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Part One: Second Annual Report Card on Western Canadian High Schools

The Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS) and the Frontier Centre for Public Policy (FCPP) have released the second annual Report Card on Western Canadian High Schools (Manitoba and Saskatchewan edition). The report card ranks high schools from Manitoba and Saskatchewan based on the AIMS model, which has been used in Atlantic Canada for almost a decade.

The ongoing failure to release detailed information about school level performance in Manitoba unfortunately stands in stark contrast to global best practices in education. In a 2006 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) global analysis of what accounts for the differences in school level performance around the globe, it was found that the two most important factors in making schools better were public reporting of school level performance and school level control of budget decisions. Manitoba unfortunately fails on both counts.

The efforts of the government in Saskatchewan to consider school level performance and to expand the number of measures they collect and report to the public is to be commended.

The Report card looks at school performance in the 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 school years. As a result of the province's continuing refusal to make more comprehensive data available, Manitoba's Report Card includes only the moving on rates for grades 10, 11 and 12, and attendance rates for a minority of schools.

[Read the full report here](#)

Part Two: Open for Business: Creating Wealth through Better Health

The Opportunity Will See You Now

Healthcare. It's a burden. A drain on our economy.

But it is also a major economic driver and it could be the engine of economic growth for Atlantic Canada.

Do you live in a rural community facing population and resource challenges?

Health care is an industry that relies on portable raw materials, people and ideas, not proximity to bitumen!

The same applies to urban or suburban settings facing demographic shifts, aging populations and rising health care bills.

If you can't afford to make the payments on your health infrastructure going forward, or if you are having challenges drawing new people to your community – health care offers both new investment AND new populations – both providers and patients.

On November 15th, at Halifax's World Trade and Convention Centre, AIMS will host its latest health conference: Open for Business; Creating Wealth through Better Health.

[Find out more about the conference here](#)

[Register for the conference here](#)

Part Three: Why Europe Matters

It is a great shame that political leadership in Europe has not been honest with the

electorate. As a consequence, they are promoting an economic environment which, for many European jurisdictions, is no longer globally competitive.

In this paper, *Why Europe Matters*, AIMS Board Chair, John Risley, looks at Greece and its current economic turmoil, offering insight into how to rebuild its economy. Through a comparison of Greece to the US, Risley argues Greece lacks the confidence of lenders to continue on its current path. Greece must tackle both debt and spending obligations through lower salaries, fewer public servants, regulatory reform, open its professions to competition and enable new businesses to open and grow.

Risley warns no country, including Canada, can live beyond its means and no country can afford to ignore the discipline of ensuring the promises it is making are consistent with its ability to fund such promises.

[Read the full commentary here](#)

Part Four: Too Rural for Our Own Good

Nova Scotia has been dead last in Canada for most of the last 20 years in terms of economic growth as measured by GDP. At least part of the reason for low economic growth is related to a much less urbanized population and a continuing reliance on seasonal work. In this commentary, AIMS Board Member, Don Mills, outlines the consequences of a large rural population. He looks at the challenges of generating long-term jobs, the cost to deliver public services in rural regions, and the higher dependence on seasonal work. He argues that the urbanization of Atlantic Canada has been artificially held back by government policies over the last 40 years.

Addressing critics of the Federal Government's recent EI reforms, Mills argues seasonal jobs are not the way forward. He supports urbanization as a better path; leading to fewer seasonal jobs, more permanent employment and economic growth.

[Read the full commentary here](#)

Part Five: Why Not Gauge Progress With a Follow-up Exam?

In this op-ed AIMS Fellow in Common Sense Education Michael Zwaagstra and co-author of the book [What's Wrong With Our Schools and How We Can Fix Them](#) takes on the issue of standardized testing in Nova Scotia with a common sense approach. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, Nova Scotia's Education Department will change the grade levels at which standardized exams are written. The most notable change is moving math and literacy exams out of Grade 12 and into Grade 10. Zwaagstra argues that adding a standardized exam in Grade 10 does not necessitate their removal in Grade 12. It is akin to a car manufacturing plant adding an extra inspection in the assembly line process but simultaneously removing any requirement to inspect the final product.

[Read the full op-ed here](#)

Part Six: AIMS in the Media

[Grading the schools that grade the students](#)

We all know how it works when students are graded and marked for competency within their respective schools, but what happens when the public attempts to get grading and competency reports on the schools themselves? Well, thanks to the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS) and the Frontier Centre for Public Policy (FCPP) that have carried out some detailed surveys and studies...those marks for Western Canadian high schools are now available.

[Saskatchewan high schools ranked](#)

Glentworth Central School in the Prairie South School Division is No. 1 in the province, according to latest report card by the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS) and the Frontier Centre for Public Policy (FCPP) ranking high schools throughout Saskatchewan.

[Small town high schools get highest ranking in Sask.](#)

For the second year in a row Saskatchewan rural high schools have been ranked higher than those in larger cities, according to an AIMS and FCPP study that graded 170 schools.

[Standardized exams: We learn by testing twice](#)

The Chronicle Herald Editorial Board agrees with AIMS Fellow in Common Sense Education

Reform Michael Zwaagstra that standardized testing must occur in both grades 10 and 12.

[Time to consider health-care lodgers](#)

In this op-ed, AIMS Senior Fellow Don McIver makes the case for Canada to actively encourage inbound medical tourism to help curb some of the financial pressures facing our public healthcare system.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

AIMS is a non-partisan social and economic policy think tank based on Halifax, Nova Scotia. AIMS is a registered charity in Canada and the United States, and takes no money from government to maintain the independence of the institute.

CURRENT ISSUES

[The Case for Que Jumping](#): It's time to PROFIT from Health Care: AIMS explores all of the ways to make money from health care and the implications greater revenues have for sustaining and expanding health services.

[Nova Scotia's Tuition Support Program](#): AIMS proposes expanding support for students with learning disabilities

[AIMS on Campus](#): An exciting opportunity for students! The AIMS on Campus project is made possible through the generous support of the Lotte and John Hecht Memorial Foundation.

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