on the importance of preparing teachers to face the challenges of our current diverse environment and the need to give them greater autonomy.

Collaboration — joint efforts and resources made and shared by unions, governments, and teachers — is fundamental to developing teachers’ interest. This is a powerful way for

stakeholders to broker learning across the system. Many policy-makers described teachers as crucial components of change and progress. They spoke of empowering teachers with authority and shifting paradigms in the teaching profession. They discussed the notions of a shared vision and distributed leadership, of making choices together, and of providing the space teachers need to have their voices heard and influence change.

Minister Currie stated that the union voice is central to discussions on education across the country. He noted that many provinces and territories, including Prince Edward Island, are rolling out strong reforms on teacher development, and consultations are taking place with all stakeholders in an effort to bring fundamental changes to the system.

Heather Smith observed that trust is needed between partners. She acknowledged that governments do provide training but that teachers' unions often fill in the gaps with respect to other types of knowledge.

Josée Scalabrini stressed that teachers must be given autonomy to be creative, innovative, and able to take risks, as well as be agents of change, but must also be prepared to embrace this autonomy in order to bring about change.

Ms. Scalabrini noted that, when responding to a Quebec teacher survey on barriers to professional development, 85 per cent of teachers pointed to a lack of time, a heavy workload, and the need for appropriate training, and 81 per cent admitted to having received training that did not support their needs. Respondents also stated that teachers should be allowed to determine what those needs are and which practices would best support them. She observed that teachers should be respected as professionals rather than having a top-down approach imposed on them.

Singapore noted that teachers need a competitive environment that drives autonomy and the delivery of curriculum, as well as leadership training, and that knowledge and skills can be learned, but the notions of value and citizenship, as well as leadership characteristics, take time to develop. He added that teachers also need to understand and be reflective of their own learning, and that there is often a difference between what they say should happen in their classrooms and what they actually teach.

Germany noted that teaching is a calling, a profession, and that teachers must have intrinsic motivation.

Austria spoke of the need for teachers with many years' experience to adapt to new approaches and stay motivated, and noted that teacher-centred classrooms are no longer tenable.

In the face of rising extremism and polarization, conversations also centred around how schools can better prepare teachers and students to value plurality, navigate a world in which people of diverse cultural backgrounds need to collaborate with one another, and appreciate different ideas, perspectives, and values.

Germany, which has taken in more than 300,000 refugees, reminded participants how important it is to prepare teachers to face the issue of integration of refugees and special-needs children.

Many delegates underscored the fundamental cultural shift that must occur in our schools and how they must adapt to this new reality. Minister Currie noted that a key issue all have to tackle in view of the growing number of refugees entering our countries is the well-being of children, and that a balance between supporting teachers and providing them with the appropriate training and skills they require to face very challenging situations needs to be found.

The USA noted that teachers must be aware of and able to embrace cultural diversity and gender biases; they should be able to support students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds. The system, therefore, must be prepared to recruit a diverse workforce that is aligned with this plurality.

It was interesting to hear that Singapore decided to keep larger classes, opting instead for the scaffolding of teachers and thereby reducing their workload to allow them to receive more mentoring hours — up to 100 hours per year per teacher. This is part of their system redesign, in which teachers are invited to learn by observing, peer-learning, and collaborating. This system allows schools to provide teachers with more professional training without disrupting teaching schedules.

Asia Society spoke of the professional development and peer-learning instituted in the Shanghai school system, where every teacher has a mentor and works with learning groups for one hour a week. This teacher-directed system is based on three key elements: the principle that the profession matters; teacher recognition; and professional learning. Teachers are also given a lot of autonomy, which boosts their motivation and confidence in the system. In addition, teacher training is prescribed by law. It was therefore noted that the focus is on professional development first, and then on the subject.

The Czech Republic emphasized the importance of taking into account teachers' years of experience and of considering different approaches for elementary and high-school teachers, whereby more experienced teachers become mentors, and this is reflected in their salary, class sizes, etc.

3.4. Country delegation meetings

At the conclusion of the summit, delegations were invited to come together to determine a set of commitments that they would translate into actions.

