

**Government of Alberta** ■  
Education

SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

**Business & Industry Survey**  
**Employers of Alberta High School Graduates**

**Corporate Planning Branch**

**May 2013**

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## 1. Summary

As part of its continual efforts to improve Alberta's education system, Alberta Education routinely conducts a survey of Alberta employers to assess satisfaction with key areas of the learning system, particularly for organizations that employ recent high school graduates. For 2012/2013, the survey included a total of 1,638 employers, including 683 employers of recent high school graduates, and included questions about graduates of Alberta's Learning System. This summary highlights the main findings from the 2012/2013 Business and Industry Survey as they pertain specifically to recent high school graduates.

### Employees with Only High School Graduation

Approximately two-thirds of employers (65%) reported having employees whose highest level of education was a high school diploma.

### Employment of Recent High School Graduates

About one-third of employers (31%) reported having a recent high school graduate on staff. Of those employers who did not have a recent graduate on staff, approximately one-quarter (27%) were looking to hire a recent high school graduate. Those who were looking to hire were often looking to fill Operator/Labourer/Warehousing positions (37%).

Employers who were looking to hire recent high school graduates were asked why they have not hired any recent high school graduates for their positions. The most common reasons why recent high school graduates were not hired was because graduates were not interested/none applied (33%) and/or that they couldn't find the right person/lack of a suitable candidate (23%).

### Opinions of Alberta's Education System

About four out of five (81%) employers that employed recent high school graduates were very satisfied or satisfied that high school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work. Most employers were also satisfied that high school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge (65%), and have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime (61%).

### Organization Provided Assistance for Education or Training

The most common type of educational or training assistance provided to recent high school graduates by their employer was time off during the working day (73%), followed by allowed leave of absence (60%), paid time off for specific course work (50%), and paid fees/tuition (42%). When asked to indicate the type of short-term training their organization offered to recent high school graduates, the most common response was safety-related training or courses.

### Number and Working Location of Recent High School Graduates

Those organizations that did employ recent high school graduates often employed a small number of graduates. Specifically, 61% of those who employed recent high school graduates employed 1 to 4 graduates, and 15% of the organizations surveyed employed 5 to 9 recent graduates.

When asked where their recent high school graduates were working, 80% of employers indicated they were working at the current location, while 18% indicated they were working at a field office, and 11% at some “other” location (note that respondents could provide multiple responses to this question, therefore the percentages total to over 100%).

#### Overall Satisfaction with Recent High School Graduates

Four out of five (80%) employers of recent high school graduates reported they were satisfied with the skills and quality of work of recent high school graduates, with 16% indicating they were “very satisfied” and 64% “satisfied”.

When asked to rate their satisfaction with 19 unique skills and personal qualities of recent high school graduates, satisfaction ranged from a low of 37% for the ability to manage money, credit and personal finances to a high of 90% for the ability to work with others towards a common goal.

#### Responsiveness of Alberta’s Learning System

Two-thirds (67%) of employers that have high school graduates agreed that Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of their organization by providing an adequate supply of high school graduates, while 59% agreed that Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of their organization by providing appropriate skills for high school graduates.

#### Skills and Abilities Missing From Recent High School Graduates

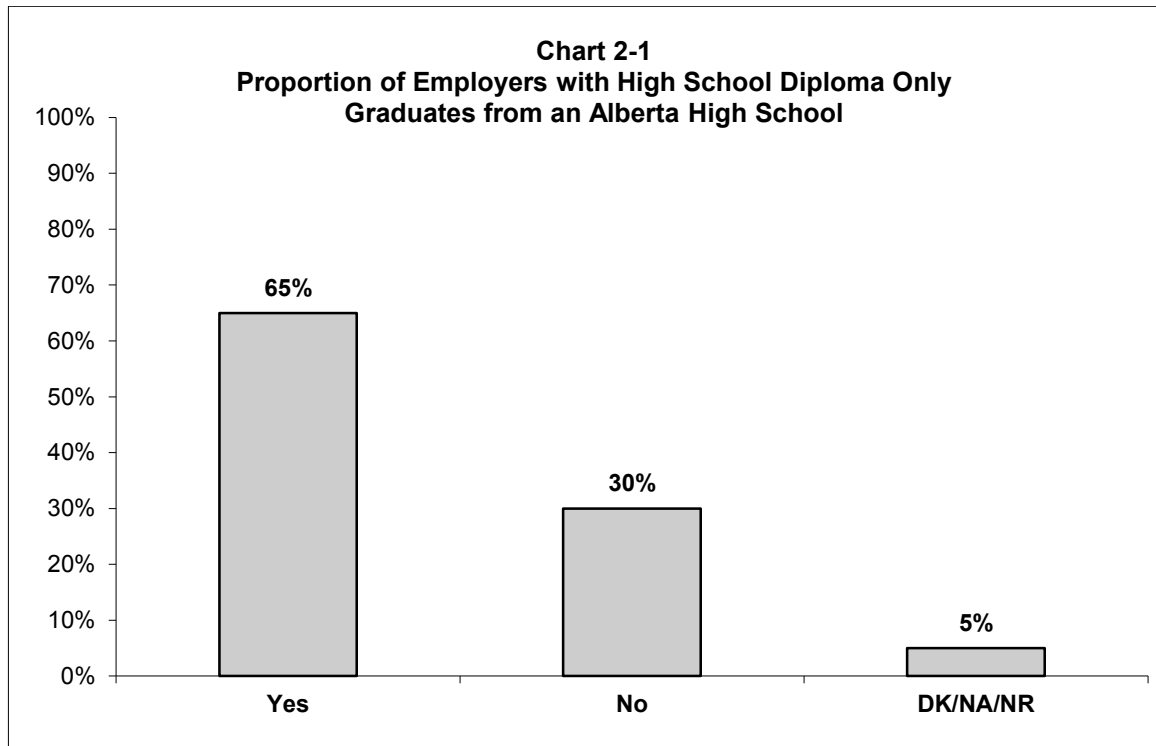
About one in five employers that have recent high school graduates felt that writing/reading/basic literacy skills were missing from recent high school graduates (20%), while a similar proportion felt that accountability/responsibility was missing from recent high school graduates (19%).

Relationships among survey items and demographic variables including region, industry, and business size are described in detail in the body of the report.

## 2. Survey Results

### 2.1. Employees with Only High School Graduation

When asked about the education levels of employees in their company, approximately two-thirds (65%) of employers reported having employees with only a high school diploma from an Alberta high school (Chart 2-1).



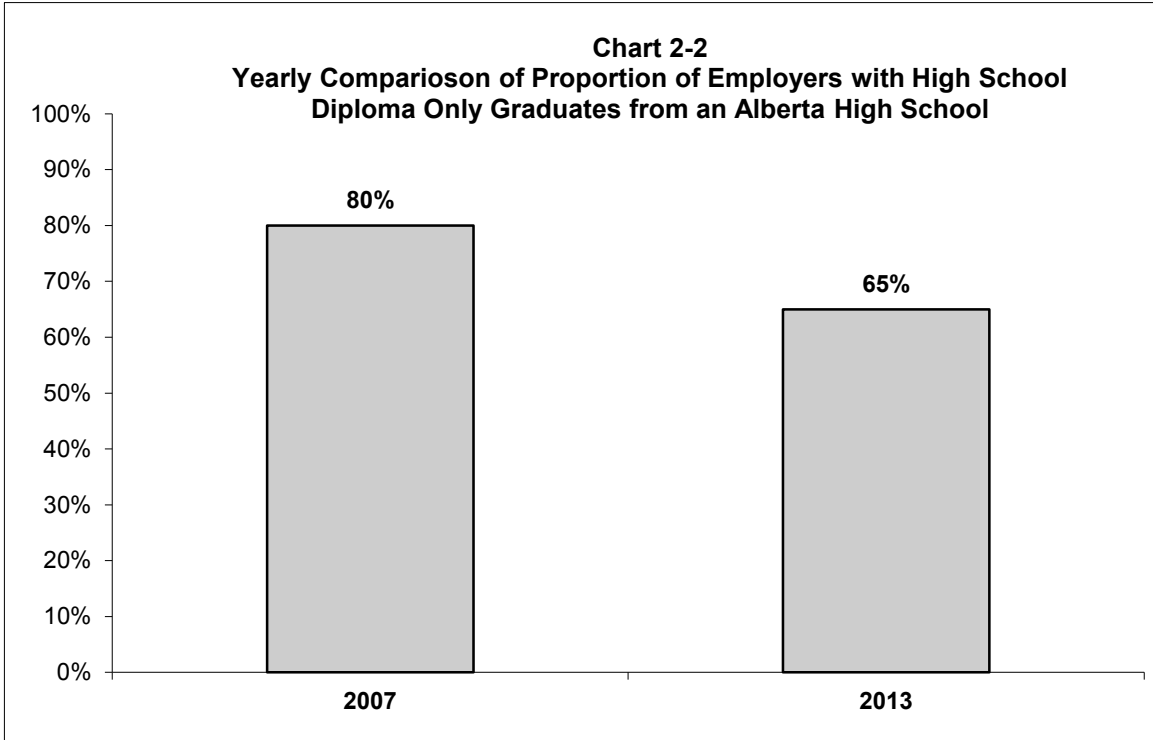
n=1,335 in 2013

QD "Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with ONLY high school graduation, from an Alberta high school?"

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region, industry, and business size, as follows:

- Employers in Calgary were the least likely to report having employees with only a high school diploma, while employers in Non-Cities and Other Cities were the most likely to report having employees with only a high school diploma.
- Employers in the Wholesale/Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing industries, the Primary/Utilities industries, and the Construction and Manufacturing industries were the most likely to report having employees with only a high school diploma from an Alberta high school.
- Employers with 2-4 employees were the least likely to report having employees with only a high school diploma. Generally, the larger the business the more likely the employer was to report having employees with only a high school diploma.

The proportion of employers in the current year that employ people with only a high school diploma from an Alberta high school (65%) is less than the proportion who employed high school diploma only graduates in 2007 (80%) (Chart 2-2).



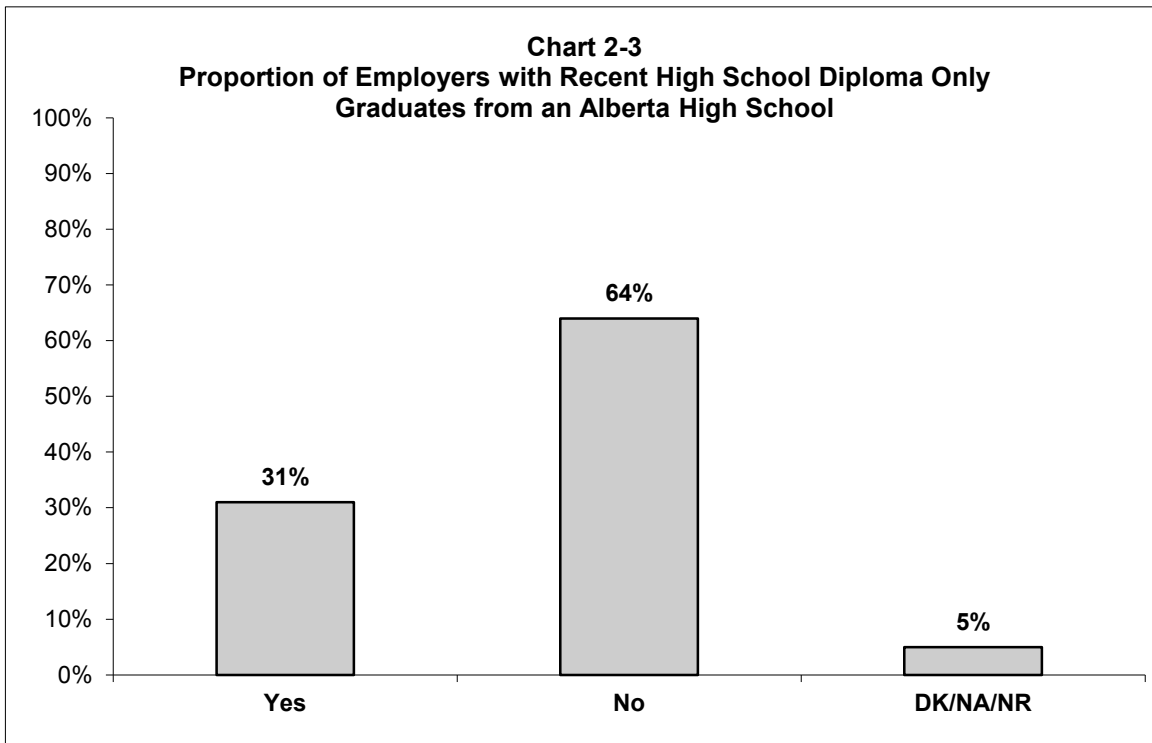
n=2,201 in 2007, n=1,335 in 2013

2007 "Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with the following education levels? a) Employees with a High School Diploma only – having graduated from an Alberta high school."

