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Council of
Ministers
of Education,
Canada

Conseil des
ministres
de l'Éducation
(Canada)

The International Summit on the Teaching Profession

New York, United States

March 16–17, 2011

Report of the Canadian Delegation

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I. Canadian Delegation

- The Honourable Doug W. Currie, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for Prince Edward Island, as head of the delegation;
- Dr. Alexander MacDonald, Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for Prince Edward Island, as advisor to Minister Currie on domestic issues that may arise at the meeting;
- Keray Henke, Deputy Minister of Alberta Education, as the Head of the Canadian Delegation to the Education Policy Committee (EPC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- Kevin Costante, Deputy Minister of Education for Ontario;
- Daniel Buteau, Coordinator of Elementary-Secondary Education, as the CMEC-nominated member.

In addition, CMEC participants were joined by the leaders to two teachers' unions:

- Mary-Lou Donnelly, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation
- Réjean Parent, President of the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec*.

Lastly, even though he was not part of the official Canadian delegation, Ben Levin, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Education Leadership and Policy at the University of Toronto, was also invited by the OECD to act as a rapporteur for the discussion on teacher engagement in education reform.

II. Introduction

The US Department of Education, together with OECD, Education International, and several US-based organizations, hosted the first International Summit on the Teaching Profession. The event marked the first time that education ministers, teachers, and union leaders from around the world convened to discuss best practices in building a world-class teaching force. In his welcoming remarks, US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stressed that the summit was designed as a forum for conversation and discussion and not as a speech-making opportunity. He also stated that he approached the event with humility, wishing to learn from others how to better support the teaching profession to ensure enhanced educational outcomes.

1. Objectives of the Summit

- To improve the teaching profession by sharing promising practices from around the world;
- To gather education ministers and teachers' union leaders from countries and regions with high-performing and rapidly improving education systems to talk about approaches to building a highly effective teaching force.

2. Main Themes of the Summit

- Teacher Recruitment and Preparation;
- Development, Support, and Retention of Teachers;
- Teacher Evaluation and Compensation;
- Teacher Engagement in Education Reform.

III. Structure and Key Participants of the Summit

The meeting's main objective was to highlight best practices and generate strategies to strengthen the teaching profession. To involve all key stakeholders in such a discussion, the OECD and Education International wished to ensure that teachers' union leaders from participating countries had equal status with ministers responsible for education. All countries had the opportunity to designate four spokespersons. The Canadian delegation's spokespersons were:

- The Honourable Doug W. Currie as head of the delegation;
- Kevin Costante as the representative of the premier of Ontario;
- Mary-Lou Donnelly as the teachers' union representative for Canada, with the exception of francophone Quebec;
- Réjean Parent as the teachers' union representative for francophone Quebec.

The meeting was structured as a series of discussions on the four identified themes. Discussion on each theme was introduced by the minister and union leader from two designated countries, followed by open discussion among officials from national delegations. Each discussion also featured a Q&A session in which all other attendees, including participants from the public, were invited to participate. These four sessions concluded with a wrap-up presentation from a rapporteur selected by the organizers.

Countries selected to participate in the summit were represented by both the minister responsible for education and key teacher's union leaders. Interestingly, some invited countries, such as France, declined to participate as they did not wish to showcase discussions between their minister and union leaders on the international stage. It should also be mentioned that tension was palpable between the minister and union leaders of certain countries. The People's Republic of China was represented only by political leaders, who stated at the summit that a different political system precluded the participation of teachers' representatives. The summit was held at the instigation of Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education.

Selected participants from the public were also invited to attend the summit, mainly as observers. Most invitees were selected through the US National Teacher of the Year program.

IV. Interventions by the Canadian Delegation

Given the structure of the meeting as an open discussion among political and union leaders, as well as the attendance of a good number of members of the public, Canadian perspectives were well represented by a variety of participants. Particularly notable were contributions from international participants who quoted best practices from jurisdictions within Canada. During his welcoming address, host Secretary of Education Arne Duncan highlighted the need to strengthen and elevate the teaching profession, quoting Ontario as an example of a jurisdiction where strong teacher unions contribute to a high-performing education system. He also cited Ontario as a leader in providing career advancement opportunities for teachers. The introductory session also included a video address by Premier McGuinty, who stressed the success in Ontario achieved by both Canadian-born and immigrant students.

Members of the Canadian delegation were active participants in discussions on all four themes. It should also be noted that the delegation demonstrated a spirit of collaboration throughout the summit.

