



4.7 Manitoba (MB)

Pop: 1,265,015

K–12 Schools: 746

K–12 Students: 195,152

of K–12 DE Programmes: ~38

of K–12 DE Students: 11,351

K–12 distance education began in the Province of Manitoba in 1927, with the introduction of print-based distance learning courses—now known as Independent Study Option (ISO). In 1992, the Ministry of Education began providing school-aged and adult learners access to grades 9 through 12 print-based distance learning courses, supplemented with audio teleconference classes hosted by an instructor at scheduled times during the school day. The latter sessions were known as the Teacher Mediated Option (TMO). Finally, in 1997 the Ministry began providing schools and teachers access to the online courses developed by the Ministry—along with use of the provincial LMS—to manage their own online or blended learning programmes, known as the Web-Based Course (WBC) Option.

Distance Programmes

The Ministry continues to support all three distance learning options. In theory, each school division is participating in one or more of the Ministry's options. However, the list of distance learning contacts provided on the Ministry's website includes several individuals who are no longer working for that school division, or alternatively the contact information is no longer accurate. As such, it is difficult to determine which school divisions are utilizing various distance learning options. During the 2012–13 school year, there were 2,950 enrolments in the ISO, 401 in the TMO and approximately 8,000 student enrolments in the WBC. Overall, there were about 11,351 distance education enrolments.

Governance and Regulation

The only reference in the Public Schools Act regarding distance education is mention 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. The Ministry has been investigating options to support the formation of virtual collegiate(s) in the province and is currently working toward signing a Memorandum of Understanding with two entities to launch a three-year pilot startup for two virtual collegiates.