2013 "Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with ONLY high school graduation, from an Alberta high school?"

## 2.2. Employment of Recent High School Graduates

With respect to recent graduates, employers were asked to indicate whether they had any individuals working for their company who had graduated with a high school diploma from an Alberta high school within the last two years. As shown in Chart 2-3, approximately one-third (31%) of employers reported having one or more recent high school graduates, while 64% did not employ any recent high school graduates.



n=1,335 in 2013

QG "Have any of the individuals working for your organization graduated from an Alberta high school WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS?"

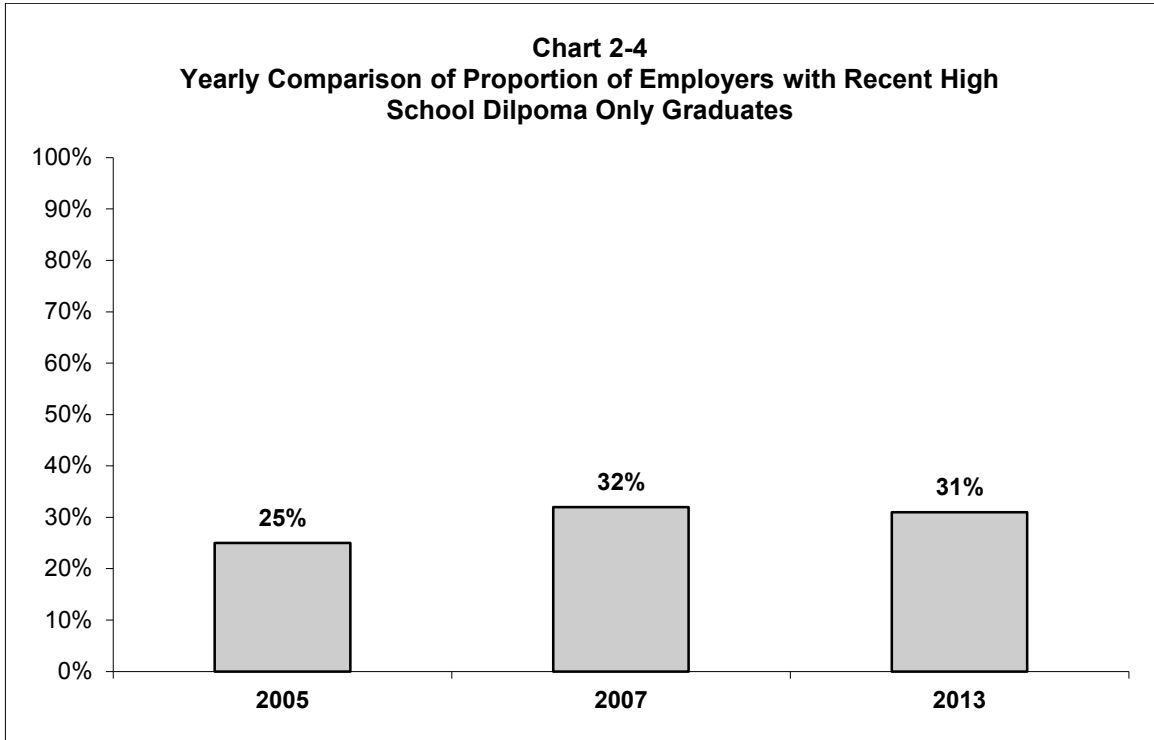
Note that the n for this survey question includes the first 1,335 survey respondents before the survey logic was changed to only survey businesses with recent graduates.

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region, industry, and business size:

- Employers from Calgary were the least likely to indicate that they employed recent high school graduates.
- Employers in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services; Information and Cultural industries were the most likely to report having recent high school graduates working for their business.
- Employers with 2-4 employees or 5-9 employees were the least likely to report having employees that graduated from an Alberta high school within the last two years working for their business. In general, the larger the business, the more likely the company was to have recent high school graduates on staff.



The proportion of employers in the current year that employ one or more recent high school graduates from an Alberta high school (31%) appears to be similar to the 2007 result (Chart 2-4). Note that the sample size and confidence intervals are unknown for 2005 results, therefore comparisons to 2005 results are not discussed.

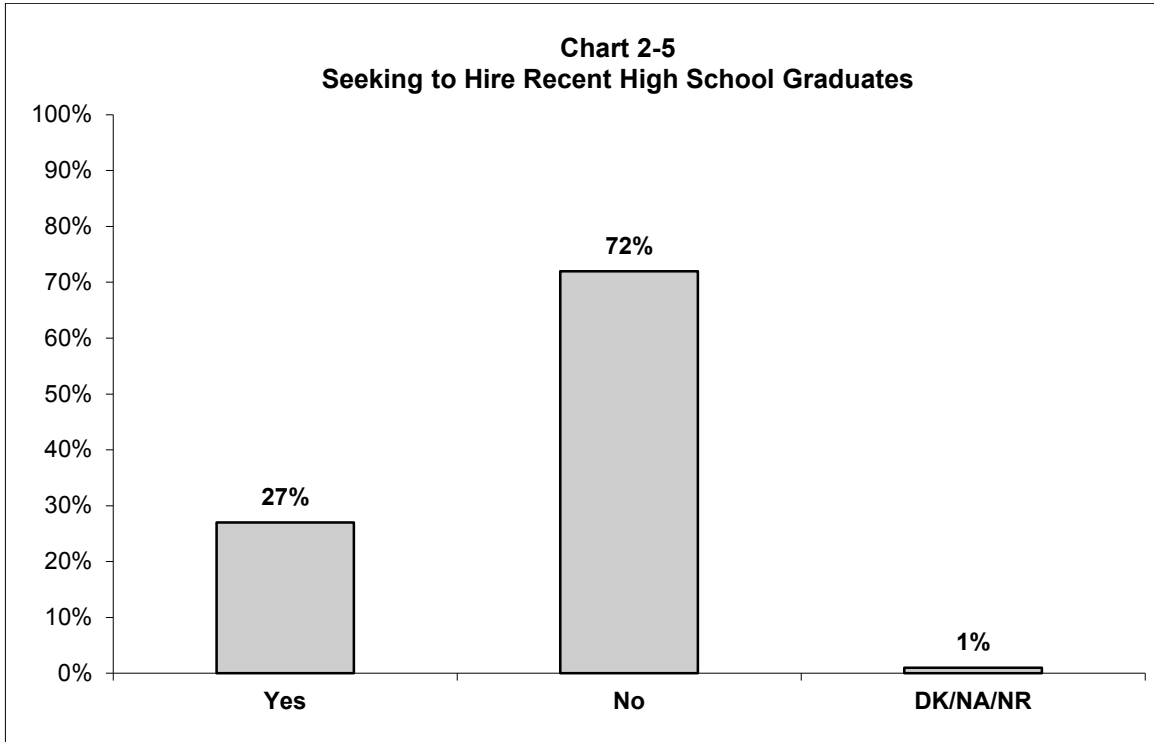


n=2,201 in 2007, n=1,335 in 2013

2007 "Have any of the individuals working for your company graduated with a High School Diploma only within the last two years?"

2013 "Have any of the individuals working for your organization graduated from an Alberta high school WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS?"

Employers that did not currently employ any recent high school only graduates were asked if they had been looking to hire recent high school graduates. Approximately one-quarter (27%) of employers reported that they were looking to hire employees who graduated with a high school diploma within the last two years (Chart 2-5).



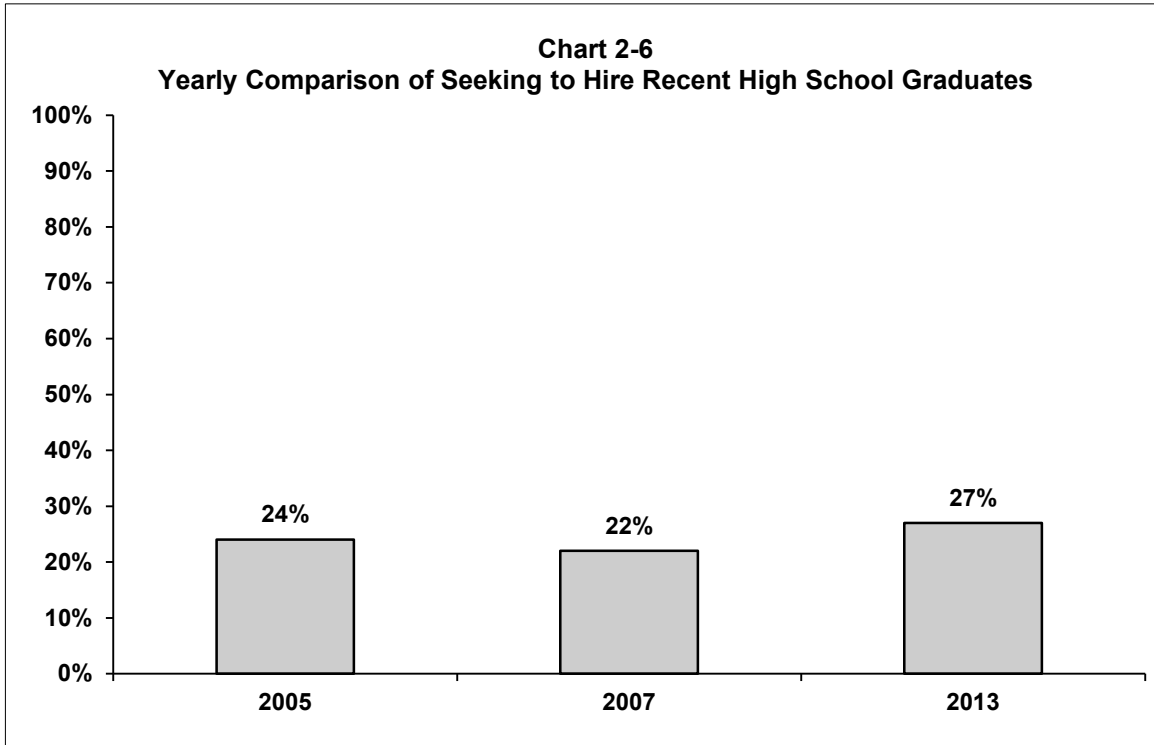
n=922 in 2013

QH "WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS, have you been looking to hire RECENT high school graduates?"

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region, industry, and business size:

- Employers from Non-Cities were the most likely to indicate that they were seeking to hire recent high school graduates within the last two years, while employers from Calgary were the least likely to be looking to hire recent high school graduates.
- Employers in the Finance and Insurance, Real Estate/Rental/Leasing, Management of Companies, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industries, and the Health, Education, and Public Administration industries were the least likely to report that they had been looking to hire recent high school graduates within the last two years.
- Employers with 2-4 employees and those with 100-199 employees were the least likely to report that they had been looking to hire recent high school graduates within the last two years, while employers with 20-49 employees were the most likely to be seeking to hire recent high school graduates.

As shown in Chart 2-6, the demand for recent high school graduates among those not currently employing recent high school graduates appears to be similar to the 2007 result.



n=1,431 in 2007, n=922 in 2013

2007 "Within the last 2 years, have you been looking to hire...a) "High School Diploma only graduates" (asked to employers who did not currently have any recent high school diploma only graduates working for their company)

2013 "WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS, have you been looking to hire RECENT high school graduates?" (asked to employers who did not currently have any, or any recent high school graduates working for their company)

As shown in Table 2-7, of those employers not currently employing recent high school graduates but that were looking to hire recent high school graduates, 37% were looking to fill Operator/Labourer/Warehousing positions, which is similar to the result from 2007. Other common types of positions that employers were trying to fill with recent high school graduates were Customer Service/Counter Help (14%), Administrative/Office Workers/Clerical (12%), Technicians/Skilled Trades positions (10%), and Sales positions (10%).

<b>Table 2-7 Positions to be Filled by Recent High School Graduates</b>		
<b>Position/Occupation</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
Operator/Labourer/Warehousing	32%	37%
Customer Service/Counter Help	12%	14%
Administrative/Office Workers/Clerical	10%	12%
Technicians/Skilled Trades	17%	10%
Sales Persons	13%	10%
Cashier	5%	8%
Food Preparation/Services	4%	6%
Truck Driver/Driving positions	8%	4%
Administrative Assistant/Secretary	2%	3%
Other <sup>1</sup>	26%	29%

n=306 in 2007, n=247 in 2013<sup>2</sup>

2007 "What position(s)/occupations(s) were you looking to hire High School Diploma only graduates for?"

2013 Q1\_1 "What type of positions or occupations were you looking to hire RECENT high school graduates for?"

Respondents could be coded into multiple categories.

<sup>1</sup> Includes categories that are too small to report individually.

<sup>2</sup> Confidence intervals for these sample sizes are as follows: n=306 is +/-5.6%; n=247 is +/-6.2%.

