

State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada

2024 Edition

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Executive Summary

The 17th annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* study describes the changes that have occurred in relation to e-learning governance and activity over the past year. Jurisdictional profiles describe the activity and nature of governance for each province and territory, as well as for Indigenous programs under federal jurisdiction. This report describes only the changes that have occurred, while full profiles remain on the project research website (<https://k12sotn.ca/>).

During the 2023-24 school year, students from all thirteen provinces and territories continued to participate in K-12 distance and online opportunities, with most western provinces' enrollment levels remaining higher than the national average. Many jurisdictions continued to have primarily district-based programs, some in combination with provincial programs. The exception to this is mainly in Atlantic and Northern Canada, where the dominance of single jurisdiction-wide programs remains. While some jurisdictions, notably Ontario, continued with remote learning opportunities, most lapsed back to primarily classroom-based instruction with options for enrollment in pre-existing e-learning programs.

Provincial policy and funding changes, suspended during the pandemic and reinitiated in many jurisdictions, impacted both district-based and provincial programs. In British Columbia, the implementation of delayed policy changes for designated Provincial and District Online Learning Schools were in full implementation in the 2023-24 school year. SaskDLC, a Crown Corporation with the responsibility to deliver K-12 online learning in Saskatchewan, began enrolling students in September 2023. The mandatory e-learning in Ontario, and its subsequent impact on student enrollment, was fully implemented. In Québec, legislation regarding the primary role of the classroom, with the online environment only being supplemental if required, was passed. Finally, in the Atlantic provinces and northern territories, online learning activity remained relatively static over the past five years, even during the pandemic.

The 2023-24 school year saw a continuing low response rate from Ministries of Education to the request for enrollment data that began during the pandemic. While this lack of response does not impact the ability to report on the nature of regulation in each jurisdiction, it has impacted the ability to accurately reflect the level of activity in some jurisdictions. Of note, since Ontario implemented the requirement for students to take two online credits to graduate from secondary school, beginning with students graduating in 2023-24, while researchers documented increased roles for board-based e-learning programs, the Independent Learning Centre, and also a significant increase in private online schools in Ontario that operated province-wide but largely as international programs, student enrollment data over this period has not been provided.

The *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report, and its accompanying publications on its project website, provide critical information and insight into how Canadian educational authorities and governments are integrating technology-supported approaches to prepare students for today's economy and a future society in which the use of technology will be ubiquitous. The report and website provide a benchmark for educators and offers background, guidance, and ideas for the improvement of policy and practice in online and blended learning.

1. Introduction

This report details the results of the seventeenth annual State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada study. Since 2018 the printed report has simply described the changes that have occurred in relation to e-learning governance and activity over the past year, while a more detailed profile for each jurisdiction has been posted on the State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada website at: <https://k12sotn.ca/>.

1.1 Methodology

The methods of data collection utilized for the annual study included:

- a survey sent to each of the Ministries of Education,
- follow-up interviews to clarify or expand on any of the responses contained in the survey,
- an analysis of documents from the Ministry of Education, often available in online format, and
- follow-up interviews with key stakeholders in many of the jurisdictions.

The survey was initially sent to the Ministries of Education in August 2023. Reminders were sent in October and December. As the annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report is not designed to be simply report Ministry responses, each year the researchers also analyze both government documents and items published by external organizations, including the news media. Additionally, the researchers also rely on their extensive network of practitioner contacts across the country to verify information and obtain local perspectives on how stated policies actually operate on the ground. In instances where the Ministry of Education fails to respond, the document analysis and interviews with key stakeholders become the primary source of data collection for the jurisdictional profiles. Table 1 provides a summary of the main sources of jurisdictional data collection for the 2024 report.

