



**MPHEC**  
Maritime Provinces  
Higher Education  
Commission

**CESPM**  
Commission de  
l'enseignement supérieur  
des Provinces maritimes

## Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission

April 13, 2015

Fredericton (NB) – Nine-in-ten Maritime high school students intend to seek higher education; university number one choice

When asked in May 2014 about their future plans, 71 percent of Maritime grade 12 students reported they intended to be enrolled in a postsecondary institution in Fall 2014, and an additional 21% said they would likely do so over the next five years, says a report released today by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

“We are very pleased to see the popularity of postsecondary education among our region’s youth. It is especially remarkable that almost half of students headed for higher education in the fall said they would go to university, nearly double that of any other postsecondary destination,” said Mireille Duguay, CEO of the Commission.

One of the interesting findings from this survey is that there is little variation in the main motivations cited by students for choosing the different postsecondary destinations: Whether students say they intend to go to university or to college, the great majority are doing so for reasons related to preparing for employment.

Once they’ve finished their program, 63% of university-bound students definitely expect that they will be able to find a job that is closely related to their program. Expectations about being able to find a job *close to home* are much more measured however, with just 14% of the university-bound saying they definitely expect to be able find a full-time job in their hometown.

Students were also asked about education costs and about their plans to finance it. “One thing is clear, students who know the costs know them very well. But one-quarter of university-bound students were not able to answer those questions” said Ms. Duguay. “Whether a student is well informed or not about the costs of attending university is correlated to the extent Grade 12 students expect to rely on their parents to cover those costs.” The higher the percentage of education costs the student expects their parents to pay, the more likely they did not know the cost of tuition.

The report explores many other themes, such as how long postsecondary-bound students expect their studies will take, what students value about a postsecondary education, and who influenced students’ decision-making about further studies

When asked why the MPHEC conducted a survey of high school students, Ms. Duguay said “Our goal in this project is to learn about incoming students’ expectations, to see how well they align with reality. The report we released today describes these expectations. In a follow-up report, we will be exploring how well university graduates feel their expectations were met. This ‘reality check’ will be very valuable information for our stakeholders- governments, universities, and perhaps most importantly, students and their families.”

A copy of the report, “Higher Education Expectations: The View from Grade 12” is available at [www.mphec.ca](http://www.mphec.ca).



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The Commission worked closely with the three provinces' departments of education to conduct the survey in May and June 2014. The survey sampled more than 5,000 students across 175 Maritime high schools. The margin of error for the survey is  $\pm 1.4\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

**About the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC):** The MPHEC, established in 1974, is an arm's length organization accountable to the Ministers responsible for post-secondary education in the Maritime Provinces. The Commission assists institutions and government in enhancing the post-secondary learning environment. The Commission's 20 members are drawn from the Maritime provinces, and represent higher education institutions, provincial governments and the general public. The Commission's primary orientation in carrying out its duties is to give first consideration to improving and maintaining the best possible service to students as lifelong learners.

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FOR BROADCAST NEWS

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