



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: ~51,800

Governance and Regulation

Historically, school boards have held the primary responsibility for distance education policies and regulations. In fact, at present the *Loi sur l'instruction 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, a 2017 amendment to the *Loi sur l'instruction publique* stated:

459.5.3 The Minister may develop and implement a pilot project to test or innovate distance education or to study, improve or define standards in this area.

This provision allows the Minister to authorize a pilot project that would:

1. offer distance education services, authorize the offering of such services to a school board or an educational institution governed by the *Loi sur l'enseignement privé* or authorize a person to receive them according to standards different from those provided for by the *Loi sur l'instruction publique* or the *Loi sur l'enseignement privé*, while ensuring respect for the right to free educational services;
2. establish, by directives, the norms and rules applicable. It may also, at any time, modify the project or terminate it after notifying any interested party. A pilot project has a maximum duration of three years, which the Minister may, if he considers it necessary, extend for a maximum of two years. The Minister shall make and publish an evaluation of the pilot project every two years and an evaluation at the end of the pilot project.

As of the 2017-18 school year there were no active pilot projects.

However, private schools are regulated by a different act (i.e., *Loi sur l'enseignement privé*) that does contain 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 l'enseignement privé* for them to approve.

The government provides school boards funding for distance education students based upon enrolment at a rate of 80% of the amount provided for a student enrolled in a brick-and-mortar setting. The *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur* does provide a block grant to the *Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec* (SOFAD) to support their course development activities. Additionally, SOFAD also charged a fee for school boards to use their materials, money that was reinvested in the development of other learning materials.

Similarly, the Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN) program is largely funded through the Canada-Quebec Entente on minority language education and second-language instruction, which is a funding program managed by the *Ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur*.

K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity

During the 2017-18 school year, there were an estimated three distance learning programs in Quebec. The largest distance education program was SOFAD, which 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 approximately 27,400 adult students who are 16 years or older. While there was no data submitted for the 2017-18 school year, the *Centre d'apprentissage en ligne de la CSBE* – a distance education program offered by the Beauce-Etchemin School Board – had 149 students enrolled during this school year, and an additional 1366 students took a remedial course through distance education during the summer of 2018. Finally, LEARN provided a variety of distance learning opportunities to approximately 300 English-language students synchronously and 1,300 self-paced students from all nine English-speaking school boards in the province.

K-12 Blended Learning Activity

At present, there are two formal programs that provide blended learning in Quebec. The first is LEARN, which 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 2017-18 school year approximately 120 students were enrolled in these blended learning services, and another estimated 10,000 or more students accessed the blended learning content outside of LEARN's content management system.

The second is the *Écoles en réseau* (i.e., Networked Schools), which focus on teacher professional development and technology integration projects (e.g., connecting two or more small rural classes together through the use of *Knowledge Forum* and various synchronous tools in a manner that blends face-to-face instruction with online tools and collaboration). During the 2017-18 school year, *Écoles en réseau* had approximately 484 teachers in 275 schools participating, representing more than 11,162 students.