Table 1. Primary data sources for the 2024 State of the Nation: K-12 E-Learning in Canada

	Primary Data Sources
NL	Document analysis
NS	Ministry of Education
PE	Document analysis
NB	Ministry of Education
QC	Ministry of Education / Key stakeholders
ON	Ministry of Education / Key stakeholders
MB	Ministry of Education
SK	Ministry of Education
AB	Key stakeholders / Document analysis
BC	Ministry of Education
YT	Ministry of Education
NT	Ministry of Education
NV	Document analysis
Federal	Indigenous Services Canada

Finally, in addition to the data collection for the provincial, territorial, and federal profiles, the researchers also undertake an individual program survey that is sent to contacts from all of the K-12 distance, online, and blended programs across Canada identified by the researchers. While individual programs can complete the survey at any time, during the specific 2023-24 data collection cycle the survey was sent to all known contacts on three occasions from October through December 2023.

Table 2. Individual program survey responses for the 2023-24 school year

	Total Number of Programs	Number of Programs Responding	Response Rate
NL	1	0	0%
NS	2	0	0%
PE	1	0	0%
NB	2	0	1%
QC	89+	1	0.3%
ON	584	2	8%
MB	~38	0	0%
SK	20	0	0%
AB	47	8	17%
BC	69	5	7%
YT	2	0	0%
NT	1	0	0%
NV	0	-	-
Federal	4	1	25%
Total	860	17	2%

The response rate for the 2023-24 school year fell to 2%, partly due to the significant increase in the number of programs in Quebec and Ontario. The most recent responses that the State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada researchers have received to the individual program survey, regardless of when they were received, are included in the provincial, territorial and federal profiles located at <https://k12sotn.ca/about/>

1.2 How to Read This Document

The goal of the 2024 annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report is to provide an overview of the state of K-12 e-learning in Canada. K-12 e-learning is broadly defined to include all forms of K-12 distance and online learning, as well as blended learning that may occur within the context of a face-to-face setting.

The report begins with a national overview of K-12 distance, online, and blended learning in Canada. It continues with a brief update of any changes or new developments in each provincial, territorial, and federal jurisdiction. The full jurisdictional profiles continue to be available at <https://k12sotn.ca/data/>

Additionally, the project website includes vignettes and brief issue papers. Vignettes have typically taken the form of one to two page narratives or stories designed to provide a more personalized perspective of how some of the K-12 e-learning programs were designed, delivered, and supported – as well as the impact that had – from the viewpoint of various administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Brief issue papers, which tend to be three to five pages in length, provide a more detailed discussion of a range of issues that are current and relevant to the design, delivery, support and regulation of all forms K-12 e-learning in Canada. Historically, the research team would recruit authors for these two features in conjunction with the annual report, and each contribution would be highlighted in this publication. However, after 15 years the research team has decided to shift the focus of these features to an on-going effort that will be posted solely on the project website.

2. National Overview

The consistency in the general trends in both the nature of regulation and the level of activity of K-12 e-learning remains a theme of the 2024 *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report. While each year there have been minor changes, the overall scope of e-learning in Canada has generally been reliable.

2.1 Nature of K–12 E-Learning Regulation

The specific nature of regulation of K-12 distance, online, and blended learning has remained quite stable over the seventeen year period that the *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report has been active. While many provinces and territories continue to have some reference to distance education in the *Education Act* or *Schools Act*, in most instances these references simply define distance education or give the Minister of Education in that province or territory the ability to create, approve or regulate K-12 distance education. Many of these references have also become antiquated given the present realities of K-12 distance and online learning. Table 3 provides a summary of regulations showing that the most dominant trend affecting the regulation of K-12 distance and online learning is that approximately a third of all jurisdictions use policy handbooks to regulate K-12 distance and online learning, sometimes in combination with a formal agreement or contract.

