

3.4 New Brunswick (NB)

Population: 145,211

Number of K-12 Schools: 63

Number of K-12 Students: 101,079

Number of K-12 Distance Education Programs: 2

Number of K-12 Distance Education Students: 2615



K-12 Distance Programs

Both the Anglophone and Francophone sectors of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development manage K –12 online learning programs. These programs service secondary students in New Brunswick in either of the province’s two official languages. During the 2013–14 school year, there were approximately 1,782 students enrolled in the Anglophone program and 839 students enrolled in the Francophone program. In addition to these distance students, there were also 943 English and 1511 French face-to-face students registered in the learning management system using online courses under the direction of their local school’s classroom teachers.

The Department reported that student mental health and anxiety issues have caused an increase in the number of students taking online courses outside of their physical school setting. The Anglophone system added a second First Nations Language course and now offers Mi’kmaw 110 and Wolastoqey 110 (more commonly known as Maliseet). The Department is also continuing to examine areas for expansion (e.g., more French Immersion courses, adding grade 10 courses, summer school, etc.) in the Anglophone sector, but this examination is still in the exploration phase. The Francophone sector offers a program for gifted children in Grade 8.

Additionally, the Department has extended its online teacher professional development offerings to include teaching assistants and other adults within the K –12 system along with teachers. For example, the majority of educational assistants in the province have received Autism training through an online course. The Department is continuing to develop educator courses around inclusive education and offers a number of Autism Spectrum Disorder online courses.

Finally, access for mature and upgrading students (aged 19+) continues to be a challenge. The existing distance education program is too limited in capacity to support the number of inquiries that are received. The Anglophone sector is currently working with outside partners to develop additional supports for these learners.

Governance and Regulation

There remains no specific legislation that governs K –12 distance education in New Brunswick. The system continues to operate based on collaboration between the Ministry of Education and individual school districts. The Ministry has published a policy handbook, different for both the English and French systems, that outlines the responsibilities of a variety of individuals at the Ministry, district and school level to ensure the orderly implementation of the distance education program. Interestingly, in addition to school officials such as a registrar and local site facilitator, there are specific responsibilities outlined for both distance education students and the parents of students who are enrolled in distance education programs.