Association of Canadian Community Colleges

ACCC is the national and international voice of publicly funded colleges and institutes in Canada, working with industry and social sectors to train 1.5 million learners of all ages and backgrounds at campuses serving over 3,000 urban, rural and remote communities from coast to coast to coast.

Colleges are the advanced skills educators of choice. Advisory Committees comprising local employers ensure that college programs align with employers’ requirements and operate on the leading edge of skills identification, economic trends, and market shifts. Colleges support business growth and sustainability by supplying graduates with advanced skills, re-skilling employees, offering customized education, and providing applied research and development support. They help the disadvantaged gain access to post-secondary education, in particular Indigenous peoples, the disabled and newcomers to Canada.
Summary Report

Background

The National Skills Summit, organized by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), assembled senior leaders across economic and social sectors, key government leaders and CEOs of member colleges and institutes across Canada. Participants shared perspectives on solutions and go-forward actions to address the skills shortages in Canada.

Many sectors in Canada are identifying labour supply challenges. For some, like the construction sector, "... the need for skilled employees is unprecedented," said Michael Atkinson, President of the Canadian Construction Association. Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters report 40% of their members are not meeting sales demands due to a shortage of skilled workers.

In addition, technology is driving the need for a more specialized workforce. The workplace has changed and employers are seeking highly skilled individuals. Many current employees need reskilling, while vulnerable groups, like Indigenous peoples, disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities and youth that are neither employed nor in education and training, require essential skills for employment. Immigrants also need support systems, training programs and services to help with their integration into the labour market.

Unless mitigating measures are adopted within the next ten years, employers will not be able to find the qualified candidates for 1.5 million available jobs and the impact on Canada’s economy will be severe.

A priority for colleges and institutes across Canada is collaborating with industry, social organizations and governments to overcome mutual challenges and build on successes.
Regional Realities

- Labour market data shortfall;
- High mobility from one region to another, resulting in labour shortages and skills mismatches in regions with upcoming development projects;
- Low mobility in northern regions;
- Labour force growth in urban areas;
- Skills gaps in professional sectors such as engineering, health, social services, arts and culture;
- Need to focus on career development, move to networked system, more degrees at colleges, stimulate business engagement, overhaul apprenticeship systems;
- Completion rates for Indigenous people below those of non-Indigenous people;
- Skill shortages are not linked to state of economy but rather to government policy (e.g. how efficiently institutions train and limited investment in training by employers).

Partner Perspectives

- Business degrees should require a human resources component;
- Essential skills and employability skills in workforce need enhancement;
- Need collaboration between business, PSE, government and unions to develop a coherent skills development strategy at a national level;
- Develop a culture in Canada that places value on technical credentials;
- Up-skill the existing workforce and increase participation of under-represented groups in PSE;
- Need creative solutions: grants, co-op programs, mentorships, etc.;
- Consider a national labour market forum;
- Need leaders to help create solutions for employers seeking skilled employees;
- There is a market niche for colleges to provide the technical skills and help employers retain their employees;
- Need to engage youth;
- Reform the education system - there is no technical training in the K-12 system anymore;
- Rethink our economy digitally. IT is in all sectors;
- Focus on pedagogy, people, places and promotion.
Through the Lens of YOUTH

RYAN LOVETT
- Focus on high schools
- Make it easier to transfer credits
- Who will give us the experience that industry demands of us?
- Everyone needs to work together and invest in the future of future generations
- We, as students, need connections to facilitate networking

ERIKA NORRIS VILLEMAIRE
- We learn to Be, Learn, Help
- I have to discover myself
- We need reciprocal credential recognition
- Now that I know who I am, qui va me former?
- School counsellors need to know about other options to suggest to students

PATRICK COUGHLAN
- Transition
- Our credentials should be portable across Canada
- Decrease social pressure to leave studies
- C'est un gros obstacle!
- High School CEGEP Université

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Jennifer Shepherd @jennshepherd www.livingtapestries.ca
Through the Lens of Youth

- Transferability of learning and recognition of credentials is an issue.
- Co-op opportunities are challenging to find.
- Work integrated learning is essential.
- Secondary school guidance counselors need more information to better counsel students on study pathways and careers, including labour market information.
- There is a need to bring more industry and business representatives into classrooms.
- There is a change needed in the perceived education hierarchy (e.g. misconception that university is superior to college or trades).

Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC): Results and Implications for Canada

- PIAAC findings show that Canada ranks highly in digital skills, is average in literacy and is below average in numeracy.
- Few international analysts understand the Canadian context and few Canadian analysts understand the college sector.
- Canada leads in post-secondary attainment, but not in PIAAC results.
  - 28% of the labour force in Canada has a college-level education and is employed, compared to 12% for the OECD average.
  - The college sector is more inclusive with students from more diverse backgrounds.
  - There are more people in occupations that require high skills.
  - Canada has higher-than-average proportion of people at both the high and low skill levels.
Indigenous Perspective

PATRICIA BAXTER
Aboriginal Human Resource Council

The landscape is difficult to navigate. We can help!

We're launching a new charity: KOCHTA
"Reach out"

We're working with the "supply side" to access skills and resources needed.

We need to form real partnerships:
- Indigenous communities
- Education
- Business
- Philanthropy

Inclusion works! Initiative works!

Thanks for helping me build a career and access education.

Please join me.

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Indigenous Perspectives

• Need to recognize broad landscape when serving Indigenous peoples;
• Proactivity is key in building partnerships between companies, Indigenous communities and post-secondary education institutions;
• Companies need to invest in training Indigenous peoples;
• Curriculum must include life skills and cultural content;
• Need to offer relevant education programs close to communities – e.g. related to natural resource developments.

Industry Perspectives

• Need a competency-based approach;
• More prior learning assessment for immigrants is required;
• Part of solution is in innovation;
• Need to secure workers for resource-based projects in remote areas;
• The mobility factor is huge for some industries and is a key part of long-term solutions to their skills shortages;
• The ability to access immigrant and foreign-trained workers in a timely manner is a necessary option.

International Perspectives

• In Colombia, science, math and technology are promoted at a young age; entrepreneurship is promoted in both rural and urban areas; focus is on soft skills;
• In USA, need to retool talent; describe this era as Human Age – defined by ingenuity of individuals and communities;
• See four global trends:
  • emerging markets;
  • indicators of the human age; demographics and talent mismatch;
  • rise of customer sophistication and individual choice;
  • technological revolutions.
Differing Views

• There are four mismatches in Canada’s economy: supply-demand, geographical, overqualified and under-qualified.
• Educational attainment levels are higher now than in 2010, yet labour force demand projections are lower.
• There is a higher demand for college education today than university education.
• There will be no labour market shortage in the future. For every vacancy today, there are six unemployed.
• There are important market failures: failure of government that continues to fund training for jobs that do not exist; failure of schools that continue to train for jobs that do not exist.

The Honourable Jason Kenney
Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister of Multiculturalism said:

• Skills gap/shortages is the single biggest challenge for our economy.
• Canada has highest level of public spending on skills development in OECD, but lowest of business investment in skills development.
• We must do a better job of creating and providing accurate, robust labour market information by region and by industry especially to young people.
• Our future immigration system will attract people who have precise skills to fill specific jobs so they are able to work at their skill level upon arrival.
• Businesses are not doing enough to invest in the training of prospective employees.
• There will be flexibility in the Canada Job Grant for implementation with provinces.
• There needs to be closer collaboration between union, employers, educational sector, federal and provincial governments to support the choices made by young people.
• Colleges are where the rubber hits the road through market responsive programs.
Key Messages

Ann Buller
President, Centennial College and ACCC Board Chair, summarized the messages heard at the Summit:

