

**BCCIE SPEAKER SERIES:
DEMYSTIFYING THE ROLE OF OFFSHORE SCHOOLS
IN CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES**

*In partnership with the
Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada*

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**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2011
3:00-4:30 PM
SFU Harbour Centre, Room 1700**

There are currently seventy Canadian international and offshore schools operating beyond Canada's borders. Seventy-six percent of these schools are located in the Asia-Pacific Region, (with many having opened in the last ten to fifteen years). Sixty-three percent are located in China, Hong Kong SAR, and Macao. At modest count, ten Canadian offshore schools are scheduled to open in China alone in the next year. Canadian international and offshore schools are charged fees and inspected annually to be officially accredited to grant Canadian provincial high-school diplomas to their mostly non-Canadian student bodies. The majority of these overseas Canadian high-school graduates are looking for pathways into Canada's post-secondary system. Canada is the only country characterized by this fee-based, provincial accreditation and inspection structure. This unique provincial engagement fosters new job opportunities for Canadian educators, and new avenues through which to recruit for post-secondary international students. As such, Canadian international and offshore schools must be understood broadly as a part of the country's economic strategies in international education.

In East Asia, Canadian international and offshore schools are growing at a tremendous rate, yet remain one of the least known or understood operations. This research will illuminate and contextualize the operation of these schools based on original qualitative research conducted with all seven provincial ministries of education engaged in the accreditation process, and over ten Canadian international and offshore schools in Asia. Interviews were conducted at both international and offshore schools in Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Macau and China. Canada's engagement with its international and offshore schools requires first and foremost, an appreciation of the work and dedication of our Canadian teachers and administrators abroad.

It requires an appreciation of the overseas demand for our high quality of education and educational services, and support for those who engage in its dissemination. It also requires a real effort to open communication and create transparency to help support and sustain a high quality of operation of the Canadian brand of education overseas. Arguably, this is the only way to protect a growing Canadian brand of education overseas. It is also the only way to address the critical issues that also ensue from the operation of provincial curricula overseas.

A flexible, multifaceted and cooperative approach is needed which aims to first and foremost dispel the negative rhetoric which has questioned this type of engagement in the past. All key players at the federal, provincial and regional contexts must share the responsibility to better align the operations of Canadian schools overseas, to ensure a sustainable quality operation. This talk aims to increase transparency and foster dialogue of this operation to do just that.

This event follows the BCCIE Post-Secondary Roundtable event. Both the Roundtable and the Speaking Series events are free. To attend the Roundtable or the afternoon professional development event, please register online at www.bccie.bc.ca/educators/professional-development before **Wednesday, February 16**.

For information about future BCCIE 2010-11 events, visit www.bccie.bc.ca.