



4.2 Nova Scotia

Population – 921,727

Total Area – 55,283 km²

Population Density – 16.67 people/km²

Capital (Population) – Halifax (390,096)

Number of K–12 Schools – 414 (2011–12)

Number of K–12 Students – 125,540 (2011–12)

Number of K–12 Distance Education Programs – 2

Number of K–12 Distance Education Students – ~2550

K–12 Distance Education Policy – Teachers’ Provincial Agreement

Distance Programs

Since April 2011, and effective for the September 2011–12 academic year, the structure of offering online high school courses in Nova Scotia has changed significantly to a provincial level program. At present, the Department of Education—through a co-operative management board structure—is offering online courses through the Nova Scotia Virtual School (NSVS). Formerly, the NSVS was a registration portal, whereas now it provides a full range of services including:

- A centralized learning content management system
- Video conferencing
- Interactive objects, video streaming/downloading and other multimedia resources
- Training and support for online teachers
- Professional development and resources for classroom teachers, technical support, etc.

Beginning with the 2011–12 school year, if a student wishes to enrol in a course through the NSVS, that student should be registered in a high school in Nova Scotia and should also have space in his or her schedule for the course(s) in question.

Prior to this change, individual school boards around the province offered online courses, with some funding provided to support students from one school board enrolled in courses in another school board. With this change, the online courses are offered by the NSVS with teachers employed by individual school boards, but working within a co-operative structure. This updated model is fully funded through the Department of Education to support approximately 650 students in their learning regardless of their geographic location within Nova Scotia. Additionally, the *Conseil scolaire acadien provincial* (CSAP)—the pan-provincial school board for French first language students—is using a range of resources now available to them in the province (e.g., the provincial Moodle platform, are an active member of the NSVS Management Board, etc.); as well as having a sharing arrangement for online programming from the Province of New Brunswick.

The Department of Education also continues to maintain a correspondence study program (CSP) with approximately 1800 students enrolled, approximately half of whom attend a public school; the other half are adult students or live outside of the province.

Governance and Regulation

Distance education continues to be governed by the agreement between the Government of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union. In particular, there are 11 provisions that focus on teacher certification and quality of life issues (e.g., defining the work day, professional development requirements, program oversight, and class size) related to the unique environment of distance education teaching.

Interprovincial and International

Any online course from an online program outside of the province taken by a student in Nova Scotia would be reviewed at the school or board level, to determine if an equivalent course exists.

Unless a student is registered in a public school in Nova Scotia, that student is not eligible to take an online course through the NSVS. If an adult student within the province or a student from outside of Nova Scotia were interested in taking a distance education course from a program located in Nova Scotia, the student would be directed to the province's CSP. For out-of-province students who successfully complete courses through the CSP, the Ministry will issue a completion certificate and send a transcript to schools as requested.