1. Teacher Recruitment and Preparation

Mary-Lou Donnelly and Ben Levin discussed a perceived loss of teacher autonomy that could be rectified through enhancing teachers' sense of professional responsibility. Ms. Donnelly also mentioned that the apparent feminization of the teaching profession could potentially be contributing to a perceived devaluing of the profession. Mr. Levin also highlighted the importance of recruiting a diverse teaching force, including Aboriginal teachers, which could be further strengthened through enhanced processes for the recognition of foreign credentials. During the Q & A session, PEI Deputy Minister of Education Alexander MacDonald raised the importance of further exploring the link between the perceived feminization of the teaching profession and emerging concerns about the lower academic performance of boys.

2. Development, Support and Retention of Teachers

Mary-Lou Donnelly highlighted the growing pressures on teachers' time due to increasing expectations with regard to curriculum reforms and the administration of assessment tools, which may have a negative impact on teachers' capacity for ongoing professional development. Ben Levin expressed the wish to change the focus of the discussion from teachers to the act of teaching, which would put the spotlight on the skills required by educators.

3. Teacher Evaluation and Compensation

The Honourable Doug Currie highlighted the need to make teacher evaluation a truly collaborative process, in which strong partnerships are established between teachers and school boards, as well as between school boards and the ministries responsible for education. He also cited Ontario as a leader in demonstrating fruitful partnerships between government and teachers' unions. Kevin Costante discussed the importance of ensuring that teacher evaluation be at the heart of a continuous development process. In Ontario, such processes are based on 16 identified competencies approved by

the Ontario College of Teachers. He also stressed the need to ensure proper training for those performing teacher evaluations.

4. Teacher Engagement in Education Reform

Mary-Lou Donnelly stated that for education reform to be successful, all key partners need to be at the table, which can only be accomplished through continuously building trust.

Ben Levin, as rapporteur for this session, stated that securing strategic relationships between governments and teachers' unions emerged as the key challenge at the summit.

5. Closing Remarks from OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría

Interestingly, Secretary-General Gurría used Canada as an example on the following issues:

- reaching out to recruit teachers from all societal groups;
- how to harmonize professional and career development with school and system change;
- how in-service training, appraisal, and rewards can be closely aligned;
- how learning that improves individual competencies goes hand in hand with cooperation among teachers to produce better instruction in the classroom;
- the need to spend budgets in ways that make the greatest difference to student learning;
- the need to allow time for reforms to take effect.

V. Main Outcomes of the Summit

The key conclusions from the summit are summarized in a report entitled *Improving Teacher Quality Around the World: The International Summit on the Teaching Profession*. The report is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/international/teaching-summit.html>. There are:

- Significant change is possible. Contrary to what is often assumed, a high-quality teaching force is not due simply to a traditional cultural respect for teachers; it is a result of deliberate policy choices that are carefully implemented over time. Cultural context clearly matters. Different cultures have different ideas about the role of teachers and the teaching profession. Nevertheless, there are many success stories to share. The highest-performing countries show that thoughtfully designed and purposefully executed, systemic initiatives can build a high-quality teaching workforce. This was one very hopeful message that emerged from the summit.
- To succeed, reform efforts cannot tackle just one small piece of the puzzle, but must instead be part of a comprehensive approach. Teacher-related policies need to be linked to both curricular and school-management reform. New kinds of school leadership, for example, are central to creating and sustaining the conditions that make professional practice possible. High-quality

education is the result of a system, not just individual teachers. If you put a high-quality teacher recruit into a dysfunctional school environment, “the system wins every time.” The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, but neither will the quality of teaching exceed the quality of the systems in place to recruit, train, develop, and advance teachers.

- The discussions echoed the importance of “getting it right from the start.” High-performing systems build their human resource systems by putting the energy up front in attracting, training, and supporting good teachers rather than at the back end by means of reduction through attrition and firing weak teachers. Trust, cooperation, and a common ethical commitment to equality through education are required of all the institutions involved, including the colleges and universities that educate our future teachers.
- Making teaching an attractive profession requires more than recruitment campaigns. It means supporting continuous learning; developing career structures to give new roles to “master teachers”; and engaging strong teachers as active agents in school reform, not just as implementers of plans designed by others. Teachers need to be respected as skillful professionals and active masters of educational advancement. This will require strengthening the knowledge base of education and developing a culture of research and reflection in schools, so that teaching and learning can be based on the best available knowledge.
- The area of sharpest discussion and disagreement was certainly the design and implementation of fair and effective teacher-evaluation systems. On this issue, a host of questions and issues were raised:
 - 1) the balance between teacher and school evaluations;
 - 2) the definition of “quality,” and which evaluation criteria to use;
 - 3) the need for evaluator training;
 - 4) ways to protect teachers from discrimination;
 - 5) whether and how evaluations should be tied to compensation;
 - 6) the dangers of distorting an education system by relying on narrow measures of effectiveness; and finally,
 - 7) the importance of seeing teacher evaluation within the broader context of what makes a successful education system.

