



BACKGROUND

Cardus Education Survey 2016

What is the Cardus Education Survey?

Since 2011, Cardus Education has led the way in measuring graduate outcomes from religious independent schools, including evangelical Protestant, Catholic independent, and religious homeschools. This is the fourth in a series of reports alternating between Canadian and US data.

Why was this survey conducted?

Our goal is to provide a “fuller picture of Canadian graduates.” Too many studies of graduate outcomes provide a reductive analysis of how well education prepares one for a good job. While this matters, our report includes a much broader focus that also examines the school effects on political involvement and religious orientation, habits of home and social ties, levels of trust in institutions, and how much a graduate gives of his or her time and resources.

What is the survey’s key finding?

Private education does not, as some stereotypes might have it, create a secluded, privileged class that is largely uninterested in the common good. In fact, the 2016 survey found the opposite to be true for non-government schools, confirming the findings of our last Canadian survey in 2012. If one were to examine the data for Christian private schools specifically, the survey would show their graduates meet or exceed all aims of public education across Canada:

- **Be valuable contributors to the economy and value further education and life-long learning**
Christian private school graduates are just as equipped to find work and attain credentials after high school as public school graduates. Evangelical Protestant graduates are more socially mobile and more likely to be in managerial or professional roles.
- **Be informed citizens who value democratic participation and civic engagement**
This is the fourth in a series of rigorous and credible research studies to demonstrate that Christian private schools are not breeding grounds for political extremism. Evangelical Protestant graduates are in fact less likely to be involved in political activities than public school graduates and demonstrate similar levels of trust and confidence in society and its institutions.
- **Be confident, responsible, self-sufficient, honest, fair, and ethical adults**
Evangelical Protestant and independent Catholic graduates are more likely to volunteer in non-church organisations. Evangelical Protestants are more likely to give blood, to donate to charity and to report that they feel responsible for the welfare of others than public school graduates.
- **Contribute to a peaceful, pluralistic, and cohesive society**
The graduates of independent Catholic schools have a more diverse set of social ties than public school graduates. The graduates of evangelical Protestant schools have social ties just as diverse

as those of public school graduates. Graduates from private independent Christian schools value tolerance to the same degree as do public school graduates.

- **Live personally fulfilled and healthy lives**

Private Christian school graduates report a significantly more positive view of their secondary education and are more likely to believe that they were prepared for life after high school. (This study does not measure the health of graduates.)

Who led this project?

Dr. Beth Green, Program Director of Cardus Education, directed the research for CES 2016. She earned her DPhil from Oxford University, has deep experience in educational research, and has worked as a high school history teacher in the UK. Dr. Green has an international reputation for her expertise in religious school ethos; leadership and management; teaching and learning; and social theory in education. She regularly publishes her empirical research in international journals including the *British Journal of Sociology and Education* and the *Cambridge Journal of Education*.

The 2016 Cardus Education Study includes a survey of randomly selected Canadians that was administered by MARU Group, formerly the Research and Consulting division of Vision Critical. Dr. David Sikkink, associate professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame and director of the Cardus Religious Schools Initiative, served as principal investigator.

About Cardus

Cardus is a think tank dedicated to the renewal of North American social architecture. It conducts independent and original research, produces several periodicals, and regularly stages events with Senior Fellows and interested constituents across Canada and the U.S. To learn more, visit: <https://www.cardus.ca/> and follow us on Twitter @cardusca.

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