Table 3. Summary of the K–12 distance and online learning regulation by jurisdiction

	Legislation	Policy Handbook	Agreements	Memorandum of Understanding
NL				
NS	✓			
PE	✓			
NB		✓		
QC	✓		✓	
ON		✓	✓	
MB	✓	✓		✓
SK	✓			
AB	✓	✓		
BC	✓		✓	
YT	✓			✓
NT	✓	✓		✓
NV	✓			✓
Federal	✓			

The 2023-24 school year saw the continued or full implementation of several legislative and regulatory changes that had begun in previous years. For example, the requirement that students take two online credits to graduate from secondary school in Ontario came into effect with students who graduated at the end of the 2023-24 school year (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022). The Government of Saskatchewan began using its new definition for online learning and established the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Corporation as outlined in the *Education Amendment Act, 2023* that passed in December 2022. Similarly, the Ministry of Education in British Columbia completed its full implementation of the legislative framework resulting from the *Education Statutes Amendment Act, 2020*. There had been potential for regulatory change in Manitoba,

as the report entitled *Manitoba's K to 12 Education Action Plan* had tasked the Ministry of Education with “develop[ing] a provincial remote learning strategy, including an online high school, to enhance access to programming and learning across the province” (Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, 2022, pp. 15 & 23). However, the change of government in Fall 2023 has put the implementation of this action plan on hold.

In fact, there was only one jurisdiction where regulatory change occurred during the 2023-24 school year. The Government of Quebec (2023) adopted *Projet de loi n° 23, Loi modifiant principalement la Loi sur l'instruction publique et édictant la Loi sur l'Institut national d'excellence en éducation* in December 2023, which made distance education services possible, by regulation, in two contexts: (1) exceptional or unforeseeable situations and (2) special home or hospital teaching services. The passage of this bill essentially legislated the judicial decision that had been rendered in the *Karounis c. Procureur Général du Québec*.

The remaining jurisdictions saw little or no change in the nature of regulation.

2.2 Nature of K–12 Distance/Online Learning Activity

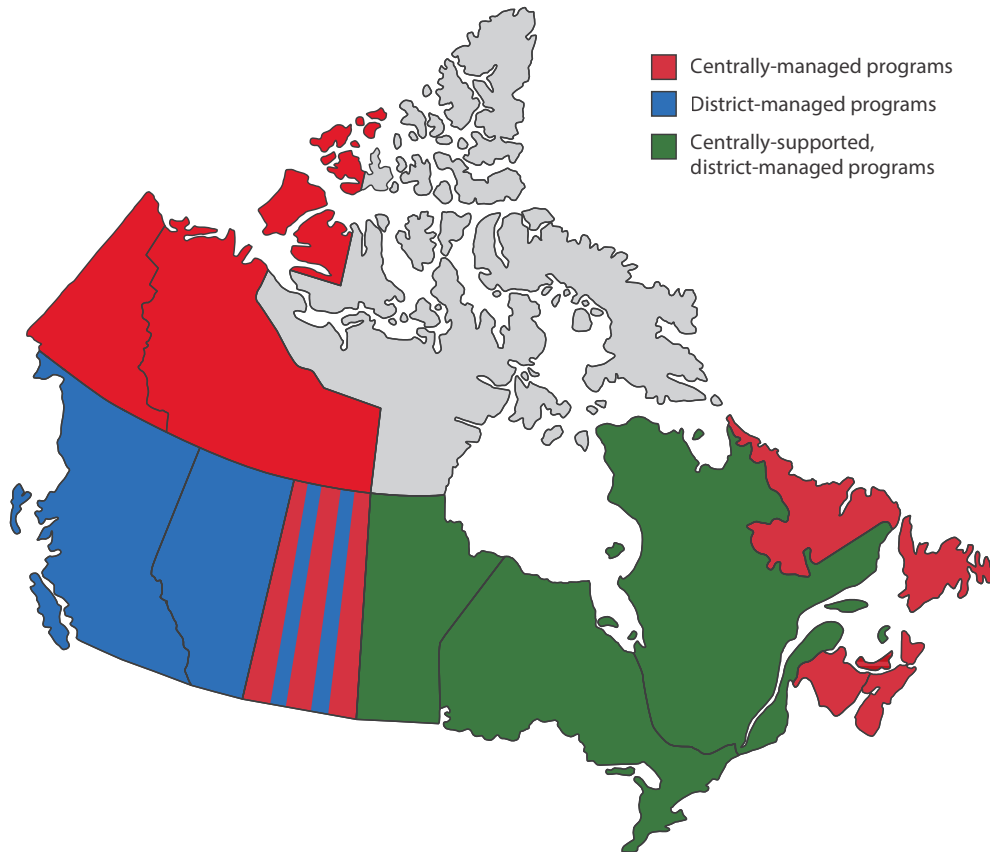
Students from all thirteen provinces and territories continue to have the opportunity to participate in K-12 distance and online learning opportunities. Similarly, while there has tended to be consistency from year to year in types of K-12 distance and online learning programs that exist throughout the country, there has also been minor changes that occur each year. It is in these minor changes where the neat classifications that the research team has used in the past become somewhat problematic. Historically, the research team has described the nature of K-12 distance and online learning activity as falling into one of four categories:

