



Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
Conseil des ministres de l'Éducation (Canada)

**JOINT SESSION OF THE OECD EDUCATION COMMITTEE
AND THE CERI GOVERNING BOARD**

CANADIAN REPORT

Paris, France
October 27, 2004

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1. The OECD Secretariat will prepare a summary record of the meeting, and it will be available upon request from the CMEC Secretariat. Documentation referred to in this report is also available upon request from the CMEC Secretariat.
2. The Joint Session adopted the agenda for the meeting and approved the summary record from the last Joint Session on May 26, 2004 [EDU/EC/CERI/ M(2004)1].
3. The Joint Session noted the conclusions from the meeting of the INES Strategic Management Group on October 4–5, 2004 [EDU/INES/SMG/M(2004)2].
4. The Joint Session was reminded that vacancies existed on the INES Strategic Management Group (SMG) — two positions for Education Committee members and one position for the CERI Governing Board. Nominations have been received and voting will take place electronically in the coming weeks.
5. Michael Barber, Head of the UK Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit, made an interesting presentation on innovative approaches and instruments that are being used in the United Kingdom to establish and monitor benchmarks in various sectors of public policy. His presentation stimulated a lively discussion, although it became evident during the discussion that Member countries use a number of models of accountability. It was curious that Professor Barber did not respond to Maria David-Evans’ enquiry about the effect that the UK model has on government management strategy (reporting relationship between ministers and their Permanent Secretaries), given the one-to-one relationship that Professor Barber has with the Permanent Secretaries on behalf of the Prime Minister.
6. Andreas Schleicher introduced the INES Programme of Work: Prioritisation and Finance with particular reference to (i) proposals from the INES SMG [EDU/EC/CERI(2004)4]; (ii) a proposal for developing indicators on teachers, teaching and learning [EDU/EC/CERI(2004)5]; and (iii) a strategy for the assessment of adult competencies [EDU/EC/CERI(2004)6].
7. Needless to say, this item received considerable attention, and the majority of delegates made or attempted to make an intervention on this topic. Once again, time became a factor in the discussions because too much of the meeting had already been taken up by the presentation of Professor Barber. **IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO IMPRESS UPON THE OECD SECRETARIAT THE NEED TO BETTER MANAGE THE AGENDA OF THE JOINT SESSION.** This is not the first time that the most substantive item did not receive adequate time for discussion.
8. As expected, there was a considerable variation in the range of support given to the critical issues of (i) an increase of approximately 16% in voluntary contributions; (ii) the proposal and the timing of a teacher survey; and (iii) the work in assessing adult competencies.

9. Maria David-Evans added Canada's support to the recommendations of the SMG on the subject of core activities, cautioned the Secretariat about the relevance and feasibility of developing indicators for teachers, and suggested that more work needed to be done on a proposed model for this indicator (supporting the suggestion made by Germany that interested countries could work on a pilot project).
10. The representative from Japan spoke most forcefully about the need for further reduction in the INES budget and indicated that his country is not prepared to accept the proposed 16% increase in voluntary contributions.
11. Andreas Schleicher summarized the discussions as follows:
 - There seemed to be an interest in the teacher survey — possible pilot work in 2006.
 - Will look for further reduction in the INES budget and will report back to the Joint Session.
 - Continue to work on adult competencies.
12. Canadian authorities will have to reflect further on the issue of a supplementary contribution to INES in light of the decision by Foreign Affairs Canada not to include the required increase to INES funding as part of the overall contribution from the Government of Canada to OECD. This matter has become more urgent, given the prospect of the further voluntary contribution needed for INES in 2005–06.