

2.1.3 Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island is the smallest province in Canada, joined to the mainland portion of the country by the Confederation Bridge (a 13 km long span from Borden-Carleton, Prince Edward Island to Cape Jourimain, New Brunswick). The population of the province is only 140,402 (Statistics Canada, 2009), making it Canada's smallest province. With an area of only 5,683.56 km², the population density is 23.9 /km² (making it one of the most densely population provinces). The capital is Charlottetown, known as the birthplace of Canada, which has a population of 58,625.

K-12 Online Learning

There was no response from the Prince Edward Island Ministry of Education, as such this profile has been developed based on a document analysis of the Ministry's website and other published Government documents.

| Category | Yes/No | Comments |
|-------------------------|--------|---|
| Province-led programme | No | |
| Other online programmes | No | It appears that PEI utilises the distance education programmes from one or more provinces |
| Provincial-level policy | Yes | |

Online Programmes

Historically, students could enrol in correspondence courses offered through the New Brunswick Community College system to gain secondary school credit with certain restrictions. At present, students in the province have some ability to access courses offered by the New Brunswick Ministry of Education. For example, there are currently 19 students from Prince Edward Island are enrolled two online courses offered by New Brunswick.

Provincial Policies

There is no mention of distance education in the provincial *Schools Act*. However, in 2001 the Ministry of Education issued Ministerial Directive No. MD 2001-05 established guidelines for the use of distance education within the K-12 system. These provisions were superseded in August 2008 by Ministerial Directive No. MD 2008-05, which reads:

1. Application

This directive applies only to courses delivered within the jurisdiction of the school during the school day.

2. Definition

Distance Education is a mode of instruction in which the student and teacher are separated in either time or space or both, and where two-way communication takes place through non-traditional means for the most part. There is a broad range of both individualised and team instructional approaches and strategies used in distance education. Distance education communication may utilise various technologies and media, including but not limited to print, computers and computer networks, telecommunications, and audio-visual equipment and resources.

Supervision is the act of overseeing the course of study and monitoring student activities.

3. Purpose

Distance Education is seen as a means to provide students with equitable access and/or a diversity of programmes as approved by the P.E.I. Department of Education.

4. Beliefs

1. Regardless of site, personal interaction between teachers and students is fundamental to the teaching and learning process. On-site teaching is the preferred mode of instruction.
2. Distance education programmes must be consistent with the Philosophy of Education for P.E.I. and its curriculum.
3. Distance education must be guided by sound pedagogical principles that support an effective teaching and learning environment.
4. Teacher education programmes in P.E.I. should include instruction in distance education policies, programs, and instructional strategies.

5. Delivery

1. Teachers delivering distance education courses must be certified in a Canadian province or territory or be approved by the Registrar of the Department of Education as being eligible for an instructional license in the Province of Prince Edward Island.
2. Students enrolled in distance education courses will be under teacher supervision at the receiving site.
3. Duties assigned to teachers as a result of their students being involved in a distance education course shall be considered part of their regularly assigned duties.

6. In-Service

The Department of Education will ensure that, where appropriate, teachers participating in the delivery of distance education courses will receive in-service in distance education.

7. Curriculum and Accreditation of Courses

Courses offered by distance education must be authorised by the Department of Education.

8. Student Access

Distance education courses may be offered to students in any grade level.

This directive provides a positive structure for the development of K-12 distance education in Prince Edward Island. However, to date there appears to be no local organisation within the province to utilise this opportunity.