

Canadian Education Ministers want fewer access barriers to online educational content

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The Canadian [Council of Ministers of Education](#) (CMEC) wants to amend Canadian copyright law in order to improve access to online content. From yesterday's [press release](#):

"Because copyright legislation impacts directly on our policies and practices in classrooms across Canada, we are most concerned with fair and reasonable Internet access for students and teachers in their educational pursuits," says Minister [Jamie] Muir, whose consortium represents education ministers in Canada with the exception of the province of Quebec....

Education Minister Muir comments that the Canadian Music Creators Coalition's recent meetings with the federal ministers have captured the public's interest in the anticipated copyright legislation. He says, "Like these musicians, the education community is very concerned about the new legislation. We want the new Copyright Bill to reflect the reality of Internet usage today and not support outdated and unsustainable business models that limit access to publicly available Internet materials."...

"For the education community, we believe a large part of the Internet is in the public domain, and we don't want to see Canadian-made fences placed on the Internet's public space. We simply don't want the establishment of restrictive measures that will negatively affect the quality of education for today's Internet-surfing generation and for future Canadian students and educators." Minister Muir adds, "We believe that Canadian students and educators have a right to use publicly available materials on the Internet without a copyright collective charging a licensing fee for access."...

"Bill C-60 was wholly inadequate from the perspective of the education community because it failed to address the educational use of the Internet....Our proposed education amendment would allow access to publicly available Internet materials while respecting the rights of those creators who post on-line for commercial purposes. In our proposal, students and teachers would be able to access those on-line materials that are 'free.' Those materials posted on-line for commercial enterprise would still require payment should students and teachers wish to access and use them."...