• People do not know the stories about colleges; trades is only one portion of what colleges do;
• Government and industry need to understand the situation in colleges: colleges are stuck in first gear;
• Need more people and a better match;
• Colleges play an important role in innovation and research;
• Essential skills are important across all sectors; new essential skills include entrepreneurship and digital literacy;
• Need to give people in skilled trades the respect they deserve; they are highly skilled;
• On the mobility issue, we need to break down provincial barriers; colleges must also explain what they do and help ease the way through institutions for students;
• Must do more to incentivize young people;
• Our greatest shortage is leadership:
  • All stakeholders must take up the charge individually and collaboratively;
  • Labour market information is critical for trainers, employers, students and parents;
• Need for social and economic inclusion of all groups: immigrants, Indigenous peoples, women, disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities - all need better access to PSE;
• Need enhancements to the apprenticeship system to improve completion rates of apprentices and reduce mobility barriers between jurisdictions;
• Consider a competency-based approach to ensure that jobs are not based solely on credentials, but rather the skills needed in the workplace;
• Need to reduce barriers to enhance transferability, mobility and the recognition of credentials and of prior learning, between colleges and universities and between jurisdictions;
• K-12 system needs more enhanced information to promote careers through studies at colleges and institutes across Canada. Math and science study outcomes must be improved and emphasized particularly for trades, information technology and engineering studies;
• The skills gaps are an issue for all provinces and territories and we must work on short term as well as long term action;
• There is a need for civic engagement to address the challenge.
• Need to reduce barriers to enhance transferability, mobility and the recognition of credentials and of prior learning, between colleges and universities and between jurisdictions;
• K-12 system needs more enhanced information to promote careers through studies at colleges and institutes across Canada. Math and science study outcomes must be improved and emphasized particularly for trades, information technology and engineering studies;
• The skills gaps are an issue for all provinces and territories and we must work on short term as well as long term action;
• There is a need for civic engagement to address the challenge.

Stakeholder Collaboration is the Key to Address Skills Shortages

Colleges and institutes in Canada are aligned with the needs of employers. They develop program curriculum that is market responsive and offer customized education; have established business and industry partnerships; and play an important role in applied research and innovation. Yet, there is still a compelling story to tell to government industry and the general public about advanced skills offerings, including degrees and specialized post-graduate programs. Too many people still believe colleges provide only vocational and trades training. There is a need to dispel the myth and raise awareness about the possibilities available through studies at colleges, institutes and polytechnics.
New Policy Perspectives for a World of Changing Skills

Ross Finnie

We're looking at the products of the future. We know what skills are needed.

We need responsiveness in both demand and supply sides.

All moving parts are needed in the system to address labour issues.

I need combinations of new skills to be a plumber.

Prepare me for life and education.

We're sitting on data that's useful, too.

Workers

Labour market

Demand for post-secondary education

K-12 Students

Prepare me for life and education

New Policy Perspectives for a World of Changing Skills

Recommended Actions

Association of Canadian Community Colleges

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Next steps by ACCC

- Prepare report of proceedings
- Re-engage the coalition
- Leverage joint transferability committee
- Make presentations at conferences
- Appoint CEOs to ACCC Board
- Follow up with industry
- Explore a national campaign on the skills gap
Where to from Here

Denise Amyot
President & CEO, ACCC, outlined some go-forward actions:

**Action Plan for ACCC**

- Provide a Summary Report of the National Skills Summit to all delegates.  
  **Status:** Completed.

- Engage with industry represented at the National Skills Summit to work jointly on proposed solutions.  
  **Status:** Joint meeting planned with college leaders and the Forest Products Association of Canada with respect to forest innovation and transformation.

- Re-establish Employers’ Coalition on Advanced Skills.
  **Status:** Industry College Coalition created in January 2014.

- Appoint three new external Directors to the ACCC Board.
  **Status:** Two new external Directors appointed to Board in February 2014.