Employers that were looking to hire recent Alberta high school graduates were subsequently asked why they did not hire any recent graduates for the positions (Table 2-8). Overall, one-third of employers (33%) mentioned that graduates were not interested in the position or that none had applied, while the next most common reason was the lack of a suitable candidate (23%). These two response options were also the most commonly mentioned reasons in 2007.

<b>Table 2-8 Common Reasons Recent Alberta High School Graduates were Not Hired</b>		
<b>Reason</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
Graduates not interested/none applied	30%	33%
Lack of suitable candidate/didn't find the right person	22%	23%
Lack of experience related to position	5%	16%
High school graduates have a poor attitude	5%	10%
Still looking/Position has not been filled	8%	6%
Other	--	28%

n=254 in 2007, n=247 in 2013<sup>3</sup>

2007 "Why didn't you hire recent **Albertan** High School Diploma only graduates for these positions/occupations?"

2013 Q1\_2 "Why didn't you hire RECENT Alberta high school graduates for these positions?"

Respondents could be coded into multiple categories.

<sup>3</sup> Confidence intervals for these sample sizes are as follows: n=254 is +/-6.2%; n=247 is +/-6.2%.

Employers that had been looking to hire recent high school graduates were then asked if they had any other comments about recent high school graduates of Alberta's K-12 Education System. Almost half of these respondents (45%, n=111) contributed an additional verbatim comment, many of which were detailed and spanned more than one theme. In general, most comments with respect to recent high school graduates were negative in nature, although there were some respondents (approximately one in ten) that responded with a positive comment about recent high school graduates.

The most common theme was that recent high school graduates were not reliable, committed, responsible, and/or had poor motivation, work ethic and attitude, with approximately one-quarter of respondents making a comment that reflected this theme. Closely following this theme, was another commonly-mentioned idea that recent high school graduates had high expectations and entitlement issues regarding work. Specifically, more than one in ten respondents mentioned that recent graduates did not want to start at entry-level positions or entry-level pay and expected the high wages that are common in the oil industry, with very little experience. Another theme identified by about one in ten respondents was that recent high school graduates lacked life skills and maturity, and that they were not prepared for the real world workforce. Additionally, about one in five respondents identified specific skills that were weak or lacking from recent graduates, including math, writing, and critical thinking skills. About one in ten respondents felt that recent graduates did not want to work hard or get their hands dirty, while about the same proportion blamed technology (such as calculators, computers, smart phones) for the shortcomings of recent graduates. Less than one in ten respondents felt that high school students were not prepared or trained enough for the trades and/or that parents, teachers, and/or the education system were at fault for the various shortcomings of recent high school graduates.

### 2.3. Opinions of Alberta’s Education System

Employers that currently employed high school graduates (recent or non-recent) were asked a series of questions about their opinions regarding graduates of Alberta’s K-12 Education System (Table 2-9). In general, the majority of employers were satisfied that high school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work (81%). In addition, at least three in five employers were satisfied that high school graduates enter the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge (65%) and have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime (61%).

Table 2-9 Opinions of Alberta’s K-12 Education System						
	Total Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	DK/NA/NR
High school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work	81%	10%	71%	14%	3%	2%
High school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge	65%	4%	61%	29%	4%	3%
High school graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime	61%	5%	56%	32%	4%	3%

n=866 in 2013

QE “I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta’s K-12 Education System in general. We are asking about those who have high school graduation only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree. Please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the following: (a) High school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge (b) High school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work (c) High school graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning that they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self-confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities”

Crosstab analysis for the questions related to the skills and knowledge of graduates entering the workforce indicated some differences according to region and business size:

- Employers from Calgary and Other Cities were the most likely to be satisfied that high school graduates were entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge.
- In general, employers with 100 or more employees were more likely to be satisfied that high school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge compared to employers with less than 100 employees.
- Employers with 100 or more employees appear more likely to be satisfied that high school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work.

Current year employer satisfaction with high school graduates' ability to learn at work and with the skills and knowledge of graduates entering the workforce is higher than the 2007 results by 13% and 7%, respectively (Table 2-10). Employer satisfaction that graduates demonstrated knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning is similar to the 2007 result. Note that sample size and confidence intervals are unknown for 2001, 2003, and 2005 survey results.

<b>Table 2-10 Yearly Comparison of Opinions of Alberta's K-12 Education System</b>					
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
High school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work	73%	73%	71%	68%	81%
High school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge	63%	66%	59%	58%	65%
High school graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime	N/A	58%	58%	55%	61%

n=1,768 in 2007, n=866 in 2013

2007 "I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta's Learning System in general. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied", please rate to what extent you are satisfied with the following: (a) That graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge. (b) That graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work. (c) That graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities."

2013 "I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System in general. We are asking about those who have high school graduation only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree. Please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the following: (a) High school graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge (b) High school graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work (c) High school graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning that they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self-confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities"



## 2.4. Organization Provided Assistance for Education or Training

Employers that employed recent high school graduates were asked if their organization has provided various types of assistance within the last two years to recent graduates for short term training or courses related to their jobs (Table 2-11). The most common type of training assistance provided by employers of recent high school graduates was the provision of time off during the working day (73%), while the second most common type of assistance provided was an allowed leave of absence (60%). Half (50%) of these employers provided paid time off for specific course work, while 42% paid the fees or tuition for their employees' training/courses.

<b>Table 2-11 Type of Course/Training Assistance Provided to Recent High School Graduates</b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>DK/NA/NR</b>
Provided time off during the working day	73%	26%	1%
Allowed leave of absence	60%	37%	2%
Paid time off for specific course work	50%	47%	2%
Paid fees/tuition	42%	56%	2%

n=683 in 2013

QK\_1 "In the last two years, has your organization provided the following types of assistance to RECENT high school graduates for SHORT TERM TRAINING OR COURSES RELATED TO THEIR JOBS: (a) paid fees/tuition (b) allowed leave of absence (c) provided time off during the working day (d) paid time off for specific course work"

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to industry and business size:

- Employers in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, Information and Cultural industries were the least likely to report that they had provided paid time off for specific course work as a form of assistance, while employers in the Primary/Utilities industries were the most likely to provide paid time off for specific course work.
- Employers with 20 or more employees were the most likely to report that they had provided paid tuition, allowed leave of absence, and/or paid time off for specific course work as a form of assistance to their employees who are recent high school graduates.

The proportion of employers that provide time off during the working day as a type of assistance for education or training has declined by 18% since the previous survey result (Table 2-12). Similarly, it appears that the proportions of employers that allow a leave of absence, paid time off for specific course work, or provide paid tuition have declined from that of 2007 by 18%-26%. Note, however, that these questions in previous surveys differed in two ways: (1) in previous surveys these questions were based on logic such that they were asked following a general qualifier question concerning whether the employer provided any assistance to employees for education or training, whereas in the current year this general qualifier question was not asked; and (2) previous surveys asked these questions to all employers, whereas in the current year these questions were asked only to those that employed recent high school graduates.

<b>Table 2-12</b>					
<b>Yearly Comparison of Type of Assistance Provided for Short-term Training or Courses</b>					
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
Provided time off during the working day	85%	88%	85%	91%	73%
Allowed leave of absence	74%	81%	73%	83%	60%
Paid time off for specific course work	66%	63%	61%	68%	50%
Paid tuition	74%	67%	63%	68%	42%

n=1,236 in 2007<sup>4</sup>, n=683 in 2013

2007 "Has your organization provided the following types of assistance? (a) Paid tuition (b) Allowed leave of absence (c) Provided time off during the working day (d) Paid time off for specific course work (e) Any other type of assistance"

2013 "In the last two years, has your organization provided the following types of assistance to RECENT high school graduates for SHORT TERM TRAINING OR COURSES RELATED TO THEIR JOBS (a) Paid fees/tuition, (b) Allowed leave of absence (c) Provided time off during the working day (d) Paid time off for specific course work"

Employers that provided some type of assistance to recent high school graduates for training or courses were then asked to describe the type of short-term training or courses for recent high school graduates that their organization has supported. Over 575 respondents provided a verbatim comment to this question.

By far, the most common type of short-term training or courses provided was safety-related training. More than 200 respondents (over one-third) identified safety-related courses that their organization offers to recent high school graduates including, but not limited to: general health & safety, WHIMIS, First Aid, St. John's Ambulance, CPR, H2S, fall protection, hazards, and fire protection, among others.

More than one in ten employers also indicated that they offered in-house or on-the-job training, including orientation sessions to their employees. Similar proportions of employers provided or supported various apprenticeship programs including the RAP, or identified some type of computer-related training including such software as Microsoft Excel, Word, and Auto Cad, among other programs. Approximately one in ten employers identified specific technical, industry-specific trades-related training or large equipment training (including forklift), while a smaller proportion mentioned driving training, including but not limited to AZ training, vehicles with air brakes, large trucks, and ATVs.

Food handling/food safety, and culinary training was identified by less than one in ten respondents as a type of training that businesses offer to recent high school graduates in addition to customer service training. A small number of respondents identified leadership/supervisory/management training, specific training and certification related to the oil and gas industry, specific training sessions related to the health industry, business/accounting training, pro-serve or other alcohol-related training, and/or childcare/ECE training as types of short-term training that their organization has supported for recent high school graduates.

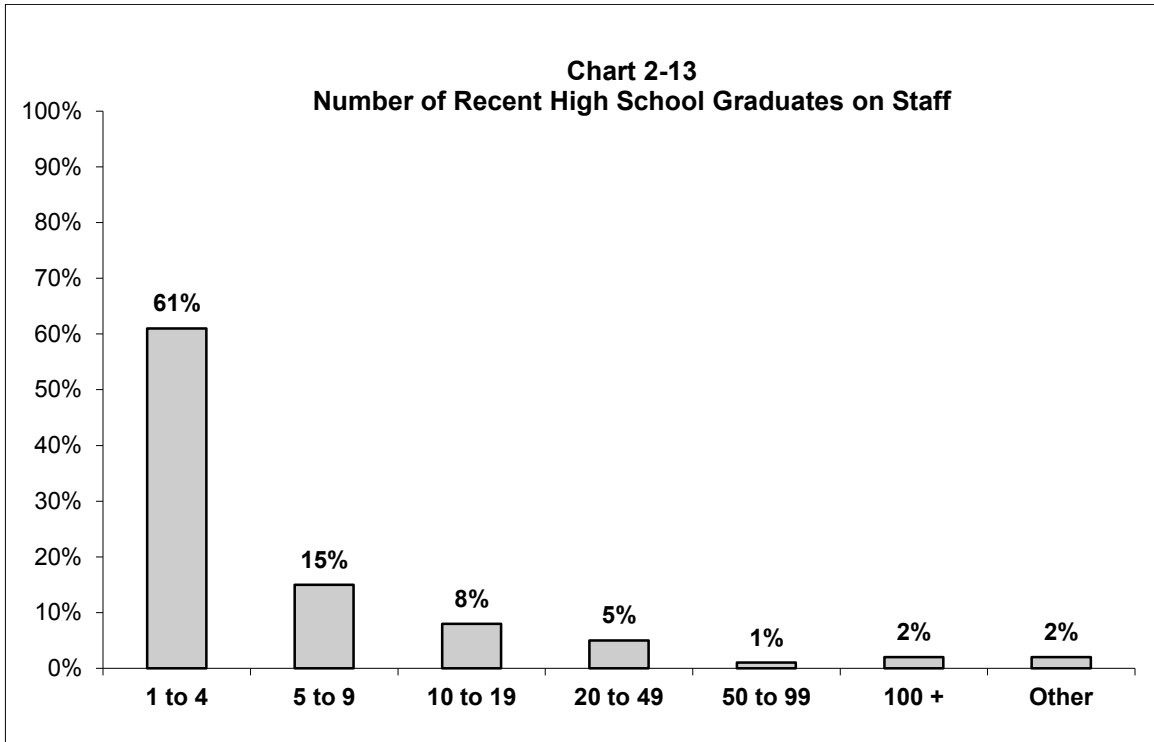
Additionally, less than 10 respondents indicated that they offered summer student experience or work experience programs to current high school students or recent high school graduates. A similar number (less than 10) offered communications/language skills training, including ESL. Many additional training topics and courses were also

<sup>4</sup> Confidence interval for n=1,236 is +/-2.8%

identified by five or fewer businesses, which were specifically related to their business or organization (e.g. marketing, product-training, human resources, agriculture-related, outdoor/physical education, propane, insurance, drafting, environmental, wine, life guarding, horsemanship, and train-the-trainer, among others).

