

3.5 Quebec (QC)

Population: 8,263,600

Number of K-12 Schools: 3,102

Number of K-12 Students: 1,003,322

Number of K-12 E-Learning Programs: 4

Number of K-12 E-Learning Students: ~41,000



K-12 E-Learning Programs

During the 2015-16 school year, there were four e-learning programs in the province of Quebec. The largest distance education program was the *Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec* (SOFAD) that primarily develops and produces correspondence distance learning materials that school boards utilize in their own district-based programs. SOFAD also provides an e-learning platform (i.e., EduSOFAD) that offers many of the courses online for the students who prefer to work online. SOFAD served 30,072 adult students who are 16 years or older during the 2015-16 school year, including 3231 course enrollments in EduSOFAD). The *Centre d'apprentissage en ligne de la CSBE* is the distance education program offered by the Beauce-Etchemin School Board and had 1041 students enrolled in 21 remedial and 10 full-time online courses. Finally, the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN) provides a variety of distance learning opportunities to approximately 9,400 English-language students from all nine English-speaking school boards in the province.

LEARN also provides its services and resources – such as tutoring, tailored pedagogical content, training, community learning centres' support, academic peer review articles, curated resources, and enrichment activities – to stakeholders across the province in a blended format. During the 2015-16 school year approximately 39,500 students accessed these blended learning services. Finally, the *Écoles en réseau* (i.e., Networked Schools) has 350 teachers in 275 schools, and connected more than 5000 students through use of Knowledge Forum and various synchronous tools in a manner than blends face-to-face instruction with online tools and collaboration.

Governance and Regulation

The *Education Act* in Quebec makes no reference to distance education and since 1995 school boards have held the primary responsibility for distance education policies and regulations. In fact, at present the *Loi sur l'éducation publique* stipulates students must be physically present and connected to a recognized school and school board, which prevents any formal full-time online learning (and relegates supplemental online learning programs to being a provider that must co-operate with the brick-and-mortar schools).

However, private schools are regulated by a different act (i.e., *Loi sur les établissements privés*), that contains provisions pertaining to online education. Essentially a private school can request a “derogation” allowing students to be “virtually attending,” which would in theory allow for the formal creation of a virtual school. To date, the Ministry has yet to receive a request for an online initiative that meets the conditions stated in the *Loi sur les établissements privés* for them to approve.