

NEWS RELEASE

Increasing number of Ontarians choosing independent schools over government schools

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For Immediate Release

TORONTO—Enrolment at independent schools in Ontario—as a share of total enrolment—increased over a recent 19-year period, while the share of enrolment in government schools declined, according to a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

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

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

In Ontario, independent school enrolment—as a share of total enrolment—increased from 4.9 per cent in 2000/01 to 6.9 per cent in 2019/20.

Over the same period, enrolment at government schools—again, as a share of total enrolment—declined from 95.1 per cent to 92.8 per cent.

Crucially, unlike Quebec and western Canada, Ontario offers no financial support to parents choosing independent schools.

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

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