1. Single provincial program
2. Primarily district-based programs
3. Combination of provincial and district-based programs
4. Use online learning programs from other provinces

However, this often led to inconsistency in how the data was understood. For example, there are two provincial programs in New Brunswick (e.g., one Anglophone and one Francophone). While Prince Edward Island had a single provincial program, it also uses online learning programs from other provinces – as does the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Traditionally programs in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan were district-based, but in each case programs had the ability to serve students either in only their own district or province-wide – depending on the desire of the individual program. These limitations have become more nuanced each year.

Due to these limitations, the research team is changing the way it describes the nature of activity of K-12 distance and online learning programs to concentrate on the locus of control and support for these programs (see Figure 1). More specifically, whether the programs are controlled and/or supported at the provincial or district level.

Figure 1. Types of K–12 distance and online learning programming across Canada



As illustrated above, the four Atlantic Canadian provinces and the two Northern Canadian territories with K-12 distance and online programs have programs that are centrally managed – either by the Ministry of Education (i.e., directly or indirectly) or by a designated, arms-length organization. In these examples, the administration and delivery of the program itself, as well as the hiring of leadership and employees, is centrally-managed. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador have a single centrally-managed program, the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation. Similarly, Nova Scotia has two centrally-managed programs, the Nova Scotia Virtual School and the Nova Scotia Independent Online Learning program. The two territories have centrally-managed programs as well, the Aurora Virtual School (Yukon) and the Northern Distance Learning (Northwest Territories), and both New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island operate centrally-managed programs from the Ministry of Education.

In contrast, Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba have district-managed programs that are centrally-supported. The support might be in the form of licenses for the specific tools needed to deliver the program (e.g., a centralized learning management system) or the provision of asynchronous course content (e.g., an online course repository). It might also come in the form of coordination of human resources or other programmatic services. In some cases, the centralized support is from the Ministry of Education, but in other cases, it is in the form of third-party organizations. However, in each instance, the actual administration of the program is done at the district level. For example, the *Société de formation à distance* provides access to course content and tutors for distance learning programs that are operated by school boards in Quebec. Similarly, LEARN also provides access to tutors and asynchronous resources to Anglophone school boards in Quebec. The Ontario Ministry of Education provides a centralized learning management system and asynchronous course

content, as well as human resources in the form of technology facilitators for each school board. At the same time organizations such as the Ontario eLearning Consortium and *Consortium d'apprentissage virtuel de langue française de l'Ontario* provide centralized coordination of services. However, each school board is still responsible for managing its own e-learning program. Similarly, in Manitoba, the Department of Education and Training provides a centralized learning management system for individual school divisions who wish to manage their own remote learning programs, as well as coordination and technology for the rural school divisions who wish to engage in the Teacher Mediated Option.