## 2.5. Number and Working Location of Recent High School Graduates

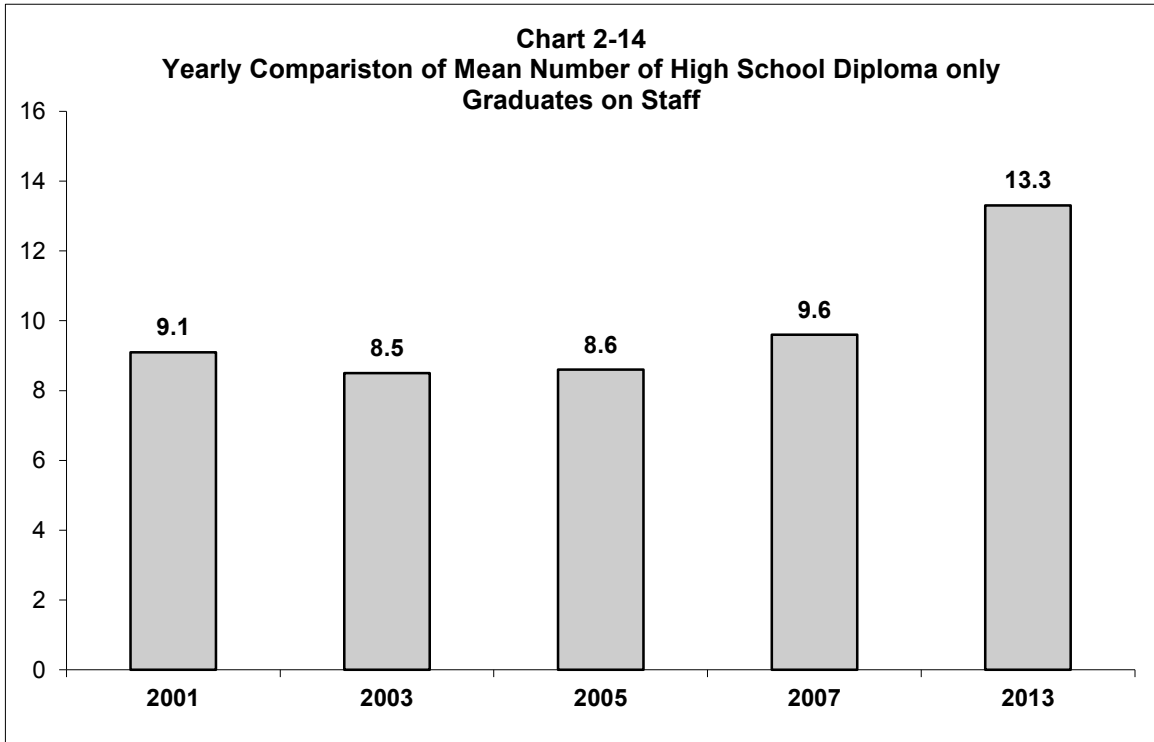
Employers that had recent high school graduates on staff were asked how many recent high school graduates they employed in their organization (Chart 2-13). Most employers (61%) reported having only one to four recent high school graduates.



n=683 in 2013

QL "Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from Alberta's K-12 Education System WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS with ONLY high school graduation?"

As shown in Chart 2-14, employers in the current year reported having an average of 13.3 high school graduates on staff. Although this mean number of graduates on staff appears to be somewhat higher than the mean number of high school graduates reported in previous years, it is important to note that in previous years, respondents replied to this question in an open-ended format, while in 2013, respondents indicated the category that reflected the number of current staff members. In order to calculate the average for the current year, the mid-point of each category was used in calculating the mean number of high school graduates on staff.

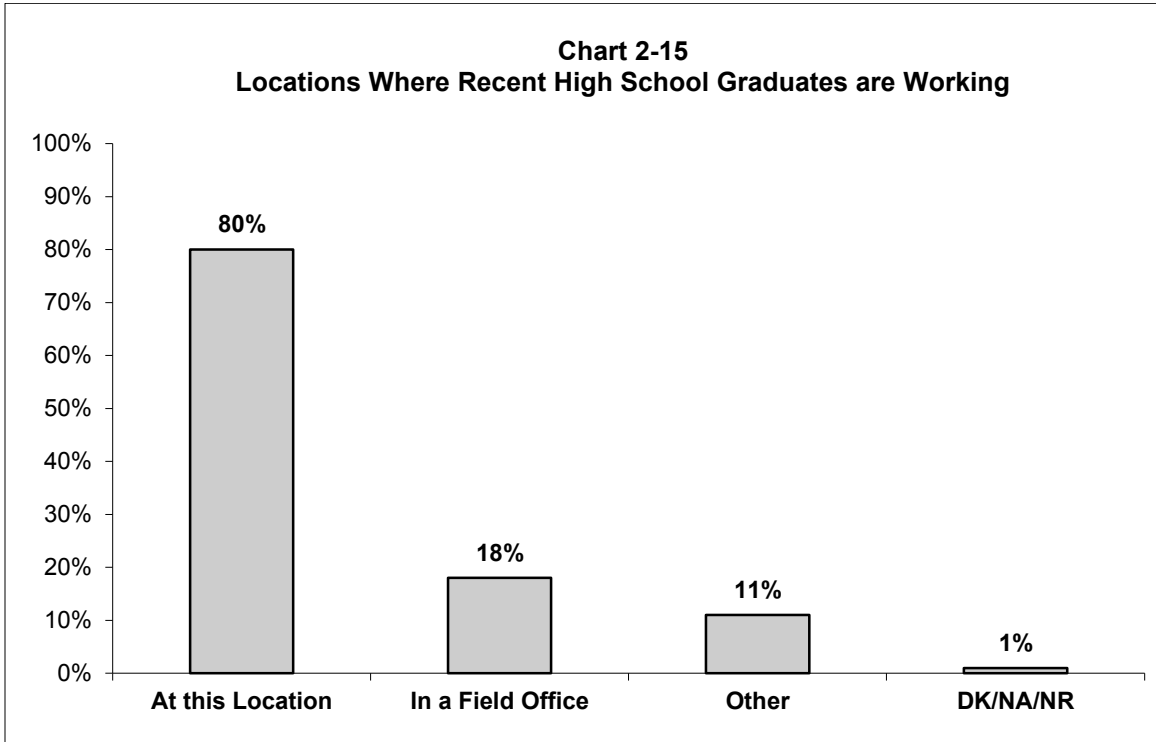


n=677 in 2007, n=683 in 2013

2007 "Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from Alberta's Learning System within the last two year with a: a) High School Diploma only"

2013 "Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from Alberta's K-12 Education System WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS with ONLY high school graduation?"

Employers most often reported that their employees who are recent high school graduates are working at the location where the respondent was called (80%), while 18% indicated their recent graduates were working in a field office and 11% mentioned some “other” location (Chart 2-15).



n=683 in 2013  
QM “Where are your RECENT high school graduates working?”  
Respondents could be coded into multiple categories.

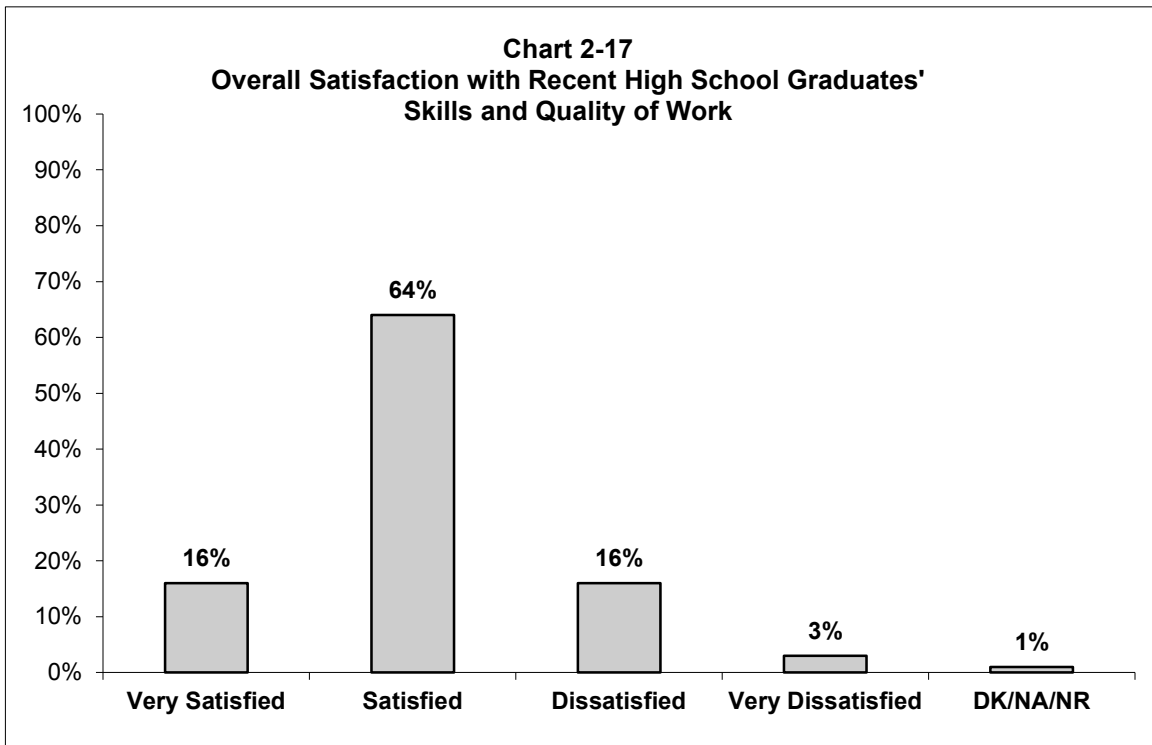
Results for where recent high school graduates are working are similar to the 2007 results (Table 2-16).

<b>Table 2-16</b> <b>Yearly Comparison of Locations Where Recent High School Graduates are Working</b>		
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
At current location/at this location	84%	80%
In a field office	17%	18%
Anywhere else/other	14%	11%
DK/NA/NR	1%	1%

n=1,058 in 2007, n=683 in 2013  
2007 “Where are your recent graduates working?”  
2013 “Where are your RECENT high school graduates working?”

## 2.6. Overall Satisfaction with Recent High School Graduates

Employers were next asked how satisfied they were with the skills and quality of work of recent high school graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System (Chart 2-17). Four out of five employers (80%) reported that they were satisfied overall with the skills and quality of work of recent high school graduates, with 16% "very satisfied" and 64% "satisfied."



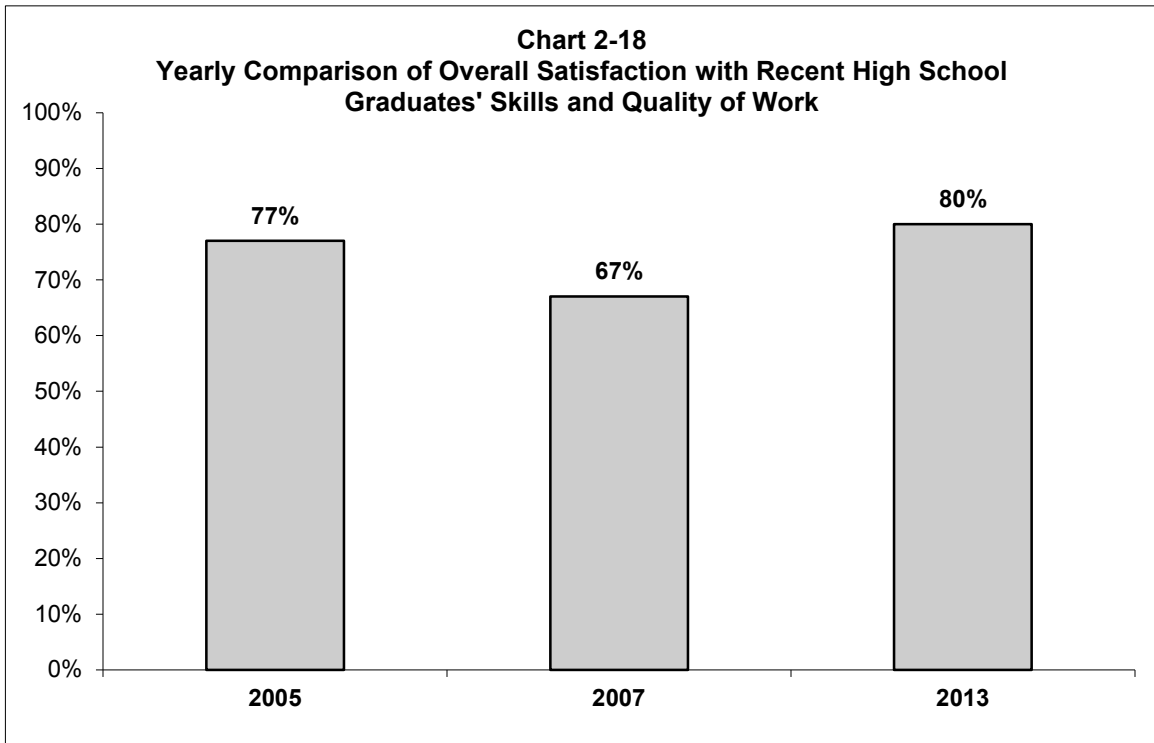
n=683 in 2013

QN "Thinking about the RECENT high school graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System you have working for your organization, please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are OVERALL with their skills and quality of work"

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region:

- Employers in Calgary and Other Cities were the most likely to report satisfaction with the skills and quality of work of recent high school graduates.

