

British Columbia's International Education Strategy



Photo courtesy of Okanagan College, Kelowna, B.C.



THE BC
JOBS PLAN





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International Education Strategy Highlights:

- \$2 million to the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society for the One World International Scholarship program to help B.C. students study or undertake co-op terms or internships abroad.
- \$2.3 million to the Mitacs Accelerate program to support B.C. and international students pursuing graduate education/ industry internships in B.C.
- Dedicated education officers will be placed in a number of B.C.'s overseas trade and investment offices to help advance B.C.'s international education interests in priority markets.

Understanding International Education

At one time, learning occurred in the school across town, but in today's interconnected world it is possible for students to take classes around the globe. For a new generation of British Columbians, a smaller world means bigger opportunities to learn, to work in the global economy and to live as citizens in the global village.

International Education is the global two-way flow of students, faculty, staff and ideas, encouraging:

- B.C. students and educators studying and working abroad;
- students and teachers from around the world to study and work in B.C.; and
- a stronger international outlook within B.C.'s educational system.

All together, international education is helping to make B.C. and British Columbians much more plugged into the global community and better positioned to succeed in the global economy.



International Education Strategy Highlights:

Those who participate gain more than just an education in the traditional sense. They also gain an understanding of other cultures and have an opportunity to share a bit of their own.

For B.C., long at the forefront of international education, the sector's recent and expected global growth opens up a world of opportunities for British Columbians, both at home and overseas.

The presence of international students in B.C. has a positive impact on our institutions, the experience of our students, and, overall, generates additional seats and opportunities for our students.

This strategy aims to position the province — and its residents — to benefit even more from the social, cultural and economic opportunities that flow from international education.

- A new quality assurance framework will be developed to streamline and strengthen quality assurance for all post-secondary education programs and institutions operating in the province.
- \$700,000 to the Mitacs Globalink program to support international students participating in research internships at B.C. universities.

Our Vision

A high quality international education system in British Columbia that fosters social benefits and economic prosperity for all citizens.



Message from the Premier

British Columbia's high quality education system has been very successful over the years in attracting students from other countries. In turn, many nations around the world eagerly embrace B.C. students who choose to take classes overseas. As the number of international students worldwide is expected to increase exponentially, so too do the opportunities for all British Columbians.

Under *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*, we've developed this International Education Strategy to attract more international students and, just as significantly, to send more of our own students on similar exchanges abroad to bring social, cultural and economic benefits back home to our communities.

The international connections B.C. students make in classrooms here or while studying overseas will last a lifetime and better prepare them for jobs in the global economy.

As I found out on my two recent Jobs and Trade Missions, first to China and India and then to Japan, Korea and the Philippines, there is growing excitement about the possibilities for international education to strengthen the ties that exist between us. With this International Education Strategy, British Columbia, its students, families and communities are poised to benefit from deeper connections to the global economy and the global community.



*Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia*



Message from the Minister

Everyone benefits from the cultural diversity international students bring to our campuses and communities, and from the perspectives gained by B.C. students studying in other countries.

This International Education Strategy was built from the input of students, educators, institutions, communities and other partners who understand that we are all better off when we embrace new ways of learning and invite other cultures and ideas into our cities, towns and classrooms.

I want to thank the International Education Project Council members for their valuable time and input as this Strategy was developed. It sets forth a vision for international education in British Columbia and ways for the province to capitalize on those opportunities.

As a part of *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*, this Strategy is far from the final roadmap to British Columbia's success in the highly competitive world of international education. Rather, this Strategy is just the beginning of an ongoing conversation with all British Columbians as we build on the excellence already existing throughout B.C.'s education sector.

With your help, and with the actions set forth in this International Education Strategy, we can realize the full potential of our education system and bring many new benefits to communities throughout B.C.



*Honourable Naomi Yamamoto
Minister of Advanced Education*



Introduction

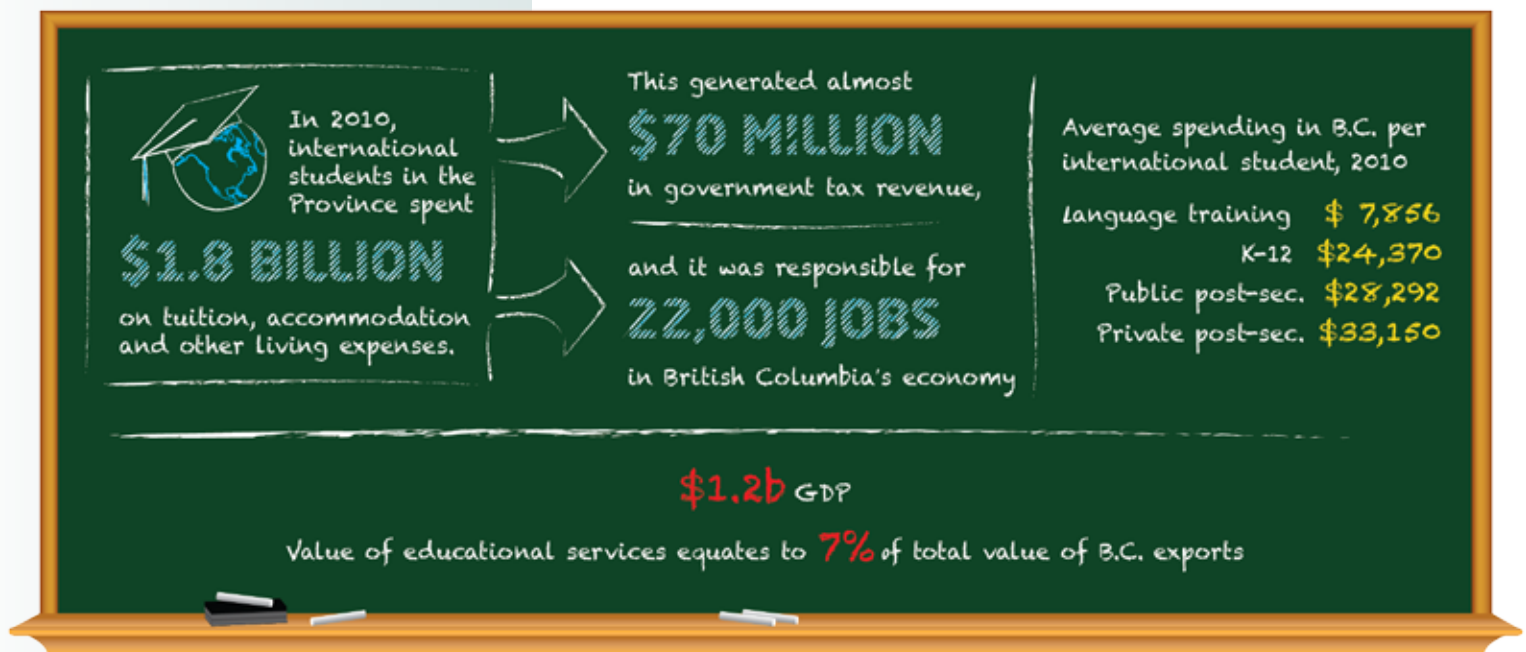
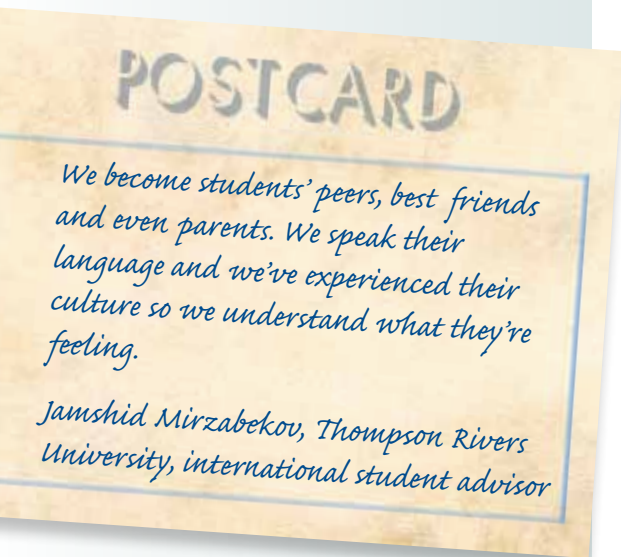
Social, Cultural and Economic Benefits