All of these are issues and questions that remain to be addressed and resolved. In order to make progress on any of these fronts, it will be essential for governments and teachers’ organizations to work together to invent a new vision for the teaching profession. There is no quick-fix formula for raising the status and quality of teaching. It requires a long-term commitment — one that transcends government terms. It will also be necessary to move from a conversation among elites to a broader dialogue with other stakeholders in the system.

VI. Specific Recommendations Arising from the Summit

The report entitled *Improving Teacher Quality Around the World: The International Summit on the Teaching Profession* identifies a set of recommendations to be considered by each participating country according to its particular challenges and stage of development. These are:

- raising the quality and rigor of teacher-training programs, linked to professional standards;
- attracting high-quality and motivated teachers, especially from under-represented groups or geographical regions;
- creating a more robust evidence base for teaching and learning, including preparing teachers to participate in research on best practices and student outcomes;
- designing a comprehensive but cost-effective professional-development system, with input from teachers;
- redesigning training for school leaders and school boards to support teaching and learning;
- creating a teacher-appraisal system to promote professional improvement and student learning;
- making policy development a partnership between government and teachers' organizations, and including a broad range of stakeholders in the process of improving the system.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations of the Canadian Delegation

Members of the Canadian delegation agreed that education systems within Canada have made a good deal of progress on all the issues discussed at the summit, and were pleased with the high and positive profile Canada maintained throughout the summit. Mary-Lou Donnelly also stated that issues of professional autonomy and professional development are viewed as of key importance for continuous progress by the teaching profession in Canada.

In closing the summit, US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan committed to hosting a second summit in 2012, and the Netherlands delegation indicated a willingness to host a third summit in 2013.

Given the high level of ministerial engagement demonstrated at the summit, as well as the high regard in which Canada is held with regard to issues related to the teaching profession, it is highly recommended that CMEC continue to coordinate the participation of the Canadian delegation for the next International Summit on the Teaching Profession.

Agenda

THE INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 16th (American Museum of Natural History)

Facilitator: Tony Mackay

2:00 pm	Buses depart from Hilton New York
2:30 pm	Guests arrive at American Museum of Natural History
3:00 pm	<p>Welcome</p> <p>Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary of Education International Barbara Ischinger, Education Director of OECD</p> <p>Summit goals—purpose and outcomes; topics to be covered</p>
3:30 pm	<p>Framing the issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher recruitment and preparation • Development, support and retention of teachers • Teacher evaluation and compensation • Teacher engagement in education reform <p>Framer: Andreas Schleicher</p>
4:15 pm	<p>Teacher Recruitment and Preparation</p> <p>Discussion Starters: Finland and Hong Kong, SAR Roundtable discussion Q&A from attendees</p> <p>Rapporteur: Fernando Reimers</p>
6:15 pm	Reception
6:45 pm – 9:00 pm	<p>Dinner</p> <p>Welcome from Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City</p>
End of dinner	Buses depart for Hilton New York

Thursday, March 17th (Hilton New York)

Facilitator: Tony Mackay

7:00 am	Breakfast
8:00 am	<p>Development, Support and Retention of Teachers</p> <p>Discussion Starters: People's Republic of China and United Kingdom</p> <p>Roundtable discussion</p> <p>Q&A from attendees</p> <p>Rapporteur: Kai-ming Cheng</p>
10:00 am	<p>Teacher Evaluation and Compensation</p> <p>Discussion Starter: Singapore</p> <p>Roundtable discussion</p> <p>Q&A from attendees</p> <p>Rapporteur: Linda Darling-Hammond</p>
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	<p>Teacher Engagement in Education Reform</p> <p>Discussion Starters: Norway and United States</p> <p>Roundtable discussion</p> <p>Q&A from attendees</p> <p>Rapporteur: Ben Levin</p>
3:30 pm	Coffee Break
4:00 pm	<p>What Have We Learned?</p> <p>Andreas Schleicher and session rapporteurs</p>
5:30 pm	<p>Where Do We Go from Here?</p> <p>Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education</p> <p>Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of OECD</p> <p>Susan Hopgood, President of Education International</p>
6:00 pm	Reception