The final category is the district-managed programs, which include Alberta and British Columbia. In both jurisdictions, the public programs are managed at the school district or school board level. In Alberta, programs have the ability to operate within their own district or provincially – and, in fact, the funding model encourages programs to operate at a provincial level. However, in British Columbia district programs can only operate at the district level (i.e., as District Online Learning Schools), unless they applied to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and were approved to operate at a provincial level (i.e., as Provincial Online Learning Schools).

The only outlier to the current classification scheme is Saskatchewan, which is coded as both centrally-managed programs and district-managed programs. Beginning in 2023-24 the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre was established as a Treasury Board Crown Corporation to be the centrally-managed online education hub for the province. At the same time, there still exist numerous programs managed by individual school divisions.

One aspect of this new classification system is that it does not capture the jurisdictions where private or independent K-12 distance and online programs exist. Figure 2 outlines all of the jurisdictions where private or independent programs are known to operate.

Figure 2. Private K-12 distance and online learning programming across Canada



At present, four jurisdictions have private or independent K-12 distance and online learning programs in operation. In each jurisdiction, the nature of private or independent K-12 online learning has varied significantly. For example, the vast majority of K-12 distance and online learning programs in Ontario are private or independent. Similarly, the largest K-12 distance and online learning programs in Ontario are operated by independent schools, even though the overall activity of private or independent K-12 distance and online learning programs accounts for a small proportion of the overall K-12 distance and online learning activity. Conversely, the number of private or independent K-12 distance and online learning programs in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia are much lower – both in terms of the proportion of private to public programs and their level of activity. For example, only 10 of the 47 K-12 distance and online programs in Alberta and only two of the 20 programs in Saskatchewan were operated by private or independent schools. Similarly, enrollment in private or independent programs in British Columbia only accounted for approximately 20% of the overall number of K-12 students engaged in distance and online learning.

2.3 Level of K–12 Distance/Online Learning Activity

In terms of the level of distance and online learning activity across Canada, the total K-12 population in Canada for 2023-24 was approximately 5.5 million students. Based on actual and estimated enrollment data, the number of students engaged in K-12 distance and online learning was 392,454 or 7.1% of the overall K-12 student population (see Table 4).

Table 4. Summary of K–12 distance and/or online learning activity by jurisdiction for 2023–24

	# of K–12 students	# enrolled in distance/online learning	Percent involvement
NL	63,805	~950	1.5%
NS	133,531	2,974	2.2%
PE	20,131	~200	1.0%
NB	102,934	6,087	5.9%
QC	1,157,761	~50,000	4.3%
ON	2,054,336	~150,000	7.3%
MB	214,132	~6,300	2.9%
SK	195,582	15,581	8.0%
AB	766,280	~80,000	10.4%
BC	696,422	75,823	10.9%
YT	5,960	367	6.2%
NT	8,700	172	2.0%
NV	10,902	-	-
Federal	~117,940	~4,000	3.4%
Total	~5,548,416	~392,454	7.1%

Note: ~ symbol means that approximations were provided by one or more sources

In examining the data, jurisdictions can be grouped into three categories. First, the majority of provinces in Western Canada continue to have K-12 distance and online learning participation levels that are much higher than the national average (i.e., Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia). Second, while historically Central Canada has consistently had participation levels near the national average, this year only Ontario fell into this category. Interestingly, continued growth in the Yukon Territory has lifted it into this second category. Third,

jurisdictions in Atlantic Canada (i.e., New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador) and most jurisdictions in Northern Canada (i.e., Northwest Territories and Nunavut) have a relatively low proportion of K-12 students engaged in distance and online learning. Finally, Manitoba continues to be an outlier in this category with a much lower level of activity compared to the rest of Western Canada.