More and more, we are living in a global village. In addition to trade in goods and services, relationships and ideas are flowing more freely around the world. International education both contributes to and benefits from this trend.

British Columbia is well positioned to serve as a "social gateway," linking North America with the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Creating new relationships between B.C. residents and people from other countries brings strong social and cultural benefits to our communities, as well as significant economic gains.

From Nanaimo to Kamloops and Cranbrook to Prince George, communities across this vast province are finding real benefits from hosting international students and from sending our own students to experience learning abroad. Partnerships between educational institutions in B.C. and those in other countries are also helping create pathways for B.C. businesses into international markets. B.C. will continue efforts to attract the best and brightest minds from around the world to our world-class learning environment and further strengthen B.C.'s position in an innovation-driven, globally competitive economy.

Whether it's new businesses growing to serve the needs of these new residents, new income and experiences for families choosing to open their homes to visiting students, or new community cultural events generated for or by new students, the diversity brought to our schools,



communities and families by international students helps make B.C. more globally minded and builds better international connections.

Each year on campuses across British Columbia, events are held to showcase the unique cultures represented by the 94,000 international students who are choosing to attend B.C.'s public and private schools and institutions.

In Kamloops, a weeklong International Days event sees Thompson Rivers University students come together to share cultures, international experiences, research and other interests. In Prince George, the city welcomes hundreds of international students annually, supported by local schools, businesses and other organizations, making students feel more included in their adopted community and as part of a concerted effort to encourage students to stay after graduation.

Families hosting international students develop lifelong friendships, new social networks and global perspectives. Their communities are strengthened by the understanding and tolerance that comes from welcoming students from all over the world. And when international students decide to make B.C. their home, they contribute their skills and community involvement on a long-term basis.

British Columbians — especially our young people — gain tremendously from our province's position as a leader in international education, both from their interaction with international students here in B.C. and through opportunities to study in other parts of the world. These international linkages set the stage for our students to participate in collaborative research and opportunities to work with, and become global innovators. Prospective employers often look favourably on those who have studied or worked overseas and understand other languages and cultures.

Faculty and staff at B.C. institutions — public and private — also gain from the learning and relationships they develop through interacting with international students. The benefits are even greater when they take advantage of international exchanges that expose them to different teaching methods and perspectives. These experiences enrich teaching practice and help instructors develop an internationalized curriculum, benefiting both students and educational institutions.

In addition to being a source of social and cultural benefits, international education is also a significant contributor to British Columbia's economy, both through direct and indirect student spending and by helping to meet our projected labour shortages as the economy grows. And connections established by students and teachers abroad can grow into new business opportunities at home and in the global marketplace.

The World Under One Roof



In February 2012, Thompson Rivers University celebrated campus cultural and student diversity during its week-long International Days festivities. More than 1,500 students from nearly 85 countries attend classes in Kamloops and bring with them a flavour of back home. <http://www.tru.ca/internationaldays.html>

Visit Globally, Spend Locally

With nearly 1,700 international students at the University of Victoria, the estimated economic benefit of these visiting students is \$64 million. At Thompson Rivers University, where students from nearly 85 countries are now studying, international education means about \$88 million annually to the Kamloops economy. Currently, more than 700 international students from 52 countries are studying at Capilano University, bringing an estimated economic impact of \$31.9 million.

Postcards From...India A B.C. Student's Experience Abroad



Victoria Francis is a B.C. student who has experienced firsthand the distinction between “needs” and “wants,” thanks to her involvement in international education.

Victoria took an educational trip halfway around the world and became immersed in a day-to-day life very different from the one most British Columbians know.

In the summer of 2011, the University of Victoria student and 19 others, travelled to northern India to take part in the first India Field School, offered by UVic's Geography Department.

The group visited remote villages and discovered some of the challenges facing villagers in this part of the world.

“In the field, we were able to meet with villagers and learn about difficult issues such as gender inequality, human-wildlife conflict, conservation challenges and relocation of tribal communities,” she said. “These experiences were much more powerful than just reading journal articles.”

Students who travel to British Columbia to study don't just spend money on books and tuition. They pay for local accommodation, shop in local stores and travel around their adopted communities and further afield, as they seek the full British Columbia experience. As a result of that spending, jobs are created in the education sector and in other sectors that support the students. For taxpayers, international education also generates significant tax revenues to the Province.

British Columbia's emerging labour market challenges make international education even more important, as we anticipate significant shortages of skilled workers in certain fields. This is largely due to the retirement of large numbers of aging “baby-boomers” and fewer young British Columbians entering the labour market, the result of declining domestic birth rates.

