

# TWO-THIRDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIANS OPPOSE PRIVATIZATION OF CUSTODIAL, MAINTENANCE AND OTHER SERVICES IN BC SCHOOLS

*British Columbians More Likely to Trust Locally-Elected School  
Boards than the Provincial Government when it Comes to  
Decisions on School Services*



Ipsos Reid

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## TWO-THIRDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIANS OPPOSE PRIVATIZATION OF CUSTODIAL, MAINTENANCE AND OTHER SERVICES IN BC SCHOOLS

### *British Columbians More Likely to Trust Locally-Elected School Boards than the Provincial Government when it Comes to Decisions on School Services*

**Vancouver, BC**—A new Ipsos Reid survey conducted on behalf of the Canadian Union of Public Employees shows that British Columbians oppose privatization of public school services such as custodial, maintenance or other services. When asked, two-thirds (67%) of British Columbians say they are opposed to privatization of these school services, with almost half (47%) saying they are strongly opposed.

At the other end of the spectrum, three-in-ten (29%) British Columbians support the privatization of custodial and maintenance services at BC public schools, with just 11% saying they strongly support this privatization. Women are more likely to oppose privatization of these services than are men (74% vs. 60%). On a regional basis, there is very little variation on this issue. A clear majority of residents throughout the province are generally opposed to the privatization of these school services.

“These results confirm what our members have been hearing from the public they serve in every corner of the province,” says CUPE BC president Barry O’Neill. “There is simply no appetite for privatization in our public school system.”

These results may largely be an issue of trust. Eight-in-ten (80%) British Columbians say they trust people who work directly for the school board more to provide custodial, maintenance and other services in schools, compared with just 13% who say they would trust a private company more. Six-in-ten (61%) say they trust school board employees a lot more. Women are a little more likely than men to say they trust people who work directly for the school board (86% vs. 73%). There are no statistically significant differences by region.

Another question that was asked of British Columbians was whether they would put more trust in the provincial government or locally-elected school boards when it comes to decisions about custodial and maintenance services in schools. People in BC clearly place more trust in locally-elected school boards than the provincial government on this issue. Eighty-five percent of British Columbians say they trust locally-elected school boards more than the provincial government, with 63% saying they trust the local school boards a lot more. Only 12% of people say they trust the provincial government more than local school boards, with just 7% saying they trust the provincial government a lot more.

*These results are based on 800 telephone interviews with British Columbians, 18 years of age and older from the BC Reid Express omnibus survey. Interviews were conducted between January 17 and January 22, 2006 with residents from throughout the province. The final data are statistically weighted to reflect the actual age and gender of the British Columbia population and are balanced by region.*

*With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95% certainty that the overall results are within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points of what they would have been had the entire BC population been surveyed. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population.*

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