

	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Manitoba</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Population – 1,213,815 Total Area – 649,950 km² Population Density – 1.87 people/km² Capital (Population) – Winnipeg (633,451) Number of K-12 Schools – 686 (2009-10) Number of K-12 Students – 196,073 (2009-10)</p>
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Manitoba is one of three Prairie Provinces (all of which are roughly the same geographic size). The capital region contains over 60% of the provincial population, with a population density of 131 people/km². The remainder of the province has a density of only 1.24 people/km².

K-12 Online Learning

Category	Yes/No	Comments
Province-led programme	Yes	
Other online programmes	Yes	Uses province learning management system and course content
Provincial-level policy	Yes	Currently under review

Online Programmes

In Manitoba, distance learners continue to be supported with three options: Independent Study Option (ISO), which is print-based delivery; Teacher Mediated Option (TMO), which utilises audio conferencing; and Web-Based Course (WBC) Option or online delivery.

The Ministry of Education, or Manitoba Education is directly responsible for the ISO and TMO distance education options. The ISO provides school-age and adult learners access to print-based distance learning courses from grades 9 to 12. Learners complete courses independently at their own pace and have access to a tutor/marker via e-mail and telephone, with some beginning to utilise web conferencing tools, such as *Elluminate*[®]. The operation of ISO is funded by Manitoba Education; however students pay a registration fee for a course.

The TMO provides school-age and adult learners access to print-based distance learning courses supplemented with audio teleconference classes hosted by an instructor at scheduled times during the school day. TMO courses are available to grades 9 through 12 students attending a school or an adult learning centre. It should be noted that Manitoba Education is currently experimenting with using the province’s learning management system (LMS) and web-based synchronous tools in the TMO delivery model. The TMO is self-funded, where one host school division collects and holds student registration fees from other schools/school divisions, which are then used to pay instructors. Participating schools and school divisions use funds from their per-pupil block grant/direct allocation

to pay the registration fee for TMO courses. Manitoba Education is responsible for the course development, and the administration and implementation of the TMO programme including the recruitment of 10 instructors.

In a model similar to the one found in Ontario, the WBC Option provides schools and teachers access to the courses developed by Manitoba Education, along with use of the provincial LMS, to manage their own online or blended learning programmes. The WBC option operates with Manitoba Education taking responsibility for course development, teacher training and support, as well as costs of running and supporting the learning management system required for development and implementation. Schools are responsible for implementing WBCs and therefore costs related to implementation (i.e., hiring or allocation of teachers), are covered through the regular per-pupil block funding from the province.

Finally, where demand exists and resources permit, the *Bureau de l'éducation française* (a division of Manitoba Education) has developed ISO and WBC courses for students registered in the *Français* and French Immersion programmes. This offer of distance learning courses in French is occasionally augmented by courses that may be required by students but are not available in French in Manitoba. In this case, students will be registered in courses offered by another Canadian jurisdiction. However, since no policy exists regarding access to out-of-province courses, each case is looked at individually.

Manitoba Education maintains enrolment figures for all three options. In the 2009-10 school year there were approximately 3400 enrolments for ISO, approximately 530 for TMO, and approximately 4,000 students for WBC. Overall, there were about 8,000 student enrolments in distance education in Manitoba in 2009-10 (down from approximately 8,500 enrolments in 2008-09).

Governance and Regulation

Currently, Manitoba Education is in the process of reviewing policies related to distance learning in the province. The original policy document was written in 2000 and was accompanied by a document outlining a peer review process for new course development. Both were out of date, and the Distance Learning Unit and the Learning Support & Technology Unit of Manitoba Education are working on renewal of the policy document so it better reflects the current situation in Manitoba, and addresses all three distance learning options. The previous policy only addressed web-based delivery (distributed learning was the term used in 2000). In 2008, Manitoba Education hosted two forums seeking input from educators, school, and division administrators on distance learning in the province. The policy review committee met several times during the past two years to work on the draft document, supporting documents and handbooks for each of the three options.

The only reference in the Public Schools Act regarding distance education is that the Minister of Education can approve courses of study, including correspondence and other courses. Manitoba Education has issued other regulatory and policy documents, along with handbooks for each of the three distance learning options (these handbooks are also being revised currently through the review process described above).