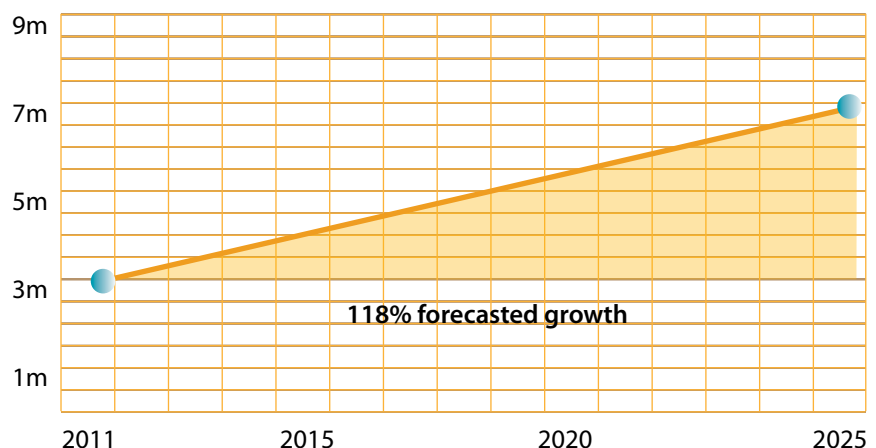
As a result of these trends, it is estimated that there will be more than a million job openings in B.C. over the next decade, with just 650,000 students currently enrolled in our Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) education system — a clear gap that cannot be filled entirely by young British Columbians.

This is where international education can play a big role. By increasing the number of international students who make British Columbia their permanent home, we can significantly ease the expected shortage of skilled workers. More international students making the transition to B.C.'s workforce, particularly in key sectors and regions, helps meet looming skills, trades, technical and professional needs — and ensures our provincial economy can keep on growing.

B.C. in the World of International Education


B.C. students gain when they have opportunities to study and work abroad, and they also benefit when educational institutions here at home have a stronger international focus. By strengthening

Global demand to study abroad - to 2025




Source: “Global Student Mobility 2025: Forecasts of the Global Demand for International Higher Education.” 2002.


The Engine of the Jobs Plan and the B.C. Economy is PEOPLE



Job Openings:
1 million



Currently in B.C.
K-12 school system:
650,000

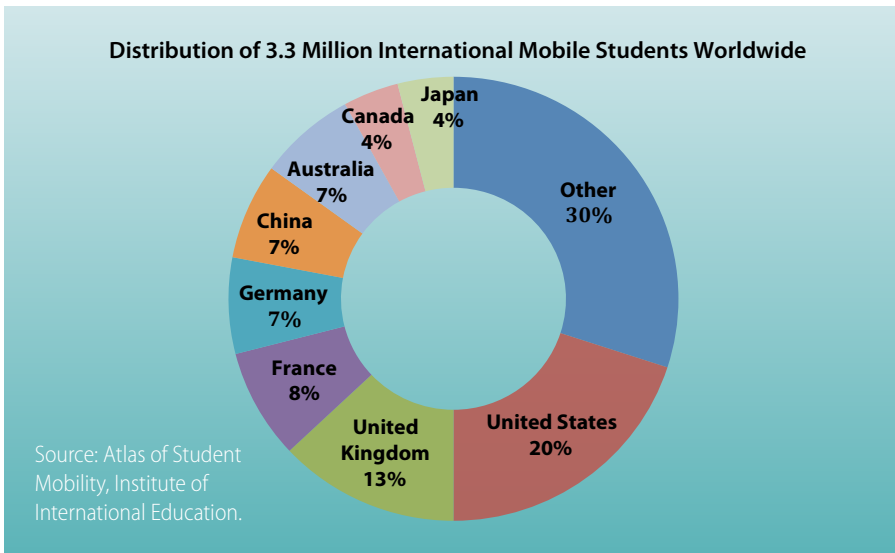


GAP
Immigrants expected to fill
1/3 of total job openings

international education opportunities, we give our own students a leg up in a highly competitive global economy.

As the world becomes smaller and as British Columbia becomes more diverse, it becomes increasingly important for B.C. to expand its international focus here at home. The benefits include greater international understanding and tolerance, which enriches personal connections across the world and provides greater opportunities for British Columbians to learn languages, travel and foster social, cultural and economic connections globally. It is also important in

2009 Worldwide Market Share



B.C. Connections Run Deep

For many international students who come to British Columbia, the personal, business and cultural ties they form while in B.C. continue to grow — even after they return home. Case in point: Shi Hao.

Fifteen years ago, Shi Hao was an international student attending the University of British Columbia.

Today, he's vice general manager of the investment banking department of the Agricultural Bank of China, one of the world's largest banks.

The B.C. alumnus is currently working to get regulatory approval to set up his bank's first office in Canada. Not surprisingly, the bank has chosen Vancouver as its headquarters, due to B.C.'s international focus and strategic geographic location.

Shi will be returning to our province as the bank's chief representative in Canada: proof that an international education in B.C. generates valuable life-long connections.

Top Sources of B.C.'s International Students, 2010

South Korea

China

Japan

Saudi Arabia

Brazil

Mexico

Taiwan

United States

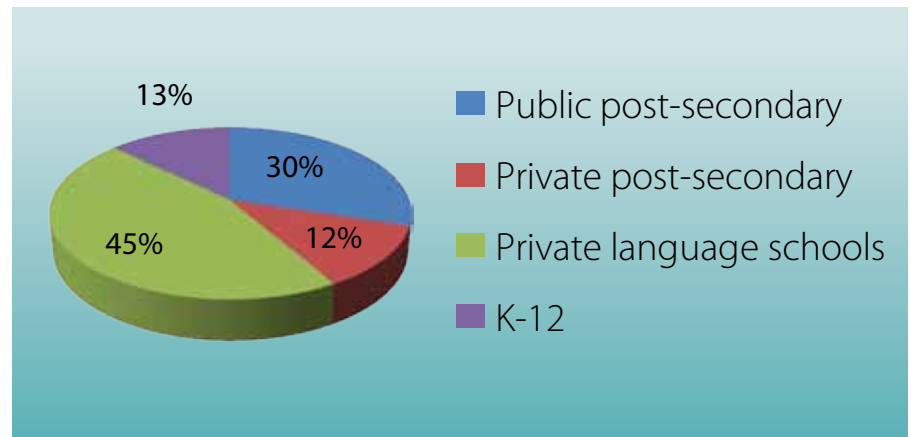
Germany

Switzerland

creating and maintaining key international pathways — pathways for commerce, research and innovation.

For British Columbia to benefit from growing opportunities in international education, we need new initiatives and a targeted, coordinated strategy that builds upon our strengths and leverages the expertise that already exists in our education system. Increased coordination and collaboration are essential, recognizing that we can do more collectively than we can individually.