- Leverage its work on transferability and pathways and with the Joint ACCC/AUCC Presidents Working Group.
  **Status:** Transferability, Articulation and Pathways Committee exploring ways to promote to stakeholders, the importance of pathways; Joint Presidents’ Working Group exploring broader collaboration between colleges and universities.

- Explore the possibility of a national campaign on the skills gap like BC did.
  **Status:** Will be discussed with Industry College Coalition.

- Share the message at national industry conferences and various fora.
  **Status:** Presentation made at the Canadian Economic Club.

Colleges and institutes support economic growth by supplying graduates with advanced skills for all sectors. They train 35% of those in the labour market and are uniquely positioned to contribute towards reducing the skills gap. There is a compelling need to have learners pursue post-secondary education at colleges, institutes and polytechnics to ensure they get jobs.
ACCC Member Colleges and Institutes

British Columbia
British Columbia Institute of Technology
Camosun College
Capilano University
Collège Éducacentre
Douglas College
University of the Fraser Valley
Justice Institute of British Columbia
Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Langara College
College of New Caledonia
College of the Rockies
Selkirk College
Vancouver Community College
Vancouver Island University

Yukon
Yukon College

Alberta
Bow Valley College
Grande Prairie Regional College
Keyano College
Lakeland College
Lethbridge College
Medicine Hat College
NorQuest College
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
Northern Lakes College
Olds College
Portage College
Red Deer College
SAIT Polytechnic

Northwest Territories
Aurora College

Manitoba
Assiniboine Community College
University College of the North
Red River College
École technique et professionnelle, Université de Saint-Boniface
Winnipeg Technical College

Nunavut
Nunavut Arctic College

Saskatchewan
Carleton Trail Regional College
Cumberland Regional College
Great Plains College
North West Regional College
Northlands College
Parkland College
Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology
Southeast Regional College

Ontario
Algonguin College
Collège Boréal
Cambrian College
Canadore College
Centennial College
Collège la Cité
Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
Confederation College
Durham College
Fanshawe College
Fleming College
George Brown College
Georgian College
Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning
Lambton College
Loyalist College
The Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences
Mohawk College
Niagara College
Northern College
St. Clair College
St. Lawrence College
Sault College
Seneca College
Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
Université de Guelph, Campus d’Alfred
University of Guelph, Kemptville Campus

Quebec
Cégep de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue
Collège Ahuntsic
Cégep André-Laurendeau
Cégep de Baie-Comeau
Cégep Beauce-Appalaches
Champlain Regional College
Cégep de Chicoutimi
Dawson College
Cégep de Drummondville
Cégep Édouard-Montpetit
Cégep Garneau
Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles
Collège Gédal-Godin
Heritage College
Institut de technologie agroalimentaire
Cégep John Abbott College
Cégep de Jonquière
Cégep de La Pocatière
Collège Lafîche
Cégep Limoilou
Collège Lionel-Groulx
Collège de Maisonneuve
Cégep Marie-Victorin
Cégep de Matane
Collège de Mérici

Cégep de l’Outaouais
Cégep régional de Lanaudière
Collège de Rosemont
Cégep de Saint-Foy
Cégep de Saint-Félicien
Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe
Cégep Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu
Cégep de Saint-Jérôme
Cégep de Saint-Laurent
Cégep de Sept-Îles
Collège Shawinigan
Cégep de Sherbrooke
Cégep de Thetford
Cégep de Trois-Rivières
Vanier College
Cégep de Victoriaville
Cégep du Vieux-Montréal

New Brunswick
New Brunswick College of Craft and Design
New Brunswick Community College
Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick

Newfoundland and Labrador
College of the North Atlantic
Marine Institute
Centre for Nursing Studies

Nova Scotia
Cape Breton University
Canadian Coast Guard College
Dalhousie Agricultural Campus of Dalhousie University
Nova Scotia Community College
Université Sainte-Anne - Collège de l’Acadie

Prince Edward Island
Holland College
Collège Acadie I.-P.-É.