The Canadian delegation committed to the following for 2016–17:

1. Strengthening Indigenous education through pre-service training and ongoing professional learning

Teacher training and ongoing professional learning need to support the integration of Indigenous knowledge into the classroom. To fulfill this commitment, the necessary funding and resources need to be allocated for the inclusion of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, and perspectives in curricula, teacher training, and ongoing professional learning in Indigenous education. Curricula, training, and professional learning should be developed in collaboration with Indigenous teachers and Elders.

2. Developing the educator’s role in early childhood learning and development

Early childhood education and care is increasingly recognized as a pivotal factor in children’s development. As a result, more professional learning and resources are needed to support educators in early-years programs in understanding and implementing approaches that nurture learning and development in the early years.

3. Implementing the necessary conditions to allow for teacher leadership through professional learning developed and led by teachers

Teachers are professionals with the capacity to lead in classrooms, schools, and communities. In response to global challenges in education such as the increasing diversity and complexity of our classrooms, teachers are tasked with providing effective and inclusive programming. To support teachers in fostering global competencies and positively impacting student learning, it is essential to encourage creative, collaborative, and self-directed professional learning.

The delegation will work together in the coming months to prepare the follow-up actions on the ISTP 2016 commitments and to develop the three commitments that will be presented in Scotland, the future host of ISTP 2017.

3.5 Closing session

Messages were clear and strong regarding the hard choices that economies have to make in order to create effective learning environments, improve working conditions, and allocate resources in the most efficient manner.

Collaboration and peer-learning should be the basis of any system redesign. Teacher autonomy is essential to developing a system that is efficient and motivating. Allowing teachers to personalize their learning in groups or individually and to align their skills and values with children’s needs is a matter of trust in and recognition of the teaching profession.

Delegates agreed that designing systems that are efficient and sustain the needs of both teachers and students calls for enabling governments, a willingness to engage with

stakeholders, the capacity for deep engagement and collaboration, and a disposition for exploration and experimentation. In short, economies need a profession capable of leading improvement, innovation, and change.

4. Other events

4.1. Signature ceremony for the alliance declaration between the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK), and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)

KMK proposed an alliance to facilitate education cooperation between federated countries.

The alliance declaration (see APPENDIX I) was officially signed on March 2, 2016, on the margins of ISTP 2016, by the following representatives of KMK, EDK, and CMEC:

- For KMK: Dr. Claudia Bogedan, Senator for Children and Education of Bremen, and President, KMK;
- For EDK: Christian Amsler, *Regierungspräsident* [minister], *Erziehungsdepartement Kt Schaffhausen*, EDK;
- For CMEC: The Honourable Doug W. Currie, Minister of Education, Early Learning, and Culture, Prince Edward Island, and Chair of CMEC.

Ministers were accompanied by the heads of their respective secretariats:

- Udo Michallik, Secretary General, KMK
- Hans Ambühl, Secretary General, EDK
- Chantal C. Beaulieu, Executive Director, CMEC

The alliance between the three bodies will provide opportunities for:

- the exchange of information on issues relating to the political and administrative management of education in decentralized federal systems, as well as on current education policy reforms and implementation processes in the fields of early childhood, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education; and
- cooperation on issues of common interest, particularly on processes toward the determination of positions to be stated in various education-related multilateral forums (e.g., OECD, UNESCO, etc.).

KMK, EDK, and CMEC ministers are to meet periodically (e.g., at future ISTPs) to discuss collaboration. Similar entities from other federated countries may join the declaration, subject to the consent of KMK, EDK, and CMEC. It is important to note that the agreement is not an international treaty and is not legally binding.

The three organizations are planning to hold a teleconference in May 2016 to discuss a draft plan that will include common areas of collaboration.

4.2. School visits

Prior to the summit, on March 2, the members of the Canadian delegation had the opportunity to visit two schools: *Walter-Gropius-Schule* and *Brillat-Savarin Schule* (which includes the Hotel Regent Berlin as part of its vocational school).