International students in B.C. 2010



The Future of International Education

International education in B.C. is a rapidly expanding sector. The number of international students worldwide currently tops 3.3 million. By 2025, that number is expected to grow to 7.2 million.

There will be strong competition for these students, as other leading jurisdictions are equally aware of the benefits of international education and are pursuing their own strategies to attract larger shares of students.

Currently, Canada is the destination of choice for about four per cent of all international students worldwide. B.C. receives about 28 per cent of all international students coming to Canada, with the majority of students coming here from Asia, the Middle East, the United States, the Americas and European Union nations.

The overall education sector growth rate over the past four years has been estimated at 21 per cent, with international students often moving between B.C.'s K-12 or language training programs and post-secondary programs. For example, almost four out of every ten



Photo courtesy of Jeff Cooper, College of the Rockies, Cranbrook, B.C.

international students who graduate from a B.C. high school start a B.C. post-secondary program within a year. As a result, one out of every nine international students enrolled in a B.C. public post-secondary program previously graduated from a B.C. high school.

Recognizing that B.C. will gain an estimated 1,800 additional jobs and \$100 million in GDP for every ten per cent increase in the number of international students coming to our province, the economic benefit of growth in international education provides a major boost to B.C. communities.

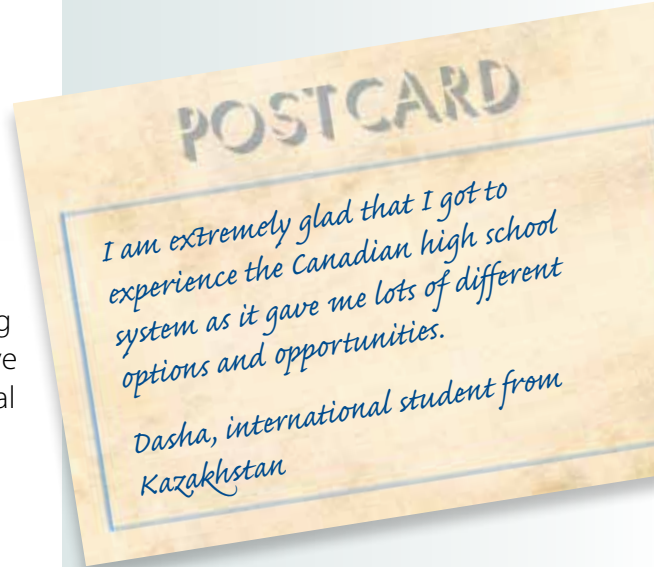
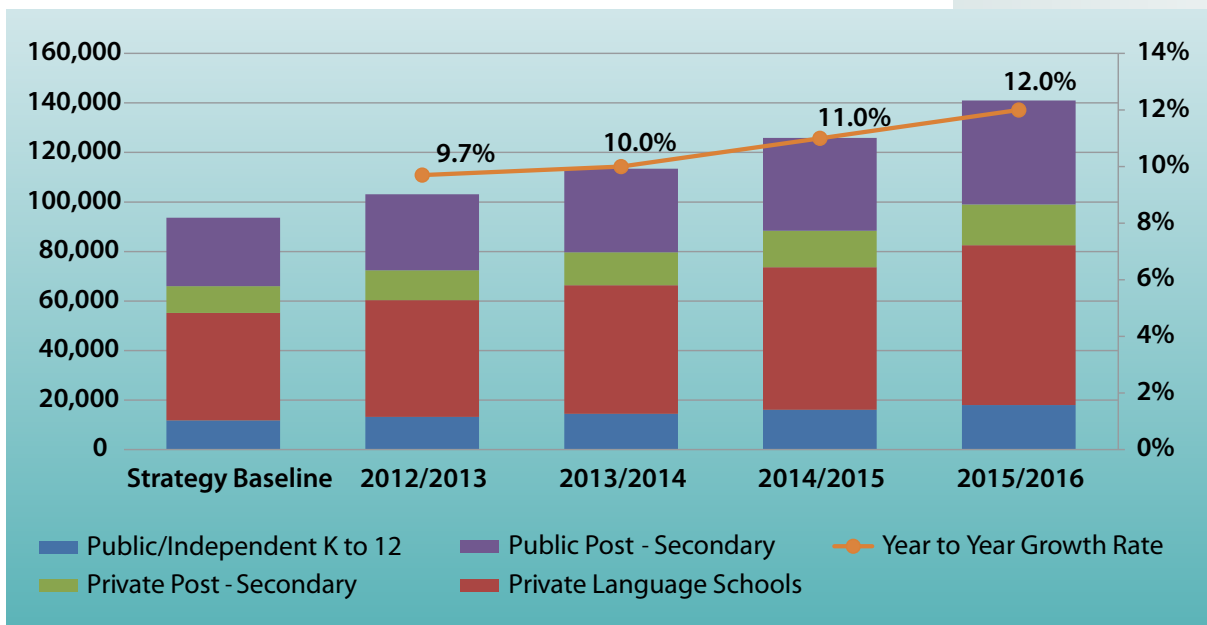
Goals for Growth

Through *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*, British Columbia has set a goal of increasing the number of international students choosing B.C. as their study destination by 50 per cent over four years. To achieve our target, B.C. will need to welcome an additional 47,000 international students over the next four years. We are also looking to increase opportunities for B.C. students to study abroad.

K-12

Of B.C.'s estimated 94,000 international students, about 12,000 currently pursue K-12 education at B.C.'s public and private schools. Growth in these student numbers over the past four years has been about 12 per cent. To achieve our target, the K-12 system will need to serve an additional 6,000 international students by 2015/2016, representing 13 per cent of the province's overall targeted growth.

Projected growth to achieve 50% targeted increase



Factors used in determining target countries:

- Total population
- Population, aged 5 to 24
- Income
- Education level
- Labour market needs
- English language proficiency
- Current number of students in B.C.
- Support for sending students abroad
- Trade / investment priority market

Top priority countries for B.C.:

- United States
- China
- India
- South Korea
- Brazil
- Mexico
- UK
- Germany
- Russia
- Japan
- France

Other countries and regions of focus include: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

Public Post-Secondary

Growth in the public post-secondary segment over the past four years has been 35 per cent, with about 28,000 international students currently attending public post-secondary institutions. To achieve our target, the number of international students in this segment will need to increase by about 14,000, accounting for 30 per cent of overall growth.