As it has been stated before, it is difficult to determine why particular jurisdictions end up in each of the categories. There are jurisdictions that have significant levels of legislative and/or regulatory requirements – like British Columbia and Nova Scotia – that are in categories that are at the opposite end of the spectrum (e.g., British Columbia in the high proportion of K-12 distance and/or online learning, while Nova Scotia is in the low proportion category). Similarly, there are jurisdictions that have little legislative and/or regulatory requirements – like Alberta and Manitoba – that are also in opposite categories. There continue to be no real trends for why one jurisdiction has a higher or lower level of engagement in K-12 distance and online learning, and any effort to apply a rationale would be political, ideological, or self-serving.

The 2023-24 school year continued the trend of levels of participation returning to a pre-pandemic trajectory with respect to the proportion of students engaged in K-12 distance and/or online learning (see Table 5 below).

Table 5. K-12 distance and/or online learning student enrolment in Canada

Year	# of distance education students	% of students engaged in distance education
1999–2000*	~25,000	0.5%
2008–09	~140,000	2.7%
2009–10	150,000–175,000	2.9%–3.4%
2010–11	207,096	4.2%
2011–12	245,252	4.9%
2012–13	284,963	5.2%
2013–14	290,185	5.4%
2014–15	311,648	6.0%
2015–16	293,401	5.7%
2016–17	277,603	5.4%
2017–18	263,686	5.1%
2018–19	299,320	5.9%
2019–20	310,582	6.0%
2020–21	387,385	7.3%
2021–22	399,847	7.6%
2022–23	~360,363	6.6%
2023–24	~392,454	7.1%

**(Canadian Teachers Federation, 2000)*

As the nature of data collection stabilized during the early years of this study, the historic trend has been that the level of K-12 distance and online learning activity has increased by approximately 0.5% or less each year. If we exclude the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, which were artificially inflated due to the pandemic, that trend has existed since around the 2017-18 school year.

2.4 Level of K-12 Blended Learning Activity

As we have discussed in previous reports, data on the level of blended learning has been collected in one form or another since the 2014-15 school year. However, the vast majority of jurisdictions do not formally track participation in blended learning programs and the data that is collected is quite unreliable. Previous editions of this report have indicated that jurisdictions such as Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Ontario were able to provide data based on the number of student accounts in the provincially licensed learning management system, but that doesn't necessarily mean that those students are actually using those accounts or are using those accounts for the purposes of blended learning. That data also excludes those students and teachers who may be engaged in blended learning activities, courses, and programs that do not make use of the provincial learning management system. Additionally, blended learning activity has been estimated from data collected in the individual program surveys, but this instrument is only circulated directly to e-learning programs (i.e., mainly programs that were primarily engaged in distance and/or online learning). So if Villanova Junior High in Conception Bay South, Newfoundland and Labrador, or Forest Glade Public School in Windsor, Ontario or Okanagan Mission Secondary in Kelowna, British Columbia was engaged in blended learning there is a strong possibility that they would not have been aware of this survey to even consider completing it. As such, previous estimations of blended learning activity only just began to scratch the surface of the true level of blended learning occurring in most jurisdictions.

While there is no presentation of the overall K-12 e-learning activity data for 2023-24 or comparison of that data to previous years, the data that has been collected is still presented in the full jurisdictional profiles (as the data can be situated appropriately in those profiles). It is also worth mentioning that the blended learning landscape in each individual jurisdiction has at times been useful in understanding jurisdictions' response to the emergency remote teaching, and later remote learning, that occurred over the past four school years.

3. Trends in e-Learning

In reflecting on recent developments in K-12 e-learning, several observations can be made – many in the context of the pandemic and the remote learning responses of most school boards and education jurisdictions. The 2020 to 2022 pandemic certainly brought awareness of online learning environments since 'emergency remote teaching' was thrust upon the entire K-12 system during the recent pandemic. While much of the resulting practice was criticized, the awareness of online or e-learning opportunities was brought to the full attention of governments, school districts, and parents. The impact of the pandemic's shift to system-wide use of digital learning environments and tools provides a lens for a discussion of e-learning trends across Canada over the past five years. Specifically, coming out of the pandemic and its remote learning practices and policies, what changes have impacted the pre-existing e-learning program policies and practices post-pandemic?