As shown in Chart 2-18, employers appear to be more satisfied with the skills and quality of work of recent high school graduates in 2013 (80%), when compared with 2007 (67%).



n=677 in 2007, n=683 in 2013

2007 "Thinking about the recent High School Diploma only graduates from Alberta's Learning System you have working for your company please rate your OVERALL level of satisfaction with their skills and quality of work. Using a scale from one to four, where one is "very satisfied" and four is "very dissatisfied" what is your overall level of satisfaction?"

2013 "Thinking about the RECENT high school graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System you have working for your organization, please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are OVERALL with their skills and quality of work"



In order to further explore employers' satisfaction with recent graduates, employers who reported having recent high school graduates on staff were asked about their satisfaction with 19 unique skills and personal qualities of these graduates. Satisfaction with all the skills and abilities ranged from a low of 37% for the ability to manage money, credit and personal finances to a high of 90% for the ability to work with others towards a common goal (Table 2-19).

More specifically, at least four out of five employers were satisfied that recent high school graduates had the ability to work with others (90%), work safely (87%), participate/contribute in projects and tasks (87%), learn continuously (86%), be honest and ethical (83%), help in keeping the environment clean (83%), work as an individual or on a team (82%), and manage information from a variety of areas (80%) (Table 2-19). Between 60% and 79% of employers were satisfied that recent high school graduates had the ability to make fair decisions (79%), demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours (73%), communicate in speech and writing (73%), transition effectively from school to work (73%), use numbers to decide what is required for the job (72%), understand abstract concepts (68%), and think and solve problems (60%). Less than three in five employers were satisfied that the recent high school graduates they employ have the ability to be punctual and finish work on time (59%) and to be responsible for their work and actions (57%), while less than half were satisfied that the recent high school graduates they employ have the ability to lead a group or team (43%) and manage money, credit and personal finances (37%). Note, however, that 17% and 30% of employers did not know, or otherwise did not provide a response with respect to the ability to lead a group or team and the ability to manage money, credit, and personal finances.

**Table 2-19**  
**Satisfaction with Recent High School Graduates' Skills and Personal Qualities**

	<b>Total Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>DK/NA/ NR</b>
The ability to work with others towards a common goal	90%	19%	71%	8%	0%	1%
The ability to work safely	87%	22%	64%	11%	1%	1%
The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks	87%	13%	74%	11%	0%	2%
The ability to learn continuously	86%	18%	69%	12%	1%	1%
The ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people	83%	20%	63%	14%	2%	2%
The ability to help in keeping the environment clean	83%	16%	67%	10%	2%	5%
Being adaptable – ability to work as an individual or within a team	82%	17%	65%	15%	1%	1%
The ability to manage Information from a variety of areas	80%	12%	68%	17%	2%	2%
The ability to make fair decisions	79%	7%	72%	13%	1%	6%
Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours	73%	19%	54%	22%	3%	1%
The ability to communicate in speech and writing	73%	16%	57%	23%	3%	1%
The ability to transition effectively from school to work	73%	14%	59%	23%	3%	1%
The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job	72%	10%	62%	23%	2%	3%
The ability to understand abstract concepts	68%	6%	62%	24%	2%	6%
The ability to think and solve problems	60%	10%	51%	34%	4%	1%
The ability to be punctual and finish work on time	59%	11%	48%	33%	7%	1%
Being responsible for work and accountable for actions	57%	11%	47%	34%	8%	1%
The ability to lead a group or team	43%	5%	38%	36%	4%	17%
The ability to manage money, credit and personal finances	37%	5%	32%	25%	8%	30%

n=683 in 2013

2013 "Considering recent high school graduates working for your organization, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with each of the following: (a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing (b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas (c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job (d) The ability to think and solve problems (e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours (f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions (g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team (h) The ability to learn continuously (i) The ability to work safely (j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal (k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks (l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work (m) The ability to understand abstract concepts (n) The ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people (o) The ability to be punctual and finish work on time (p) The ability to lead a group or team (q) The ability to make fair decisions (r) The ability to manage money, credit and personal finances (s) The ability to help in keeping the environment clean"

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region, industry, and business size as follows:

- Employers in Other Cities and non-cities were the most likely to be satisfied with recent high school graduates' ability to manage money, credit and personal finances.
- Employers in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services; Information and Cultural industries, the Construction and Manufacturing industries, and the Primary/Utilities industries were the least likely to be satisfied with recent high school graduates' ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
- Employers in the Health, Education, and Public Administration industries were the most likely to be satisfied with recent high school graduates' ability to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours, while employers in the Construction and Manufacturing industries were the least likely to be satisfied with this ability.
- Employers in the Construction and Manufacturing industries were the least likely to be satisfied that recent high school graduates are responsible for work and accountable for actions and also the least likely to be satisfied that recent high school graduates have the ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people, to be punctual and finish work on time, and to lead a group or team.
- Employers in the Health, Education, and Public Administration industries were the most likely to be satisfied with recent high school graduates' ability to learn continuously and make fair decisions.
- Employers in the Primary/Utilities industries, and the Construction and Manufacturing industries were the least likely to be satisfied that recent high school graduates have the ability to work safely, transition effectively from school to work, and manage money, credit, and personal finances.
- Employers with 2-4 employees, 5-9 employees, or 500 or more employees were the most likely to indicate that they were satisfied that recent high school graduates have the ability to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Employers with 2-4 employees, 5-9 employees, or 10-19 employees were the most likely to be satisfied that recent high school graduates were responsible for work and accountable for actions.
- Employers with 20-49 employees, 200-499 employees, or 500 or more employees were the most likely to be satisfied that recent high school graduates have the ability to learn continuously.

As displayed in Table 2-20, employer satisfaction with the abilities of recent high school graduates is higher in 2013 by 9%-17% as compared to 2007 for almost all trendable abilities. The one exception that did not increase in the current year was the ability to communicate in speech and writing, which remained similar to the 2007 result.

**Table 2-20**  
**Yearly Comparison of Satisfaction with Recent High School Graduates' Skills and Personal Qualities**

	2001	2003	2005	2007	2013
The ability to work with others towards a common goal	79%	82%	86%	77%	90%
The ability to work safely	73%	72%	84%	74%	87%
The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks	67%	74%	83%	73%	87%
The ability to learn continuously	70%	73%	84%	73%	86%
The ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	83%
The ability to help in keeping the environment clean	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	83%
Being adaptable – ability to work as an individual or within a team	69%	75%	83%	72%	82%
The ability to manage information from a variety of areas	61%	61%	71%	63%	80%
The ability to make fair decisions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	79%
Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours	74%	73%	77%	62%	73%
The ability to communicate in speech and writing	65%	58%	72%	66%	73%
The ability to transition effectively from school to work	N/A	N/A	69%	63%	73%
The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job	57%	63%	66%	62%	72%
The ability to understand abstract concepts	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68%
The ability to think and solve problems	58%	58%	60%	50%	60%
The ability to be punctual and finish work on time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	59%
Being responsible for work and accountable for actions	55%	57%	66%	48%	57%
The ability to lead a group or team	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43%
The ability to manage money, credit and personal finances	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	37%

n=677 in 2007, n=683 in 2013

2007 "Please rate the following skills of these graduates using a scale from 1 to 4 where 1 is "very satisfied" and 4 is "very dissatisfied" for: High School Diploma only graduates. (a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing (b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas (c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job (d) The ability to think and solve problems (e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours (f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions (g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team (h) The ability to learn continuously (i) The ability to work safely (j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal (k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks (l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work"

2013 "Considering recent high school graduates working for your organization, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with each of the following: (a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing (b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas (c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job (d) The ability to think and solve problems (e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours (f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions (g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team (h) The ability to learn continuously (i) The ability to work safely (j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal (k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks (l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work (m) The ability to understand abstract concepts (n) The ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people (o) The ability to be punctual and finish work on time (p) The ability to lead a group or team (q) The ability to make fair decisions (r) The ability to manage money, credit and personal finances (s) The ability to help in keeping the environment clean"

## 2.7. Responsiveness of Alberta's K-12 Education System

Among employers of high school graduates (both recent and non-recent), two-thirds (67%) agreed that Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to the needs of their organization by providing an adequate supply of high school graduates, while about three out of five (59%) agreed that Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to their needs by providing appropriate skills for graduates (Table 2-21). There did not appear to be a difference between those that employ recent high school graduates and those that employ non-recent high school graduates in terms of responsiveness of Alberta's K-12 Education System.

<b>Table 2-21 Responsiveness of Alberta's K-12 Education System</b>						
Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by providing an adequate supply of high school graduates						
	<b>Total Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>DK/NA/NR</b>
Employers of High School Graduates (both recent and non-recent)	67%	6%	61%	24%	5%	4%
Employers of Recent High School Graduates	70%	8%	62%	22%	6%	3%
Employers of Non-Recent High School Graduates	64%	5%	59%	25%	5%	6%
Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by providing appropriate skills for high school graduates						
	<b>Total Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>DK/NA/NR</b>
Employers of High School Graduates (both recent and non-recent)	59%	3%	56%	34%	6%	2%
Employers of Recent High School Graduates	58%	3%	55%	37%	6%	0%
Employers of Non-Recent High School Graduates	59%	3%	57%	31%	6%	4%

n=866 in 2013 for employers with both recent and non-recent high school graduates, n=413 for employers with recent high school graduates, n=453 for employers with non-recent high school graduates<sup>5</sup>

QF "Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by: (a) providing an adequate supply of high school graduates (b) providing appropriate skills for high school graduates"

<sup>5</sup> Confidence interval for n=413 is +/-4.8%; n=453 is +/-4.6%

Crosstab analysis indicated some differences according to region, industry, and business size, as follows:

- Employers in Other Cities and in Calgary were the most likely to agree that Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of their organization by providing an adequate supply of high school graduates.
- Employers in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services; Information and Cultural industries, the Health, Education, and Public Administration industries, and the Wholesale/Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing industries were the most likely to agree that Alberta’s K-12 Education System provides an adequate supply of high school graduates to meet their needs.
- Employers with 500 or more employees were the most likely to agree that Alberta’s K-12 Education System provides an adequate supply of high school graduates to meet their needs, while those with 10-99 employees were the most likely to disagree that Alberta’s K-12 Education System provides an adequate supply of high school graduates.

Agreement that Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of organizations by providing an adequate supply of graduates is similar to the 2007 result. Similarly, agreement that Alberta’s K-12 Education System provides appropriate skills for graduates is also similar to the 2007 result (Table 2-22). Note, the 2007 and 2013 results for these questions reflect the responses of only those employers with recent high school graduates.

<b>Table 2-22 Yearly Comparison of Responsiveness Alberta’s K-12 Education System</b>					
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2013</b>
Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by providing an adequate supply of high school graduates	77%	75%	71%	65%	70%
Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by providing appropriate skills for high school graduates	60%	59%	64%	56%	58%

n=677 in 2007, n=413 in 2013<sup>6</sup>

2007 “Using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 is “Strongly Agree” and 4 is “Strongly Disagree”, how much do you agree or disagree that Alberta’s Learning System responds to the needs of your company by (a) providing an adequate supply of High School Diploma only graduates (b) providing appropriate skills for High School Diploma only graduates.”

2013 “Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that Alberta’s K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by: (a) providing an adequate supply of high school graduates (b) providing appropriate skills for high school graduates”

<sup>6</sup> Confidence interval for n=413 = +/-4.8%

## 2.8. Skills and Abilities Missing from Recent High School Graduates

Employers that employed recent high school graduates were asked if they could think of any particular skills/abilities that are missing from recent high school graduates. Overall, 39% of employers that employed recent high school graduates reported that there are no specific skills or abilities missing from recent high school graduates. Table 2-23 shows the coded responses for those employers that did provide a response (n=413, or 60%).

<b>Table 2-23 Commonly Reported Skills and Abilities Missing from Recent High School Graduates Over Time</b>		
<b>Skills and Abilities Missing</b>	<b>Percentage of Responses 2007</b>	<b>Percentage of Responses 2013</b>
Writing and reading ability/Grammar/Punctuation	18%	20%
Accountability/Responsibility	12%	19%
Poor work ethic/pride in work	22%	17%
Common sense/Life Skills	--	16%
Verbal communication/Face-to-Face/Social Skills	--	13%
Money skills/Budgeting/Financing	--	13%
High/Unrealistic expectations/Entitlement issues	--	12%
Punctuality/Time management	--	11%
Ability to calculate/Mathematics skills	15%	10%
Poor working attitude/Lack of professionalism/Motivation	11%	10%
Too much reliance on technology/Cell phones/Social media	--	10%

n=398 in 2007, n=413 in 2013 (Those who indicated that some skills and abilities are missing)<sup>7</sup>

2007 "Can you think of any particular skills/abilities that are missing from recent High School Diploma only graduates?"