Private Post-Secondary

Based on the limited data available, it is estimated that growth in the private post-secondary segment has been about 101 per cent over the past four years, with about 11,000 attending private post-secondary institutions annually. To achieve our target, an additional 5,500 international private post-secondary students will need to come to B.C., representing 12 per cent of overall growth.

Private Language Schools

Data on language schools is also limited. Best estimates indicate growth of about seven per cent over the past four years, with about 43,000 currently enrolled in language training programs at private language schools. To achieve our target, the number of international students in language schools will need to increase by 21,500, which would be 45 per cent of overall targeted growth.

B.C. Students and Teachers Abroad

The success of B.C.'s International Education Strategy will also be measured by increasing the number of B.C. students and teachers seeking opportunities to study and work in other countries.

Key Countries

This International Education Strategy is about more than increasing the numbers of students who choose to study in British Columbia. It's also about taking a targeted approach to bringing key students to key parts of the province where there's a need for their skills, and creating pathways for research, innovation, commerce and cultural growth.

This Strategy aims to leverage the experience and best practices throughout B.C. institutions. In addition to building on existing long-term relationships with nations such as the United States, China and South Korea, British Columbia will also target emerging economies like India, Brazil and Mexico, to help target prospective students to study in areas where B.C. anticipates labour shortages.

Key markets were determined by assessing nine factors for each source country, including population, English language proficiency and support for sending students abroad.

A key objective of this Strategy is to attract students who will stay in B.C. after their studies and help meet the province's labour market needs. For this reason, the typical fields of study pursued by students in each of the countries were assessed and compared to the occupation groups that have been identified as likely to have the most future job openings in B.C.

Despite a focus on these target nations or regions, B.C. will continue to invite students from around the world to come and learn alongside local students and will continue to encourage B.C. students to study abroad in other nations.

Most Job Openings

- Sales and service occupations
- Business, finance and administrative occupations
- Trades, transport and equipment operators

B.C.'s Fastest Growth in Demand

- Health occupations
- Natural and applied sciences and related occupations
- Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport

Achieving British Columbia's Vision

British Columbia has a vision of a high quality international education system that fosters social benefits and economic prosperity for all citizens. Through this Strategy, the Province aims to achieve three goals:

GOAL 1: Create a globally oriented education system in British Columbia.

GOAL 2: Ensure that all students receive quality learning and life experiences.

GOAL 3: Maximize the benefits of international education — social, cultural and economic — for all B.C. communities, families and businesses.



Photo courtesy of Royal Roads University, Victoria, B.C.



Photo courtesy of Royal Roads University, Victoria, B.C.

Postcards From...Hawai'i

B.C. STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE ABROAD

For the Volcanology class at Quest University Canada, there's no field trip like it.

Students in the course at Canada's first independent, not-for-profit, secular university went to Hawai'i this winter to explore first-hand how a volcanologist conducts research.

"There is no 'simulated' research; the students conducted real research on real samples in real laboratories and field locations," said Physical Sciences Tutor Steve Quane. "They acquired the requisite skills and mindset needed to undertake serious research projects of any kind."

Under the institution's unique block plan, students spend three and a half weeks studying one subject at a time. The first part of this course is spent in a lab setting, followed by fieldwork at the site of five volcanoes on the Big Island.

Our Strategy

GOAL 1: Creating a Globally-Oriented Education System

British Columbia and its educational institutions have a real opportunity to collectively gain from international education. By working together, as a system, and benefiting from each other's experiences and established connections, B.C. will be better positioned to generate new connections and new opportunities abroad.

To fulfill our province's potential as a world leader in international education, and the benefits that come with it, we must build on the excellence that already exists. To achieve this goal, British Columbia will:

- Encourage all educational institutions in B.C. to promote international education throughout their activities.
- Provide B.C. students with incentives to study and work abroad.
- Strengthen long-term relationships with international students and B.C. alumni.
- Increase the profile of international education abroad.

Actions

1. Promote the use of international education 'best practices' across B.C.

By sharing 'best practices' — such as through partnerships and mentorships — every educational institution in every region can gain from our collective international education experience. Institutions that already have extensive experience with international education have expressed interest in sharing their knowledge. Specific steps include:

- Developing partnerships and mentorships across the sector to help smaller educational institutions develop and implement internationalization strategies.
- Enhancing intercultural communications curricula at B.C. institutions.

By 2013:

- The Province will develop an inventory of best practices in competitor markets and at successful Canadian educational institutions, and share this inventory with B.C. schools and institutions.

POSTCARD

The students conducted real research on real samples in real laboratories and field locations. They acquired the requisite skills and mindset needed to undertake serious research projects of any kind.

*Steve Quane, Physical Sciences Tutor,
Quest University field trip to Hawai'i*

- The Province will work with the sector to develop curricula that effectively communicates to both our domestic and international students.
- Recognizing the benefit the WORLDHOST program has made for tourism in B.C., the Province will look at expanding the program to B.C. educators, to help foster cross-cultural communication skills.

By 2014:

- To help institutions share their international education knowledge and experiences, best practices workshops/webinars will be provided for interested institutions across B.C.
- Pilot programs will be established between B.C. educational institutions (including the K-12 sector) to assist smaller institutions to further develop internationalization practices.
- Personalized K-12 learning, catered to the needs of each student, will be developed. Along with more globally focused curriculum content, it will create a more inclusive learning environment in our schools.

By 2015 and beyond:

- Intercultural communications courses will be established as an element of training for educators in B.C.

2. Expand the presence of B.C. international education.

An expanded international education sector, through measures such as distance learning and offshore schools and programs, will raise B.C.'s profile and increase options for international students. This critical element to developing international education will be furthered through steps such as:

- Reviewing current agreements for offshore schools to make sure they direct as many students as possible to B.C. educational institutions.
- Working with educational institutions to help them develop a variety of ways to enter new international markets.

By 2013:

- The Province will review agreements for B.C. offshore schools to ensure B.C. post-secondary institutions have a competitive advantage in attracting students graduating offshore, and identify areas for allowing more students studying at our offshore schools to transition to post-secondary education in B.C.

A Different Perspective in the Classroom



For Michelle Sayers, a “local” in the fourth year of the bachelor of business administration program at Capilano University, international students bring benefits to her classroom.

“They bring opinions to the class that relate to their own country, increasing the knowledge of the professor and the other students. They create debate by challenging what we think and say about their country. And they’re really involved in the school. They want to make the most of their experience here so they get involved in extracurricular activities and encourage locals to participate.”

International students are also strong ambassadors for their own countries. Michelle has travelled to China and the Netherlands for field schools, and she credits her international friends for encouraging her to study abroad.