3.1 Availability of Data

The first annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report was published in 2008. It focused on the 2007-08 school year and relied upon information from key stakeholders and document analysis for the three provinces that were featured, and a cursory document analysis for the remaining jurisdictions. The second annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report was the first attempt to obtain data from all 13

of the Ministries of Education. Over the past seventeen years, the participation of individual Ministries of Education and the response rate for the individual program survey has waxed and waned. However, over the past six years, there has been a significant decrease in the level of participation by Ministries of Education (as illustrated in Table 6), and even those who do participate often provide data from earlier school years than the school year being sought (e.g., providing data from the 2021-22 or 2022-23 school year in response to the data request for this report covering the 2023-24 school year).

Table 6. Summary of K–12 distance and/or online learning activity over the past five years

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
NL	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	KS/DA	DA	DA
NS	MoE	MoE/DA	MoE/DA	MoE	MoE	MoE
PE	MoE/KS	KS/DA	KS/DA	MoE	KS/DA	DA
NB	MoE/DA	MoE/DA	MoE/DA	MoE	MoE	MoE
QC	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	KS	MoE/KS	MoE/KS
ON	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS
MB	MoE/DA	MoE/DA	MoE/DA	MoE	MoE	MoE
SK	MoE/KS	MoE/KS	MoE/KS	MoE/KS	MoE/KS	MoE
AB	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	KS/DA	KS/DA	KS/DA
BC	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE	MoE	MoE
YT	KS	MoE/KS/DA	KS/DA	MoE/KS	MoE	MoE
NT	MoE/KS	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/DA	MoE	MoE
NV	KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	MoE/KS/DA	DA	DA	DA
Federal	KS/DA	ISC/KS/DA	ISC/KS	ISC/KS	ISC/KS	ISC

MoE – Ministry of Education; KS – Key stakeholders; DA – Document analysis;
 INAC – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada/ISC – Indigenous Services Canada
Shaded block indicates incomplete data or data from an earlier school year provided

As the researchers have outlined over the past two or three years, generally the response to the survey and suggested updates from their previous year’s profile from Ministry officials must receive approval from Directors and/or Assistant Deputy Ministers, and in some cases even approval from the Deputy Minister and/or the Minister or their political staff. Once all of the appropriate approvals have been received, the Ministries are able to respond. Unfortunately, the delays and extended time frames for data collection continue from the pandemic. An increased workload placed on Ministry officials, working remotely, decreased staffing, additional turnover in personnel responsible for e-learning within the Ministry, and/or increased levels of approval from senior government officials are all factors that have impacted the timeline required to obtain data, whether there is a response at all, and the reliability of the information provided. In fact, it continues to impact the timing of the release of this annual report.

Further complicating data collection is the fact that many governments no longer produce, or release to the public, the same amount of data that was available pre-pandemic. For example, the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education and Early Childhood Development stopped publishing data related to distance learning in their annual *Education Statistics: Elementary-Secondary* report in 2018-19 and stopped reporting it in the *K-12 School Profile System* in 2019-20. At the same time, the reliability of responses from key stakeholders has also diminished. In some cases, this is due to the reality that many of the e-learning contacts that the researchers, and its partner the Canadian eLearning Network (CANeLearn), had built up over the past

17 years have retired. The reality was expedited due to an increase in retirements resulting from the pandemic, coupled with the internal movement of many e-learning leaders into other leadership positions within their school districts and school boards.

The research team has experienced a similar loss of data from the individual program survey, which was introduced as a method of data collection for the fourth annual *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* report in 2011. In that first year, the response rate was reported as 26% of the 242 programs. Five years later the survey response rates were published as a part of the 2016 annual report with 29% of e-learning programs completing the individual program survey. This was followed by 19% in 2017 and 21% in 2018. By the twelfth annual *State of the Nation: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* report in 2019, it was reported that over the past nine years that researchers had received at least one response to the annual individual program survey from 50% of the approximately 270 e-learning programs across Canada. However, an analysis of the past five years indicates a different story (see Table 7).