2013 Q5S "Can you think of any particular skills or abilities that are missing from RECENT high school graduates?"

Responses could be coded into multiple categories.

Note that responses for the 2013 survey were coded into a greater number of categories as compared to previous survey, and therefore these categories may not be directly comparable over time.

Many respondents who specified verbatim responses identified more than one skill or ability that they felt recent graduates were lacking. With respect to the basic skills learned in the education system, a relatively large proportion of respondents (20%) indicated that graduates were lacking in basic literacy skills, including spelling, grammar, basic writing, and hand-writing skills, while 10% indicated that recent graduates were lacking in basic math and numeracy skills. Additionally, just over one in ten respondents (13%) thought that recent high school graduates needed to improve upon their verbal communication, face-to-face communication, and/or social skills in the workplace. A similar proportion of respondents (13%) indicated that graduates had poor money skills in terms of budgeting, financing, and basic tax knowledge.

A large proportion of respondents also identified specific soft skills that they felt were lacking or in need of improvement in recent high school graduates. The most commonly mentioned soft skill was responsibility/accountability, with about one in five respondents

<sup>7</sup> Confidence intervals for these sample sizes are as follows: n=398 is +/-4.9%; n=413 is +/-4.8%.

(19%) indicating that graduates need improvement in this area. Also commonly mentioned was work ethic, in terms of dedication, working hard, and diligence in the work place (17%). Many respondents also felt that recent high school graduates were lacking basic common sense or life skills (16%). Punctuality and time management was mentioned by about one in ten respondents (11%) as an area in which recent graduates need improvement, while a similar proportion (10%) felt that recent graduates were lacking motivation/initiative/ambition/attitude at the workplace.

Furthermore, 12% of respondents felt that recent high school graduates in Alberta had high or unrealistic expectations or entitlement issues with respect to the work place. Specifically, many respondents reported that employees just out of high school seem to have expectations of being at the top of the pay scale and the belief that they shouldn't have to begin at the bottom and work their way up in terms of pay and experience. Several also felt that the high expectations of these employees often caused fast turnover, as recent graduates sought out better or higher paying employment.

Additionally, one in ten respondents (10%) felt that recent graduates had too much reliance on computers, cell phones, social media, and technology in general. Many felt that there was a loss of productivity because employees could not be without their cell phones and did not respect company policies.



## **2.9. Final Comments About Recent High School Graduates**

The last question on the survey asked respondents if they would like to make any other comments about recent high school graduates of Alberta's K-12 Education System. Most respondents (70%) did not provide any further comments, however 30% (n=204) did provide some additional comment. Over one in five of those who provided comments took this opportunity to say something positive about high school graduates in general, or something positive about Alberta's Education System or teachers. In contrast, about 15% of respondents generally expressed dissatisfaction with one or more aspects of Alberta's education system or teachers.

Of those respondents who provided verbatim comments in a more specific manner, the largest proportion (over 20%) indicated that recent high school graduates are lacking in life skills, which included specifics such as professional standards/conduct at the workplace, basic financial literacy, preparation for the working world, job-readiness, social skills, workplace respect, and transition from school to the working world. The next most commonly mentioned theme was with respect to entitlement issues and/or high expectations, with more than one in ten respondents expressing concern on this topic. Other similarly common themes were the poor attitude/motivation and work ethic of recent high school graduates, and poor accountability and responsibility, with several of these comments mentioning how the "no zero", "no late", or "no fail" policies that exist in schools are not preparing students properly for the working world. The following issues were identified by less than one in ten respondents: too much reliance/focus on technology (including computers, social networking, cell phones, texting), literacy and numeracy issues, and the need for more hands-on experience/emphasis on trades.

A small number of respondents (3%) felt that they were commenting on the best recent high school graduates that their organization has already hired, but the survey might not reflect all high school graduates (as they had to weed out many non-employable high school graduates first).

## **Appendix A – Research Background & Methodology**

### **Introduction**

As part of its mission, Alberta Education provides leadership and support, collaborating with stakeholders and partners to ensure inclusive learning opportunities for all students to be engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. In order to make sure that all students are successful at learning, a number of goals have been established which outline the government's ongoing aims and long-term direction, as well as provide an environment of continuous improvement and accountability to both students and the public. As part of its continual efforts to improve Alberta's education system, Alberta Education routinely implements performance measures to assess and report on the progress of each of these goals, and the satisfaction of Albertans with selected aspects of the education system forms a significant portion of these measures. Hence, Alberta Education routinely commissions telephone surveys of random samples of the Alberta public and key client groups in order to assess perceptions of how the education system is performing in meeting the needs and expectations of Alberta students and the Alberta public.

In December 2012, CCI Research Inc. (CCI Research) was contracted by Alberta Education, Corporate Planning Branch, to conduct the annual surveys aimed at evaluating client satisfaction with the education system in the province for 2012/2013. Surveys were conducted with key respondent groups as part of Alberta Education's commitment to the continuous improvement of the education system, and one of the key client groups targeted for surveying in 2012/2013 was business and industry employers of Alberta high school graduates. This report highlights the key findings from the 2012/2013 Business and Industry Survey which sought feedback from employers on Alberta high school graduates. A historical perspective of results is provided where possible through comparison of 2012/2013 results with those obtained in previous years. A brief description of both the methodology used to conduct this survey and the key analysis issues precedes a full discussion of the results.

### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of this telephone survey project was to assess employer satisfaction with recent high school graduates from Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education System.

The main objectives of the survey were to assess:

- i. Satisfaction with the skills and knowledge of recent high school graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System.
- ii. Satisfaction with the non-subject specific attributes of recent high school graduates.
- iii. Satisfaction with the overall responsiveness of Alberta's Education System to employers' specific human resource needs.

Secondary objectives of this project were to:

- iv. Assess the degree to which employers provide assistance for education and training to recent graduates.
- v. Examine employers' perceptions on skills shortages among recent graduates and reasons why recent graduates have not been hired.
- vi. Reveal changes in client satisfaction over time by comparing data collected in this survey to data collected in past surveys, where applicable.
- vii. Assist Alberta Education to serve their clientele more effectively and efficiently by identifying areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.

In order to address these objectives, employer satisfaction was measured in the areas of academic and technical skills, non-subject specific attributes, as well as employers' satisfaction with the overall responsiveness of Alberta's K-12 Education System.

This survey also explored whether employers have been providing their recent graduates/employees with assistance for training and professional development. Additionally, the survey assessed the number of recent graduates working for employers; the perceived skills shortages of recent graduates; and the reasons why recent graduates have not been hired by employers.

## **Methodology**

Based on instruments previously used for this survey, Alberta Education prepared a survey instrument aimed at assessing satisfaction with various aspects of the education system among business and industry employers of Alberta high school graduates. Although the primary purpose of the survey was to collect feedback from employers on recent high school graduates, the survey instrument contained questions applicable to businesses that did and did not employ high school graduates at the time of the survey in order to address other issues such as demand for recent high school graduates among those not currently employing recent high school graduates. Logic inherent in the survey dictated the questions asked of each respondent based on their answers to previous questions. A copy of the complete survey instrument is attached as Appendix B.

The target population for this survey included Alberta businesses with two or more employees (i.e., excluding single-employee businesses). The survey sampling frame consisted of a random sample of businesses in Alberta that was reasonably representative (compared to the 2007/2008 survey results) in terms of business size, region, and industry sector (based on NAICS codes). Specifically, a sample of 16,234 business telephone numbers was purchased from Survey Sampling International (SSI), and 14,659 numbers were used to complete the survey. The sample files included information pertaining to Census Subdivision within Alberta, NAICS code, and business size, and this information was used to assess the general representativeness of the sample. Information about the population of businesses in Alberta was obtained from Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry, Office of Statistics and Information, Data Development and Evaluation as part of the 2007/2008 survey. Prior to implementation of the survey, the characteristics of the purchased sample were compared to the characteristics of the population from 2007/2008 to ensure that the sample was

reasonably representative of the population of businesses in Alberta. Information about industry type (i.e., as related to NAICS code) and business size (i.e., number of employees) was also collected as part of the survey administration and the information from the survey served as the basis for the reporting of results. Coding of region was based on Census Subdivision as provided in the sample file.

Data collection for the 2012/2013 Employer Satisfaction Survey took place during the period of February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 to March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Trained interviewers used a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) system to complete a total of 1,605 surveys with employers in Alberta.

Once a sufficient number surveys were completed with businesses that did not employ any recent high school graduates at the time of the survey, the logic of the survey instrument was changed in order to target only those businesses that did employ recent high school graduates. Specifically the logic was changed after 1,335 total surveys were completed (including businesses that did and did not employ recent high school graduates). Therefore, results that are applicable to all employers (i.e., those that did and those that did not employ recent high school graduates at the time of the survey) are based on a total of 1,335 completed surveys. The average survey completion time for this first group of 1,335 surveys was 14 minutes and 56 seconds. Subsequently, an additional 270 surveys were completed with businesses that employed recent high school graduates, with an average survey completion time of 13 minutes and 47 seconds. Therefore, there were a total of 922 surveys completed with businesses that did not employ any recent high school graduates and 683 surveys completed with businesses that did employ recent high school graduates.

The call dispositions for this project are shown in Table A-1.

<b>Table A-1 Call Dispositions for the Employer Satisfaction Survey</b>			
<b>Call Type</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Complete (Employers with recent high school graduates)	CO	683	5%
Complete – Other (Employers with no recent high school graduates)	CO-O	922	6%
Partial Complete (Completed only first part of survey)	PC	33	0%
Answering Machine	AM	151	1%
Business Number	BU	3	0%
Call Back (no specific time)	CA	544	4%
Call Back	CB	520	4%
Fax/Computer line	FX	306	2%
Hang Up	HU	547	4%
Interpreter Required	IR	0	0%
Language Barrier	LA	48	0%
Line Busy	LB	12	0%
Moved, no new number given	MV	3	0%
No Answer	NA	157	1%
Not Eligible	NE	3,545	24%
Not in Service	NS	1,976	13%
Number Removed at Respondent's Request	NR	82	1%
Refused	RF	2,815	19%
Refused By Someone Other Than Qualified Respondent	RO	313	2%
Wrong Number	WN	18	0%
Partial	PT	8	0%
Does Not Meet Screening Criteria	SC	17	0%
Terminated*	TE	1,956	13%
<b>Total</b>		<b>14,659</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*The "terminate" call disposition means that no contact was made after 10 call attempts to that number.

A minimum of 10% of all calls were monitored by CCI Research supervisors or managers. The survey was conducted in compliance with the requirements of Alberta's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* insofar as it applies to the personal information that was supplied, collected, or used in providing the services required by Alberta Education.

## Analysis

For the purposes of this report, first-level data analysis includes the presentation of descriptive statistics (frequencies) for survey items in text, tables, and figures, as appropriate. The following should be noted with regard to the presentation of frequency data:

- The results in this report are generally presented in the order of the questions as they appear on the current survey. However, there were a number of questions which could be logically grouped with other related items, and are therefore presented out of order.

- Many items on the survey use four-point response scales including “very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied” or “strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree,” etc., depending on the question. Although not asked, “don’t know/not applicable” and “no response” (refusals) were recorded as well. Results presented in this report may represent percentages for each of the individual options in a response scale or the combined percentages of respondents who reported “very satisfied/satisfied” or “strongly agree/agree.” Thus, in the body of the report, *overall* or *total* satisfaction or agreement refers to these combined percentages, whereas results pertaining to individual response-scale categories are specified separately in the text.
- Percentages are based on all responses for each item (i.e., “don’t know/not applicable” and “no response” are included in the calculations). For all items, the “don’t know/not applicable” and “no response” categories are combined into one category called “DK/NA/NR.”
- All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number based on computer-generated analysis. For single response items, percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding. Similarly, rounded percentages for individual response options may not total exactly to combined percentages due to rounding. Therefore, percentages in text and tables may appear to differ by 1% due to rounding.
- In the case of multiple-response items for which participants could provide more than one response, percentages are expressed in terms of the number of respondents, and, as a result, percentages total to more than 100% for these variables.
- For open-ended items on the survey, the comments made by respondents were read and grouped into general topic themes. These themes were generally quantified and are summarized in the text.
- Historical data are presented for all items which have been asked in previous years. All historical data are taken from the 2007/2008 report that was prepared and provided to Alberta Education in that year (note that in the tables and charts, the year 2007 refers to the 2007/2008 survey results). Whenever possible, the number of respondents (n) from the previous years’ results is indicated in the relevant table or chart notes, although it should be noted that n by question is unknown for many of the previous surveys. The exact wording of each item (when known) for each year is also presented in table and chart notes.
- It should be noted that previous surveys included employers of high school and post-secondary (degree, diploma, certificate, and apprenticeship) graduates, whereas the current survey specifically targeted employers of high school graduates. Therefore, the context of the survey was different in the current year as the core questions focussed on high school graduates rather than graduates with various post-secondary credentials. Thus, there are differences in survey questions and logic compared to previous surveys, and, in some cases, similar questions were asked of different respondent groups in the current year as compared to previous years. Such differences are noted in the report as relevant.