And looking to the future: “The international connections I have made at Capilano University and abroad will give me a distinct advantage in a field where many companies and employers have offices around the world.”

Cementing Innovative Green Ideas in the Okanagan

At UBC Okanagan, international talent is doing innovative research alongside local and international students with the goal of reducing what goes into B.C.'s landfills and turning what remains into something useful.

Led by Dr. Shahria Alam, the research team — including three grad students: Sumaiya Huda and Muntasir Billah from Bangladesh and Anant Parghi from India — are looking at new ways to take waste concrete and other industrial debris and turn it into “new” concrete.

The team is experimenting with a range of material – like crushed glass, polymer composite waste and even discarded paint – and looking to provide valuable input toward new guidelines to help the concrete industry produce material that's better for the environment.

“We are mixing all sorts of waste and making it a totally green concrete. The goal is to keep as much out of the landfill as possible,” Alam says. “Our international students have joined the multi-year project partway through and bring a different perspective as they work alongside Canadian students.”

Students from India, Bangladesh and Iran are involved in several other research projects he's leading on the UBCO campus.

Brilliant minds from around the world putting their ideas to work and finding solutions to global issues: that's innovation at its best, right here in British Columbia.

- The Province will review current memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and conduct research on key jurisdictions to strengthen market intelligence and assess growth opportunities.

By 2014:

- Promote partnerships between B.C. offshore schools and B.C. post-secondary institutions to recruit international students to pursue further study in B.C.

3. Increase international education opportunities for B.C. students, faculty and staff.

International education is about the two-way flow of people and ideas. We will increase these opportunities by:

- Enhancing scholarships, bursaries and employment incentives for B.C. students — in K-12 or post-secondary education — who study abroad.
- Working with institutions to help B.C. students who study overseas — in K-12 or post-secondary education — receive credit for those studies and have credentials they earn recognized in B.C.
- Working with B.C. employers to facilitate job opportunities for B.C. students returning after studying abroad in key fields.

By 2013:

- The Province will develop baseline information on the number/percentage of B.C. students pursuing study/work abroad opportunities to identify issues and inform market development opportunities.
- The Province will highlight the benefits for B.C. businesses employing B.C. students who have studied abroad, including international connections, enhanced skill sets, and language skills.
- The work of the existing [BC Study Abroad Consortium](#) will be expanded to increase access to information on post-secondary study abroad opportunities and benefits.

By 2014:

- The Province will develop a tool for measuring the number of B.C. students going abroad to study, work and volunteer.
- The Province will work with *Mitacs* — a B.C.-based, national not-for-profit research organization that fosters collaboration between academia and industry — to augment its successful Globalink program to include an overseas component for domestic students.

GOAL 2: Ensuring Quality Learning and Life Experiences for Students

British Columbia is known around the world for its high quality education system. It's something the province is proud of and something that sets us apart from many other jurisdictions.

This Strategy includes actions to ensure the B.C. education experience remains among the world's best, and ensures British Columbia offers safe, fulfilling and positive life experiences while international students are here. To achieve this goal, British Columbia will:

- Work with communities and educational institutions to make sure international students feel welcome and receive consistently excellent services and supports.
- Make sure our international education system is guided by a strong focus on quality.
- Make it easier for international students to live and work in British Columbia.

Actions

4. Expand and strengthen quality assurance in education to ensure consistently positive student experiences.

The quality of education in B.C. is our top priority and high-quality programs are critical to expanding international education. Clear, transparent quality assurance mechanisms will make sure both B.C. students and international students receive world-leading education while studying in B.C. We will achieve this by:

- Creating a new quality assurance framework that will apply to all B.C. credentials.
- Strengthening B.C.'s Education Quality Assurance designation across the province's entire education sector.

Quality Assurance is a systematic review of an institution or program to determine that acceptable standards of education, knowledge, teaching and/or financial status and capacity are being maintained and enhanced. *Education Quality Assurance designation* is British Columbia's brand for quality post-secondary education. The "EQA" designation is used to promote B.C. as an education destination of choice, giving students here and abroad a way to easily recognize B.C. public and private post-secondary institutions that meet government recognized standards.



Photo courtesy of University of Northern B.C., Prince George

Big Dreams for Big Screens



For Dasha from Kazakhstan, her studies at Coquitlam's Heritage Woods Secondary School sparked a passion for film.

"I am extremely glad that I got to experience the Canadian high school system as it gave me lots of different options and opportunities. Eventually I understood that I love film more than anything else, especially since I had a great teacher."

Dasha won a prize at the B.C. Student Film Festival and has since gone on to pursue studies in Simon Fraser University's film program.

Today, she has over 15 different short films to her credit and many other ongoing projects — all sources of pride for Dasha and her family.

By 2013:

- As outlined in *Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan*, the Province will advance a variety of actions, such as legislation or new regulations on quality assurance, to help ensure all students, no matter where they come from or where they choose to study, can be confident in B.C.'s quality education.
- Education Quality Assurance branding will be integrated into all traditional and digital communications activities, to clearly show prospective students which B.C. institutions meet B.C.'s standards for education quality.

5. Create smoother transitions for international students who wish to work and live in B.C. after graduation.

British Columbians benefit when students who train in our communities are able to stay, work and offer their skills to residents in those same communities.

To gain the greatest possible benefits from international education, we must make it easier for international students to move into careers in B.C. and take advantage of residency options after graduation. These improvements must in turn be communicated to potential international students. British Columbia will improve educational, career and residency options by:

- Providing international students with an online gateway — taking advantage of existing web-based services, like WelcomeBC — to make choosing to study, work and live in B.C. easier.
- Working with school districts and independent schools that have well-established international education programs to support and mentor others seeking to establish international education programs.
- Improving transitions from K-12 education and private language schools into post-secondary education, including dual-credit programs.
- Increasing the number of quality distance learning opportunities offered by B.C. educational institutions as a path to further education in B.C.
- Working with the federal government to create smoother transitions for international students studying in key fields who want to work and live in B.C. permanently.
- Providing international students with clear information on credit recognition in B.C.

- Increasing links between B.C.'s private sector employers and professional, trades and vocational programs.
- Working with institutions and businesses to increase "edu-tourism" throughout B.C. communities.

