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Council of
Ministers
of Education,
Canada

Conseil des
ministres
de l'Éducation
(Canada)

**The Education World Forum 2012
Global Summit for Education Ministers
“Learning from the best for a world of change”**

London, United Kingdom

January 9–11, 2012

Report of the Canadian delegation



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1. Introduction

Every year, Canada is invited to participate in the Education World Forum (EWF). The forum is built on previous Moving Young Minds (MYM) and Learning and Technology World Forum (LATWF) events. The first LATWF took place in January 2009, building on the worldwide reputation and success of MYM. The MYM ministerial seminar was hosted for the first time in January 2004, with the objective of sharing and discussing national experiences about information and communication technology (ICT) and e-learning.

“Learning from the best for a world of change” was the theme of the Education World Forum, which took place in London from 9 to 11 January, 2012.

UNESCO’s Director-General, Irina Bokova, gave a keynote address and presented the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers. Close to 60 education ministers participated in this annual global summit, which examined where rapid progress is taking place in education and showcased effective education policies and strategies that are driving success. In her address, the Director-General stressed the need for “fit to size” solutions: “Progress is more than a question of money. We need to match capacity with needs (...), skills with the world of work (...). We must make the most of innovation.” She also reiterated that education is the key to a country’s economic success and creates sustainable economies.

The forum is hosted by the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA), with support from the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the UK Department for Education, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), and several industry partners. The annual summit for ministers of education and their immediate delegations is a closed event, with participation by official invitation only.

EWF is held to coincide with the opening of the annual British Educational Training and Technology (BETT) show, one of the world’s leading education and technology events. For more information about BETT, please visit www.bettshow.com.

2. The Canadian delegation

The Honourable Line Beauchamp, Minister of Education, *Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec*, was nominated by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, to represent the provinces and territories as head of the delegation. The delegation also included:

- Patrick Huot, *Député à l’Assemblée nationale et adjoint parlementaire à la présidente du Conseil du trésor du Québec*
- Antonella Manca-Mangoff, Coordinator, International, CMEC Secretariat

3. Program

Dominic Savage, Director General of BESA and Director of the forum, welcomed participants and invited the keynote speaker, Princess Gusti Kangjeng Ratu Pembayun of Yodyakarta, to say a few words of welcome. The forum was chaired by Willy Roe, Scotland Commissioner to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

Leaders were invited to reflect on the financial challenges that have led many to question the purpose of education, on their education policies and strategies that are helping them achieve success, and on some of the challenges they face and the solutions they may employ to meet these challenges.

Speakers were invited to elucidate the purpose of education in the current world economy, examine the effective organization of informal and formal education, and reflect on the role that communication technologies can and may play in support of their strategies, particularly the particularly potential influence of mobile technologies on teaching and learning and whether such technologies can contribute to both formal and informal learning and student progress and success.

Participants were also asked to consider the importance of the role of the teacher and teacher development and the importance of networks and communities in enabling changes in practice and to relate these changes to the challenges they face and the strategies they have adopted, including how to leverage the power of teachers teaching to share and co-create learning and how to ensure that learners' voices are not isolated but are partners in addressing many issues in impoverished countries and in shaping policies. Also noted was the crucial role of governments in giving students a voice, having students on advisory councils, giving them a platform, and providing opportunities for informal exchanges.

The need to define clear objectives within a certain context was emphasized; for example, the development of basic reading skills and use of rigorous evaluation to have evidence that results are being achieved.

Leaders were invited to discuss how governments and the private sector can work more closely together to attract and engage the interest of a greater number of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) students, since these areas are viewed by an increasing number of countries as critical and central to their education development plans, and what mix of STEM and creative subject matter is most likely to lead to successful outcomes.

The program for the forum is available from the CMEC Secretariat upon request.

4. Observations of the Canadian delegation

The Education World Forum is now recognized as one of the leading international events focused on the development of ICT for learning. Discussions typically centre on ways in which technology can support change in the education sector. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss issues that many countries face, share experiences, and strengthen the bonds between countries.

In a country as vast as Canada, technology and distance education have provided access to programs in many remote communities. Technology also allows smaller schools to have access to programs that they could not access otherwise. Canada is home to Athabasca University in Alberta, an accredited research institution and a Canadian leader in flexible on-line postsecondary education, offering a wide variety of courses to students around the world.

Participation in the EWF provides the opportunity to share our expertise and examples of how we use technology in our schools. It is also an occasion to discuss common issues, understand different education systems, and to spread the knowledge about our diversified education system. We benefit from the opportunity to learn from participating countries, as they learn from us.