- **Walter-Gropius-Schule** is an interdenominational school from Grade 1 through to *Abitur* (a designation used in Germany for final exams that pupils take at the end of their secondary education) in Grades 12 or 13. The school has been breaking new ground since 2010 to provide each student with individual teaching and to boost his or her social skills, thus making the student's start in university or vocational training easier and more successful. The curriculum and teaching methodology have been reorganized to meet these needs. Examples of these innovations include free all-day care at the primary level; performance differentiation in English, German, and mathematics in Grades 7 and 8 in middle school; or a bilingual mathematics course in the senior grades up to *Abitur*.
- **Brillat-Savarin-Schule** is the largest school in the German hospitality sector, with 4,821 students in 193 classes, 153 teachers, six teachers for practical training, 18 student teachers, and 20 additional staff members. *Brillat-Savarin Schule* has a training canteen where trainee chefs offer fresh meals on a daily basis within the scope of a teaching project. The school prepares students and trainees for vocational training, advanced vocational training, and vocational grammar school, with a focus on initial vocational education. The **Hotel Regent Berlin** is a five-star hotel affiliated with *Brillat-Savarin-Schule* and provides the opportunity to train hotel managers and chefs in a luxury hotel setting.

4.3. Bilateral meetings

A bilateral meeting was organized on the margins of ISTP 2016 with the delegation from Japan. This provided an opportunity to discuss CMEC's upcoming attendance at the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Education, May 13–15, 2016, in Kurashiki, Japan, where discussions will centre on global competencies, one of CMEC's key priorities.

Other informal bilateral meetings with Finland, Germany, and Singapore took place during the ministerial lunches and banquet.

5. Follow-up for CMEC

The key discussions and outcomes from the summit will be shared by Minister Currie at the CMEC table so that all jurisdictions can benefit from Canada's participation in the event.

The Canadian delegation will work together in the coming months to prepare for Canada's participation in ISTP 2017, in Scotland. This will involve face-to-face meetings, teleconferences,

and consultations with provinces and territories (CMEC) as well as union members (CTF) to devise a common position for the next summit.

The CMEC Secretariat will also continue to provide provinces and territories with information about the emerging trends in education that are discussed and presented at these meetings.



Declaration by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education, and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, on strengthening education cooperation in federated countries

The Federal Republic of Germany ('Germany'), the Swiss Confederation, and Canada each have a decentralized federal system in which education is under the jurisdiction of: the lander in Germany, the cantons in Swiss Confederation, and the provinces and (through a delegation of power) the territories in Canada.

In these countries, education ministers have established mechanisms for exchange and consultation at the national level. In Germany, this responsibility lies with the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK), in the Swiss Confederation with the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK), and in Canada with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

The KMK, EDK, and CMEC share common interests on education matters and, in view of their comparable structures, face similar challenges in determining, when necessary, a common position with regard to an education matter at the national and international levels.

In light of the above,

- the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany,

- the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education,

and

- the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada,

wish to express their desire to strengthen education cooperation through this Declaration.

The KMK, EDK, and CMEC, subject to the approval of their member ministers, declare their willingness to:

- exchange information on issues relating to the political and administrative management of education in decentralized federal systems;
- cooperate on issues of common interest, particularly on processes toward the determination of positions to be stated in various education-related multilateral forums (e.g., the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, etc.); and
- exchange information on current education policy reforms and implementation processes in the fields of early childhood, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

The KMK, EDK, and CMEC declare their firm intention to respect the division of internal jurisdiction in Germany, the Swiss Confederation, and Canada, in the context of their cooperation. Subject to the consent of all parties, further ministries, authorities, and institutions responsible for education at the national level may become involved in the cooperation, on the recommendation of the KMK, EDK, or CMEC, depending on the country of origin of the ministry, authority, or institution concerned.

Subject to the consent of all parties, similar entities from other federally organized countries may join this Declaration.

This Declaration is not an international treaty and cannot serve as a basis for any rights or obligations under international law.

For the Standing Conference of the
Ministers of Education
and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in
the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK)



Dr. Claudia Bogedan
President of the KMK

For the Swiss Conference
of Cantonal Ministers
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Christian Amsler, Cantonal Councillor
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Doug W. Currie
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