In order to analyze trends over time using data from previous surveys, the confidence intervals for each year were taken into consideration (Table A-2). Results for the total sample of 1,335 employers are accurate to within +/-2.7% in the “worst-case scenario” (i.e., results measuring proportions of 50%) at the 95% confidence level, while results for the various sub-groups are shown in Table A-2. Confidence intervals for other sample sizes are footnoted in the report, as applicable. Note that the sample size and confidence intervals are unknown for results prior to 2007, therefore comparisons to results prior to 2007 are not discussed.

<b>Table A-2 Differences Required for Significance in Comparing Results from Different Sample Sizes Based on Confidence Intervals</b>				
<b>Respondent Group</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Completes</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>	<b>Difference Required</b>
Total number of employers*	2007	2,201	+/-2.1%	6%
	2013	1,335	+/-2.7%	
Total number of employers with no recent high school graduates (i.e., no high school graduates at all, or only non-recent high school graduates)	2007	1,431	+/-2.6%	7%
	2013	922	+/-3.2%	
Total number of employers with any high school graduates (i.e., recent and non-recent high school graduates)	2007	1,768	+/-2.3%	7%
	2013	866	+/-3.3%	
Total number of employers with recent high school graduates	2007	677	+/-3.8%	9%
	2013	683	+/-3.8%	

\*Note that for 2013, the total number of employers reflects the number of completed surveys prior to the implementation of a logic change to target only those businesses that employed recent high school graduates at the time of the survey.

Second-level analysis for group comparisons consists of crosstabulations (crosstabs) for categorical data. Crosstabs were conducted for a series of variables of theoretical and practical interest that were identified in advance of data analysis. Specifically, all survey responses were examined according to geographical region (as determined by Census Subdivision in the purchased sample), business size (as reported by the respondent to the survey), and NAICS grouping (based on a description of the industry as provided by the respondent). For business size, employers were grouped into the following categories based on their response to the question about how many people in Alberta their company employs (QA.): 2-4, 5-9, 10-19, 20-49, 50-99, 100-199, 200-499, 500 or more. For geographical region and NAICS code, individual responses were grouped as in Table A-3.

<b>Table A-3 Region and NAICS Code Groupings</b>	
<b>Region Grouping</b>	<b>Region and Census Subdivision</b>
Calgary	Calgary 4806016
Edmonton	Edmonton 4811061
Other Cities	Airdrie 4806021 Camrose 4810011 Cold Lake 4812002 Fort McMurray 4816037 Fort Saskatchewan 4811056 Grande Prairie 4819012 Leduc 4811016 Lethbridge 4802012 Lloydminster 4810039 Medicine Hat 4801006 Red Deer 4808011 Spruce Grove 4811049 St. Albert 4811062 Wetaskiwin 4811002
Non-Cities	Everywhere else, including counties
<b>Industry Sector (NAICS) Grouping</b>	<b>2-Digit NAICS</b>
Primary Industries and Utilities industries	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction Utilities
Construction and Manufacturing industries	Construction Manufacturing
Wholesale/Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing industries	Wholesale Trade Retail Trade Transportation and Warehousing
Finance and Insurance; Real Estate/Rental/Leasing; Management of Companies; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industries	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing Finance and Insurance Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Management of Companies and Enterprises
Health, Education, and Public Administration industries	Health Care and Social Assistance Educational Services Public Administration
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services; Other Services industries	Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services Other Services
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation; Accommodation and Food Services; Information and Cultural industries	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Accommodation and Food Services Information and Cultural Industries



All crosstabs were conducted using collapsed variables as described earlier (i.e., “very satisfied” + “satisfied” vs. “dissatisfied” + “very dissatisfied,” or “strongly agree” + “agree” vs. “disagree” + “strongly disagree,” etc.). It also should be noted that “don’t know”, “not applicable”, and “no response” responses were included in all crosstab analyses, and thus, like the general descriptive analysis, the crosstab analysis is based on responses from all participants. Chi-square results for each crosstab were examined and the results of crosstabs with a significant chi-square outcome ( $p < .05$ ) are described in general terms in the body of this report.<sup>8</sup>

## **Sample Demographics**

Table A-4 shows the demographic information for the completed survey responses including Business Size, Region of Alberta, and Grouped Industry (NAICS) categories in comparison with the final sample from the 2007/2008 survey as well as the business population as obtained from Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry, Office of Statistics and Information, Data Development and Evaluation for the 2007/2008 survey. Specifically, Table A-4 shows demographic information for the current survey sample that included all employer surveys ( $n=1,605$ ) as well as the current survey sample that included all employer surveys prior to the change in methodology to target only businesses that employed recent high school graduates at the time of the survey ( $n=1,335$ ). Table A-4 also shows demographic information for the employers who reported that they employed one or more recent high school graduates at the time of the survey ( $n=683$ ).

---

<sup>8</sup> Note that a minimal number of significant crosstabs for which no practical difference in frequency results could be observed – i.e., results that differed by a relatively small percentage or that were based only on a small subset of respondents – may not be described in the body of the text.

<b>Table A-4 Demographics</b>					
	<b>2007/2008 Population % as per 2007/2008 Survey</b>	<b>2007/2008 Final Sample Employer Survey (n=2,201)</b>	<b>2013 Final Sample Employer Survey (n=1,605)</b>	<b>2013 Employers with and without Recent HS Grads (n=1,335)</b>	<b>2013 Employers with Recent HS Grads (n=683)</b>
Demographic Category	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Business Size</b>					
1-4 employees(2008)/ 2-4 employees (2013)	56%	21%	15%	17%	5%
5-9 employees	17%	23%	22%	23%	14%
10-19 employees	12%	18%	18%	18%	17%
20 -49 employees	9%	17%	17%	16%	23%
50-99 employees	3%	8%	9%	8%	12%
100-199 employees	2%	5%	6%	5%	9%
200-499 employees	1%	4%	6%	6%	11%
500 or more employees	0%	4%	6%	6%	9%
Don't Know/Unknown	N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Region (Based on CSD)</b>					
Region 1: Calgary	--	25%	23%	24%	17%
Region 2: Edmonton	--	23%	23%	24%	23%
Region 3: Other Cities	--	17%	19%	19%	21%
Region 4: Non-Cities	--	35%	35%	34%	39%
Other	N/A	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Industry Sector (Based on NAICs Codes)</b>					
Primary Industries and Utilities industries (Codes 11, 21, 22)	9%	4%	8%	8%	8%
Construction and Manufacturing industries (Codes 23, 31-33)	17%	17%	19%	19%	21%
Wholesale/Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing industries (Codes 41, 44-45, 48-49)	20%	26%	24%	22%	28%
Finance and Insurance; Real Estate/Rental/Leasing; Management of Companies; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industries (Codes 52, 53, 54, 55)	25%	15%	17%	18%	10%
Health, Education, and Public Administration industries (Codes 61, 62, 91)	8%	13%	13%	14%	10%
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services; Other Services (Codes 56, 81)	13%	12%	8%	8%	6%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation; Accommodation and Food Services; Information and Cultural industries (Codes 51, 71, 72)	8%	12%	11%	10%	17%

## Appendix B - Survey Instrument

# BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SATISFACTION SURVEY

### Alberta Education

Q11. Hello, my name is <interviewer name> and I am calling from CCI Research on behalf of Alberta Education.

Q11a. I would like to speak to the person responsible for hiring and staffing at your organization. Could you tell me who that would be and their extension number?

[Interviewer prompt if asked what this is about: Alberta Education is conducting a study of employers throughout the province of Alberta to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education System is preparing its graduates for employment. We would like to speak to someone responsible for hiring and staffing at your organization.]

[Interviewer prompt if there is more than one area/department: We would like to speak with someone responsible for hiring and staffing for the department with the largest number of employees.]

Yes – that would be me	Record first name/last name and extension # of person on the line who we need to speak to; then Go to Q13
Yes – that is someone else	Record first name/last name and extension # of person we need to speak to; then Go to Q12a
No	Thank you for your time. Good bye.
Don't know	Thank you for your time. Good bye.
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye.

Q12a. Could I please speak with <recorded name from Q11a.>?

Yes – goes to get them or transfers	Go to Q12b
No – not available at the moment	Go to Call Back – record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Don't know	Go to Call Back – record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye.

(This would also be the callback)

Q12b. Hello, may I please speak with <recorded name from Q11a.>?

Yes – that would be me	Go to Q12c
Yes – goes to get them or transfers	Go to Q12c
No – not available at the moment	Go to Call Back
Don't know	Go to Call Back
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye.

Q12c. Hi, my name is <interviewer name> and I am calling from CCI Research on behalf of Alberta Education. I was referred to you as the person responsible for hiring and staffing at your organization. Is that correct?

[Interviewer prompt if asked what this is about: Alberta Education is conducting a study of employers throughout the province of Alberta to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education System is preparing its graduates for employment. We would like to speak to someone responsible for hiring and staffing at your organization.]

Yes	Go to Q 13
No	Go to Q11a
Don't know	Thank you for your time. Good bye.
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye.

Q13. I am calling on behalf of Alberta Education, a provincial government department that oversees the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education System in the province. We are conducting a study of employers throughout the province of Alberta to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's K-12 Education System is preparing its graduates for employment. The survey should only take about 10 minutes to complete.

May I continue?

Yes	Go to Q14
No – Later	Go to Call Back – record name and extension #
Refused	Thank you for your time. Goodbye.

If more information is requested by person who answers telephone read section below.

1. If respondent is questioning the survey and the validity of it:

We can provide you with a contact name and phone number if you would like. You can contact Jim Peck of Alberta Education at 780-422-1963 if you would like to know more about the survey. There is toll-free access to this number within Alberta if you dial 310-0000 first.

2. If respondent wants to know who we are:

We are calling from CCI Research, a survey research firm. We have been contracted by Alberta Education to conduct this survey to gather opinions on the education system in Alberta.

3. If respondent wants to know why we are calling from Ontario.

We are a Canadian company that conducts research for government and education across the country. We have been contracted by Alberta Education to conduct this survey.

Q14. Thank you – we appreciate your help. Your participation is voluntary and confidential, and you may refuse to answer any question or end the survey at any time. All information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Results will be reported in a combined response form only. Please note, this call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes.

FIRMOGRAPHICS

I would like to begin by asking you some general questions about your organization.

- A. How many people does your organization employ in Alberta (including yourself)? Please also include any seasonal workers you may have employed in 2012. Would you say you have . . .

[Interviewer prompt: If unsure, what would be your best approximation on how many?]

- 1 2 - 4 employees
- 2 5 - 9 employees
- 3 10 - 19 employees
- 4 20 - 49 employees
- 5 50 - 99 employees
- 6 100 - 199 employees
- 7 200 - 499 employees
- 8 500 or more employees
- 9 \*\*Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- 10 \*\*Sole proprietorship (one person/no employees) Thank you for your time. Good bye.  
<Not Eligible>
- 11 \*\*Other organization type Thank you for your time. Good bye.  
(e.g., non-profit, volunteers only) <Not Eligible>
- 88 Refused
- 99 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- B. What type of industry is your organization in?

[Interviewer prompt: How would you describe the general business activity of your organization?]

[Interviewer prompt to clarify if necessary: "What other words would you use to describe your industry?" or "How would you describe your industry more specifically?"]

- 
- C. What is your business postal code?

[Interviewer note: If respondent is reluctant to give full postal code, ask for first three digits.].

- 1 | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | \_ | {CATI set-up note: set up with alpha numeric confirmation as  
per normal}
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- D. Could you tell me if you have any employees (including yourself) with ONLY High School graduation, from an Alberta High School?

[Interviewer prompt if asked to define high school graduate: A student who is awarded one of the following is a High School graduate: an Alberta High School Diploma (English or Francophone), a Certificate of High School Achievement (English or Francophone), a

Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of School Completion, an Alberta High School Diploma as a Mature Student, or a High School Equivalency Diploma.]

[Interviewer prompt if asked about additional education: We are asking about those who have High School Graduation Only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree.]