By 2013:

- The Province will complete a refresh of the current "LearnLiveBC" website, which promotes B.C. as a great place to study and provides useful information for prospective students.
- The Ministry of Advanced Education will work with other ministries to increase student transitions from the K-12 system to post-secondary education.
- The Province will develop an inventory of distance learning opportunities (K-12 and post-secondary) offered by B.C. educational institutions, including a market analysis to help identify opportunities for future expansion.
- B.C.'s international education marketing campaign will support and promote Mitacs Globalink to help encourage top international undergraduate students to study in B.C.
- The Ministry of Education will analyse existing international education student recruitment and retention practices across Canada to ensure a competitive edge is built into B.C.'s K-12 Offshore Agreements.

By 2014:

- B.C. will partner with business and employer associations, such as the B.C. Immigrant Employment Council, to develop promotional materials highlighting the benefits of hiring international students.
- B.C. will create pilot projects — between local employers, settlement organizations and educational institutions — that assist international students to find employment related to their education in smaller communities across B.C.

Students Who Stay Here, Play Here

International students don't just study in B.C. — they experience life here.

Take Orlando McLeish, for example.

The Jamaican native is a Community Health Sciences graduate student at UNBC in Prince George.

When he's not hitting the books, Orlando is hitting the trails and slopes in a way he couldn't back home.

He says, "I'm from a big city in Jamaica. Since moving here I've really gotten to appreciate things like going to the park and enjoying what nature has to offer. Last winter I tried cross-country skiing and sledding. In the summer I went hiking, camping and white water rafting in Kicking Horse Canyon."

For communities looking to attract tourists and spread the word about the natural wonders of B.C., having international students like Orlando living, studying and exploring our communities provides multiple benefits.



International Students: A Passport to Opportunities

One of the misconceptions about international education is that students from other countries are taking spaces away from B.C. students. Dr. Stephen Toope, president and vice-chancellor of UBC is among a chorus of academics who will tell you otherwise:

“Not a single B.C. student is displaced by international students at UBC. The premise that UBC’s recruitment of international students is at the expense of our mandate to serve B.C. is false.”

International students pay their own way for their B.C. education — typically, three-and-a-half to four times the tuition that a local student pays.

“International enrolment is beneficial to student learning at TRU. It has enabled TRU to significantly improve its teaching capacity. The increase in faculty has enriched, enhanced and diversified its course and programming portfolio by approximately 25 per cent. Students, both domestic and international, can choose from a far greater selection and number of courses as a result of our internationalization,” notes Alan Shaver, the president of Thompson Rivers University.



Photo courtesy of UBC, Vancouver

GOAL 3: Maximizing Benefits for B.C. Communities, Families and Businesses

International education is more than just opening the door to new international students. It’s about providing similar exchange opportunities to our own students. By sharing classrooms and sharing experiences, both in B.C. and abroad, British Columbians gain socially, culturally and economically.

The B.C. Government is intent on bringing all of those benefits to B.C. communities and families in every region. It is essential that we maximize the benefits of international education province-wide. To achieve this goal, British Columbia will:

- Support educational institutions in attracting international students to all regions of the province.
- Encourage international students to study in specific high-demand fields.
- Highlight pathways to commerce, research and innovation forged by B.C.’s international education sector with other jurisdictions.
- Build on existing long-term relationships with key countries and emerging economies.
- Work with other provinces, territories and the federal government, taking advantage of Canada’s favourable international reputation.

Actions

6. Establish a coordinated marketing strategy to increase international awareness of B.C. as a high quality education destination.

With the number of international students worldwide growing exponentially and other countries increasing their efforts to attract international students, it’s now more important than ever that B.C. effectively market our study abroad opportunities to the world. Individual educational institutions may have limited ability to reach our target markets, so a coordinated approach is needed.

To bring this about, the B.C. Government will take a leadership role in marketing our province, using its skills, resources and relationships to attract international students to British Columbia. We will accomplish this by:

- Creating a unique international marketing strategy, customized by education program, B.C. location and target market.

- Promoting B.C. as an international education destination at international trade shows.
- Using B.C.'s trade offices and other international resources to advance overseas marketing.
- As international delegations come to B.C. — and as B.C. delegations go abroad — promoting international education in B.C. through the use of focused publications, marketing material and other methods such as social media campaigns.
- Working with other provinces, territories and the federal government on cross-government marketing initiatives, including those outlined in the Council of the Federation's International Education Marketing Action Plan for Provinces and Territories.

By 2013:

- The Province will pursue opportunities to integrate international education into future government missions.
- The Province will refresh marketing materials for use during outbound missions, international trade shows, and at B.C.'s international trade offices.
- B.C. will participate in key international education events, in collaboration with other provinces, territories and the Government of Canada, including NAFFSA: Association of International Educators in 2012.
- B.C.'s international offices will develop relationships with alumni and related networks overseas, using B.C.-educated students working overseas to help better promote business and business development opportunities in British Columbia. This will include hosting events for alumni, circulation of the trade and investment e-newsletter of the Province of B.C., and extending invitations to appropriate government and industry networking events.
- A phased provincial international education marketing strategy will be developed and implemented, in collaboration with the education sector and other private sector partners, and in alignment with federal efforts.

By 2014:

- B.C. will assist in the implementation of international marketing efforts planned through the Council of the Federation.

Providing a Little Taste of Home

The first few weeks or months an international student spends in B.C. can be overwhelming as they adjust to new courses, a new campus, a new community, new customs and a new language. Sometimes a new climate, too.

At Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, Jamshid Mirzabekov is there to help. He's one of nine international student advisors employed by the university to support students from all over the world.



Jamshid came from Uzbekistan to study at TRU and recently graduated from the university's School of Business and Economics, so he knows the value of international student support from both sides.

Jamshid and the team at TRU World help students with everything from academic programs and housing to visas, medical issues and banking.

"We become students' peers, best friends and even parents," says Jamshid. "We can speak their language and we've experienced their culture so we understand what they're feeling. We make them feel like they're at home."

Five Students, Five Countries, One Mother, One World

Dinnertime conversation takes on a whole new meaning when household members speak different first languages.

Adapting to a new language, navigating in a foreign city and being away from family and social safety nets can be overwhelming for international students. However, having a home away from home with people who care can make a huge difference.

“Despite the cultural differences, when you come right down to it, 19-year-olds are the same no matter where they were raised as children,” said Vancouver Island resident Marianna. “Dinner at my house is usually a whole lot of laughter and a whole lot of trying to figure out what each person is trying to say.”

In 2011, Marianna had five international students living in her household. In return for healthy meals, private rooms and social supports, each student paid a small fee, making the venture a win-win for everyone.

“Many of the students I have met continue to say in touch,” said Marianna. “Being a mom to someone — even if only for a year — is an investment in another being that always touches your heart.”

