



Prince Edward Island (PE)

Population: 159,249

Number of K-12 Schools: 63

Number of K-12 Students: 20,131

Number of K-12 E-Learning Programs: 1

Number of K-12 E-Learning Students: ~175

Governance and Regulation

While there is no reference to distance education in the *Education Act, 2016*, pursuant to section 8 of the *School Act, 1988*, there have been two Ministerial Directives concerning distance education (i.e., first *Ministerial Directive No. MD 2001-05*, which was superseded by *Ministerial Directive No. MD 2008-05*). According to MD 2008-05, distance education was defined as:

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 individualized and team instructional approaches and strategies used in distance education. Distance education communication may utilize various technologies and media, including but not limited to print, computers and computer networks, telecommunications, and audio-visual equipment and resources.

Internal regulations continue to be driven by this Ministerial Directives, which applies to courses delivered during the regular school day. The directive also outlines a series of beliefs about the nature of distance education instruction.

Additionally, individual schools and districts that participate in distance education programs must adhere to guidelines found in the provincial Distance Education Handbook document. The updated document specifies the use of distance education for students in particular circumstances.

K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity

At present there are no established K-12 distance education programs in Prince Edward Island. However, beginning in February 2021, the Ministry piloted a virtual school that initially focused on French-language courses, and will eventually include the English-language courses as well.

Through an inter-provincial agreement students in Prince Edward Island are funded to take online courses from the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. During the 2020-21 school year there were 21 French language students and approximately 150 English language students enrolled in online courses through this agreement. As the PEI-based pilot expands, it is expected that the participation of French-language students will continue to decrease in the coming years.

K-12 Blended Learning Activity

According to the Department, there was no intentional blended learning (i.e., specific projects or initiatives) occurring in public schools.

Remote Learning

Spring 2020 Closure

Schools on Prince Edward Island closed on March 23, 2020. The Ministry of Education and Life Long Learning created a webpage from their Ministry website that contained home learning resources to support remote teaching for each grade level. The curricular focus was on literacy, numeracy, and mental health and well-being. Educational activities for students were posted on websites and printed resources were offered to students with limited access to the internet. Attendance for remote teaching included kindergarten with 30 minutes per day of holistic learning, primary 45 minutes per day, elementary 60 minutes, intermediate 90 minutes per day, and secondary grades two hours per course per week. Provincial standardized testing was cancelled, and report cards were delivered. In June, teachers were required to contact their students and parents either by telephone, video, or in-person to review student progress and provide feedback (Nagle et al., 2020a).

Fall 2020 Reopening

There were no delays to the start of the Fall 2020-21 school year with a full re-opening and added health measures that included cohorts, physical distancing, staggered entry/exits and student breaks along with signage to direct the flow of student traffic. Masks were mandatory for grades 7-12 and voluntary for grades K-6. The curriculum was revised to address learning gaps and outcomes that could not be addressed in the Spring while schools were closed and learning assessments were planned to continue as usual with priority on missed outcomes for language arts and math (Nagle et al., 2020b).

2020-21 School Year

Schools were open to in-person learning throughout the 2020-21 school year, however, some schools closed based on case numbers, and at the beginning of May there was a province-wide lockdown with schools closed, however, in-school learning returned May 9. Students who could not attend in-school learning due to illness or self-isolation were expected to complete online and offline work prepared by their teacher. Expectations for synchronous and asynchronous learning included 60-80 minutes daily for kindergarten, two and one-half hours per day for grades 1-6, and in grades 7-12 class time remained the same as during a regular school day. The province adopted *Google Classroom* as its provincial learning management system and devices were delivered to students in need. Assessment and reporting continued as per a regular school year, but provincial assessments were cancelled for the 2020-21 school year (Nagle et al., 2021).

References

Nagle, J., Barbour, M. K., & LaBonte, R. (2020a). *Documenting triage: Detailing the response of provinces and territories to emergency remote teaching*. Canadian eLearning Network. <https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.227/sgf.292.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Documenting-Triage-canelearn-emergency-remote-teaching-report1.pdf>

Nagle, J., Barbour, M. K., & LaBonte, R. (2021). *Toggling between lockdowns: Canadian responses for continuity of learning in the 2020-21 school year*. Canadian eLearning Network. <https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.153/sgf.292.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/canelearn-2020-21-school-year.pdf>

Nagle, J., LaBonte, R., & Barbour, M. K. (2020b). *A fall like no other: Between basics and preparing for an extended transition during turmoil*. Canadian eLearning Network. <https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.227/sgf.292.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/A-Fall-Like-No-Other-canelearn-remote-teaching-report2.pdf>