



# The evolving culture of large-scale assessments in Canadian education

## Article Summary

In recent years, an increase in the number of large-scale assessment programs in Canada has been observed. However, due to the provincial/territorial control of education throughout Canada, the format and purposes of these assessment programs vary. The central purpose of this study was to document the format and explicit purposes of the current large-scale assessment programs in each of Canada's ten provinces and three territories. Through document analysis of publicly accessible policy documents, examination of Ministry websites, and telephone interviews with Ministry of Education officials, specific and general characteristics and purposes of large-scale assessment practices in Canada were obtained and analyzed. This analysis provided an opportunity to examine the commonalities and variations in the frameworks guiding the current large-scale assessment culture that is evolving in Canada. Assessment programs were categorized by their explicit purposes as they related to the functions of accountability, gatekeeping, instructional diagnosis, and monitoring student achievement over time.

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