- |   |                           |         |
|---|---------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Yes                       | Go to E |
| 2 | No                        | Go to H |
| 8 | Refused                   | Go to H |
| 9 | Don't Know/Not Applicable | Go to H |

- E. Now, I would like to ask questions regarding your opinions of graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System in general. We are asking about those who have High School Graduation Only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree. Please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the following:

[Interviewer prompt if asked to define high school graduate: A student who is awarded one of the following is a High School graduate: an Alberta High School Diploma (English or Francophone), a Certificate of High School Achievement (English or Francophone), a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of School Completion, an Alberta High School Diploma as a Mature Student, or a High School Equivalency Diploma.]

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Satisfied
- 3 Dissatisfied
- 4 Very dissatisfied
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- a) High School graduates are entering the workforce with an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge.
- b) High School graduates demonstrate the ability to learn at work.
- c) High School graduates have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for learning throughout their lifetime, meaning that they demonstrate literacy, numeracy, computer skills, motivation to learn, adaptability, self-confidence and the ability to access learning opportunities.

- F. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that Alberta's K-12 Education System responds to the needs of your organization by:

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- a) providing an adequate supply of High School graduates
- b) providing appropriate skills for High School graduates.

- G. Have any of the individuals working for your organization graduated from an Alberta High School WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS?

[Interviewer prompt: We are asking if you have any employees who have ONLY High School graduation from an Alberta High School WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS.]

[Interviewer prompt if asked to define high school graduate: A student who is awarded one of the following is a High School graduate: an Alberta High School Diploma (English or Francophone), a Certificate of High School Achievement (English or Francophone), a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of School Completion, an Alberta High School Diploma as a Mature Student, or a High School Equivalency Diploma.]

[Interviewer prompt if asked about additional education: We are asking about those who have High School Graduation Only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree.]

- |   |                           |                                                   |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Yes                       | GO TO K                                           |
| 2 | No                        | GO TO H                                           |
| 8 | Refused                   | Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Not Eligible> |
| 9 | Don't Know/Not Applicable | Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Not Eligible> |

- H. WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS, have you been looking to hire RECENT High School graduates?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- |   |                           |                                                                               |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Yes                       | GO TO I                                                                       |
| 2 | No                        | Thank you for your time. Good-bye <End Survey as "ineligible" complete (C2)>  |
| 8 | Refused                   | Thank you for your time. Good bye. <End Survey as "ineligible" complete (C2)> |
| 9 | Don't Know/Not Applicable | Thank you for your time. Good bye. <End Survey as "ineligible" complete (C2)> |

- I\_1. What type of positions or occupations were you looking to hire RECENT High School graduates for?  
[Do not read list. Select all that apply.]

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- |    |                                        |
|----|----------------------------------------|
| 1  | Operator/Labourer/Warehousing          |
| 2  | Technicians/Skilled Trades             |
| 3  | Sales Persons                          |
| 4  | Customer Service/Counter Help          |
| 5  | Administrative/Office Workers/Clerical |
| 6  | Truck Driver/Driving positions         |
| 7  | Cashier                                |
| 8  | Food Preparation/Services              |
| 9  | Administrative Assistant/Secretary     |
| 10 | Other (Specify _____)                  |
| 88 | Refused                                |
| 99 | Don't Know/Not Applicable              |

I\_2. Why didn't you hire RECENT Alberta High School graduates for these positions?  
[Do not read list. Select all that apply.]

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 Graduates not interested/none applied
- 2 Lack of suitable candidate/didn't find the right person
- 3 Still looking/Position has not been filled
- 4 Lack of experience related to position
- 5 High school graduates have a poor attitude
- 6 Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

J. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about RECENT High School graduates of Alberta's K-12 Education System?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 Yes (Record response)
- 

- 2 No
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

*[For those who complete H, I, J - Thank you for your time. Good-bye <End Survey as "ineligible" complete> (C2)]*

*[Only those for whom G=1 continue with the full survey as per logic above.]*

**If G=1 – ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE HIRED RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WITHIN LAST TWO YEARS**

K\_1. In the last two years, has your organization provided the following types of assistance to RECENT High School Graduates for SHORT TERM TRAINING OR COURSES RELATED TO THEIR JOBS?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- a) Paid fees/tuition
- b) Allowed leave of absence
- c) Provided time off during the working day
- d) Paid time off for specific course work



*[If Yes to any of the above in K\_1 a.-d., ask K\_2 – otherwise skip to L if No to all of the above in K\_1 a.-d.]*

K\_2 Could you please describe the type of short-term training or courses for RECENT High School graduates that your organization has supported:

[Interviewer prompt: By “recent” graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

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L. Approximately how many of your current staff members have graduated from Alberta’s K-12 Education System WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS with ONLY\_High School graduation?

[Interviewer prompt: If unsure, what would be your best approximation on how many?]

[Interviewer prompt if asked to define high school graduate: A student who is awarded one of the following is a High School graduate: an Alberta High School Diploma (English or Francophone), a Certificate of High School Achievement (English or Francophone), a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of School Completion, an Alberta High School Diploma as a Mature Student, or a High School Equivalency Diploma.]

[Interviewer prompt if asked about additional education: We are asking about those who have High School Graduation Only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree.]

- 1 1 - 4 employees
- 2 5 - 9 employees
- 3 10 - 19 employees
- 4 20 - 49 employees
- 5 50 - 99 employees
- 6 100 - 199 employees
- 7 200 - 499 employees
- 8 500 or more employees
- 9 Other (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- 88 Refused
- 99 Don’t Know/Not Applicable

M. Where are your RECENT\_High School graduates working?

[Read list. Select all that apply.]

[Interviewer prompt: By “recent” graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 At your current location
- 2 In a field office (Specify, record city, town, etc. \_\_\_\_\_)
- 3 Anywhere else (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don’t Know/Not Applicable

- N. Thinking about the RECENT\_High School graduates from Alberta's K-12 Education System you have working for your organization, please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are OVERALL with their skills and quality of work. Are you . . .

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Satisfied
- 3 Dissatisfied
- 4 Very dissatisfied
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

**SECTION S.**

- Q1S. Now I would like to ask some specific questions about these RECENT High School graduates that your organization has hired. Would you be the best person to answer these questions, or should I be speaking with someone else, such as an immediate supervisor?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

[Interviewer prompt: If there is more than one department or supervisor, please refer me to the supervisor who oversees the largest number of recent High School graduates.]

- |                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Same person                     | Go to 4S  |
| Different person/ supervisor(s) | Go to 1Sb |
| Refused                         | Go to 2S  |
| Don't Know/Not Applicable       | Go to 2S  |

- Q1Sb. Before I ask to speak with that person, do you have any other comments you would like to make about RECENT High School graduates of Alberta's K-12 Education System?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

- 1 Yes (Record response)
- 
- 2 No
  - 8 Refused
  - 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- Q2S. May I please have the name and phone number of the best person to answer questions about RECENT\_Alberta High School graduates so I may speak with him or her directly?

[Interviewer prompt: If there is more than one department or supervisor, please refer me to the supervisor who oversees the largest number of recent High School graduates.]

Yes	Record first name/last name and phone #/extension # of person we need to speak to; then Go to Q2Sa
No	Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Code as C1>
Don't know	Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Code as C1>
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Code as C1>

Q2Sa. Could I please speak with <recorded name from Q2S.>?

1 – Yes goes to get them or transfers	Thank you. GO TO Q3Sa.
2 – No	On behalf of Alberta Education we would like to thank you for your participation in this study. Before I let you go, would you know of a better time to reach this other person? <go to callback with name2 and phone2 starting at Q3Sa>
8 – Refused	On behalf of Alberta Education we would like to thank you for your participation in this study. Before I let you go, would you know of a better time to reach this other person? <go to callback with name2 and phone2 starting at Q3Sa>
9 – Don't Know/Not Applicable	On behalf of Alberta Education we would like to thank you for your participation in this study. Before I let you go, would you know of a better time to reach this other person? <go to callback with name2 and phone2 starting at Q3Sa>

*[If Q2Sa=2, 8, or 9, then survey goes to Call Back script and alternate contact information provided in 2S.]*

(This would also be the callback)

Q3Sa. Hello, may I please speak with <recorded name from Q2S.>?

Yes – that would be me	Go to Q3Sc.
Yes – goes to get them or transfers	Go to Q3Sb.
No – not available at the moment	Go to Call Back – record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Don't know	Go to Call Back – record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Refused	Thank you for your time. Good bye. <Code C1>

Q3Sb. Hello, may I speak with <recorded name from Q2S.>?

Yes – that would be me	Go to Q3Sc.
No – not available at the moment	Go to Call Back– record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Don't know	Go to Call Back– record name and extension # of person we need to speak to
Refused	Go to Q2S.

Q3Sc. Hi, my name is <interviewer name> and I am calling from CCI Research on behalf of Alberta Education. I was referred to you as someone who could answer some specific

questions about individuals working for your organization who graduated from an Alberta High School WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS. Is that correct?

Yes – that would be me	Go to Q3Sd.
No – that is someone else	Go to Q2S.
Don't know	Go to Q2S.
Refused	Go to Q2S.

Q3Sd. I am calling on behalf of Alberta Education, a provincial government department that oversees the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) Education System in the province. We are conducting a study of employers throughout the province of Alberta to gauge their opinions about how well Alberta's K-12 Education System is preparing its graduates for employment. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

May I continue?

Yes	Go to Q3Se.
No – Later	Go to Call Back – record name and extension #
Refused	Thank you for your time. Goodbye. <Code as C1>

If more information is requested by person who answers telephone read section below.

4. If respondent is questioning the survey and the validity of it:

We can provide you with a contact name and phone number if you would like. You can contact Jim Peck of Alberta Education at 780-422-1963 if you would like to know more about the survey. There is toll-free access to this number within Alberta if you dial 310-0000 first.

5. If respondent wants to know who we are:

We are calling from CCI Research, a survey research firm. We have been contracted by Alberta Education to conduct this survey to gather opinions on the education system in Alberta.

6. If respondent wants to know why we are calling from Ontario.

We are a Canadian company that conducts research for government and education across the country. We have been contracted by Alberta Education to conduct this survey.

Q3Se. Thank you – we appreciate your help. Your participation is voluntary and confidential, and you may refuse to answer any question or end the survey at any time. All information will be held in strict confidence and is protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Results will be reported in a combined response form only. Please note, this call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance purposes.

Now I would now like to ask some specific questions about individuals working for your organization who graduated from an Alberta High School WITHIN THE LAST TWO YEARS.

**SECTION S, Continued with person appropriate to answering questions about RECENT High School graduates**

- 4S. First, I will read various types of skills and personal qualities that High School graduates may be expected to have. We are asking about those who have High School Graduation Only at this time, and have not COMPLETED any post-secondary education or training to obtain an additional certificate, diploma, or degree.

Considering recent High School graduates working for your organization, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with each of the following:

[Interviewer prompt: By “recent” graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

[Interviewer prompt if asked to define high school graduate: A student who is awarded one of the following is a High School graduate: an Alberta High School Diploma (English or Francophone), a Certificate of High School Achievement (English or Francophone), a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of School Completion, an Alberta High School Diploma as a Mature Student, or a High School Equivalency Diploma.]

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Satisfied
- 3 Dissatisfied
- 4 Very dissatisfied
- 8 Refused
- 9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

- a) The ability to communicate in speech and writing.
- b) The ability to manage information from a variety of areas.
- c) The ability to use numbers to decide what is required for the job.
- d) The ability to think and solve problems.
- e) Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.
- f) Being responsible for work and accountable for actions.
- g) Being adaptable – Having the ability to work as an individual or within a team.
- h) The ability to learn continuously.
- i) The ability to work safely.
- j) The ability to work with others towards a common goal.
- k) The ability to participate and contribute in projects and tasks.
- l) The ability to transition effectively from school to work.
- m) The ability to understand abstract concepts.
- n) The ability to be honest and ethical in dealing with other people.
- o) The ability to be punctual and finish work on time.
- p) The ability to lead a group or team.
- q) The ability to make fair decisions.
- r) The ability to manage money, credit and personal finances.
- s) The ability to help in keeping the environment clean.

- 5S. Can you think of any particular skills or abilities that are missing from RECENT High School graduates?

[Interviewer prompt: By “recent” graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

[Accept all answers, record verbatim, probe fully and clarify responses.]

1 Yes (Record response)

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2 No

8 Refused

9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

6S. Do you have any other comments you would like to make about RECENT High School graduates of Alberta's K-12 Education System?

[Interviewer prompt: By "recent" graduates, we mean those who graduated from an Alberta High School within the last two years.]

1 Yes (Record response)

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2 No

8 Refused

9 Don't Know/Not Applicable

We have come to the end of the survey. On behalf of Alberta Education we would like to thank you for your participation in this study. Thank you again and good bye.