POSTCARD

Being a mom to someone — even if only for a year — is an investment in another being that always touches your heart.

*Marianna,
Vancouver Island Resident*

By 2015:

- A program of sustained international marketing will be implemented in priority markets.

7. Inform British Columbians and their communities about the importance of international education and its benefits.

Communities that have embraced international education have also seen significant benefits — socially, culturally and economically. The provincial government, educational institutions and other partners will work together to communicate with B.C. communities and their residents about the real benefits of international education and help to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions. British Columbia will accomplish this by:

- Identifying and communicating the full range of benefits of international education.
- Assisting communities, informed by ‘best practices,’ to welcome international students.
- Developing training resources for home-stay providers so more British Columbians can take advantage of opportunities to host international students.
- Making more information available on community supports for international students and their families and helping to connect them to B.C. communities where they will live.

By 2013:

- Communities will be encouraged to host “International Days” celebrating their international populations, including students.
- The Province will work to determine best practices for successfully incorporating international student populations into B.C.’s rural communities.
- Information on available community supports across B.C. will be incorporated into a user-friendly, “no-wrong-door” approach web portal.
- The Province will establish a working group with interested municipalities to discuss options for sharing and implementing best practices to welcoming international students.

By 2014:

- The Province will, alongside communities, develop investment attraction strategies to help enhance their attractiveness to international students.

- Training tools will be developed to help home-stay providers prepare to greet international students in their community, including potential linkages to the WORLDHOST program.
- B.C. will pursue opportunities to leverage funding to assist community organizations in providing settlement services for international students.

8. Work with the federal government on issues relating to international education.

With the number of job openings expected to outstrip the number of B.C. students going through our education system, it will become more important than ever that British Columbia take steps to encourage students who are studying skills needed in our economy, to stay here post-graduation.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that some international students face lengthy processing times when applying to study in Canada. This could discourage some potential international students from applying. Improvements to the processing of student visas could help attract and retain more international students. By addressing this and other issues relating to the federal government's areas of responsibility, we could significantly improve B.C.'s ability to attract international students. British Columbia will accomplish this by:

- Continuing to take a leadership role at the national level on international education.
- Encouraging improved service delivery by Citizenship and Immigration Canada in the processing of applications for international students.
- Pressing for improved opportunities for international student employment and residency in B.C., including through the Canada-B.C. Immigration Agreement.

By 2013:

- B.C. will continue to work with the federal government to advance study/work transition initiatives such as the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program.
- B.C. will work with the federal government to promote permanent resident transitions, such as the BC Provincial Nominee Program and the Canadian Experience Class.

By 2014:

- B.C. will build on the Post-Graduation Work Permit Program Pilot to increase opportunities for more international students at qualified institutions to work during and after studies in B.C.

Come to Study, Stay to Live and Work



Adriana came to B.C. as an international student from Brazil in 2004. Now she's a Canadian citizen, and a proud resident of Fort St. John where she manages regional highway projects for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. It's been quite a journey.

After earning a degree in electrical engineering in Brazil, Adriana's desire to learn about new cultures brought her to Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo for post-graduate studies in business and leadership.

Adriana's education and experience quickly led to job opportunities, and the lifestyle and community engagement she experienced in B.C. convinced her to stay.

"The community makes things happen here," says Adriana. "People get involved in order to protect what they have, or get together and work to improve it."

Adriana enjoys exploring the spectacular parks and trails around Fort St. John, and is looking forward to seeing the northern lights for the first time.



Photo courtesy of Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo, B.C.

- B.C. will work with the federal government to increase opportunities for international students to gain work experience during and after their studies and increase opportunities for international students to move to permanent residency.

9. Ensure educational institutions and their communities have the capacity to accommodate increasing numbers of international students.

International students looking to study in B.C. seek out learning opportunities at all levels of education, from kindergarten to graduate school, and at all types of institutions, both public and private institutions and at language schools. Success in expanding international education depends on schools and communities having suitable space and facilities for international students. Capacity varies across the education sector and across regions. Determining and managing capacity — including physical space, housing, human resources, transportation and support services — is critical to the ongoing success of international education in B.C. The Province will accomplish this by:

- Sharing capacity 'best practices' across the sector.
- Pursuing private, public and not-for-profit partnerships to help meet capacity needs.

By 2013:

- The Province will conduct a comprehensive capacity analysis of B.C.'s entire education system and supports for international students — including local governments, communities and industry — to identify areas of pressure and areas of growth.

By 2014:

- Information on capacity "best practices" will be collected and shared throughout the education sector and communities.
- The Province will assess private, public and not-for-profit partnership options that could help meet B.C.'s long-term education capacity needs.
- Community pilot programs will be implemented to demonstrate innovative solutions to capacity concerns.

By 2015 and beyond:

- Further private, public and not-for-profit partnerships will be pursued to help meet B.C.'s education sector capacity needs.
- The Ministry of Advanced Education will seek new capital funding to help the public post-secondary sector meet long-term capacity needs.

Engaging with All Citizens

Numerous partners contribute to British Columbia's success in international education. From every level of government to our many educational institutions in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to businesses and local organizations, all work to raise British Columbians' awareness of the range and extent of benefits international education can bring to our communities and citizens.

Some of these partners sat on the International Education Project Council, which developed recommendations leading directly to this Strategy. The cooperation and commitment of these partners will be even more important in the future as B.C. takes our international education success to the next level.

The input of British Columbians will be just as important to the success of this International Education Strategy. Individuals and communities have a critical role to play in implementing this Strategy and will be the main beneficiaries of its success.

This Strategy was envisioned as a living document and we invite all British Columbians to share ideas and provide input on steps we should be taking to maximize the benefits of international education to our communities. Visit our online forum and be part of the conversation at bcjobsplan.ca



It Takes A Village (...Or A City)

Nanaimo mayor John Ruttan is proud of the way his mid-Island community has rallied together to welcome international students with open arms.

Nanaimo is home to Vancouver Island University's main campus and an academic destination for 1,680 international students from around the globe.

"The City of Nanaimo has many distinct advantages to attract foreign students and certainly our lifestyle and quality of life are of great interest to the families of foreign students."

For several years, Nanaimo and Vancouver Island University have worked together to create an environment that not only welcomes international students, but actually includes them in civic development projects. Being involved in projects such as park expansion plans and other amenity programs helps the students develop a better understanding of the community and its goals. This in turn fosters a sense of belonging and helps students really feel they are part of the community.



Photo courtesy of Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, B.C.



THE BC
JOBS PLAN