Table 7. Summary of K–12 distance and/or online learning activity over the past five years

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
NL	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%
NS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PE	-	0%	0%	0%	0%
NB	100%	50%	50%	0%	1%
QC	40%	40%	60%	1%	0.3%
ON	11%	9%	13%	2%	8%
MB	3%	3%	3%	0%	0%
SK	31%	4%	5%	0%	0%
AB	32%	28%	28%	28%	17%
BC	26%	19%	14%	6%	7%
YT	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NT	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NV	-	-	-	-	-
Federal	40%	50%	75%	25%	25%
Overall	21%	15%	16%	3%	2%

From 2011 through to 2020 the annual response rate to the individual program survey ranged from 19% to 29%, with most years seeing a response rate in the low 20% range. Beginning with the first full year of the pandemic (i.e., the 2020-21 school year), the response rate decreased to 15%. Two years later, the response rate plummeted to the low single digits where it has remained. In last year’s report, the researchers offered one possible explanation – an increase in the number of K-12 distance and online learning programs, particularly in Ontario (see Table 8).

Table 8. Number of K-12 distance/or online learning programs per jurisdiction over the past five years

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
NL	1	1	2	2	1	1
NS	2	2	2	2	2	2
PE	0	0	1	1	1	1
NB	2	2	2	2	3	2
QC	5+	6+	7+	44+	82+	89+
ON	~81	~70	~70	248	527	584
MB	~38	~38	~38	~38	~38	~38
SK	14	16	27	36	38	20
AB	33	34	36	46	46	47
BC	74	69	68	71	69	69
YT	2	2	2	2	2	2
NT	1	1	1	1	2	1
02	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal	5	5	4	4	4	4
Total	258	256	269	497	815	860

While there was some increase during the 2020-21 school year in the number of programs in Saskatchewan, the significant increases began in the 2021-22 school year. An increase experienced in Quebec was due to the approval of pilot programs under section 459.3 of the *Loi sur l'instruction publique*. However, in Ontario, the growth from ~70 programs in 2020-21 to 584 programs in 2023-24 represents an overall increase of more than 830%. As the number of public e-learning programs has remained consistent, this 830% growth is due solely to the significant increase in the number of privately operated K-12 e-learning programs.

As the number of programs increased, the rate of response decreased significantly. Interestingly, when the total number of programs almost doubled in the 2021-22 school year, the response rate actually increased by 1% from the previous year. However, when the total number of programs almost doubled again the following year, the response rate declined dramatically. As indicated, almost all of the growth in K-12 distance/or online learning programs was in Ontario, with private or independent online schools seeking to take advantage of offering Ontario graduation credits to international students. It should be noted that while the program survey was sent to the Ministry-registered private schools offering an online learning program (Government of Ontario, 2025), only one Ontario private or independent online school responded. Also, applying to be registered to offer Ontario online graduation credits does not necessarily mean the programs actually registered students, as that data has not been reported. Additionally, the research team did not have access to contact information for the 84 distance learning pilot projects in Quebec. Just these two examples represent almost 68% of the overall potential sample.

3.2 Policy and Funding Implications

The influence of policy and funding changes over the past two decades on e-learning programs and their enrollment has been significant. For example, in British Columbia, one of the most regulated jurisdictions in Canada, enrollment in e-learning programs doubled between 2007 and 2010 – after a 2006 policy change removed restrictions limiting the number of funded distributed learning programs (Winkelmans et al., 2010). British Columbia was also the only Canadian jurisdiction to implement a formal allocation and funding for

e-learning support at the local school level (Winkelmans, 2011). The funding was designed to be used to offset the cost of providing a teacher to provide local support to the e-learning students and likely was the reason the estimated e-learning enrollment increased by 2.5% to 13.5% student engagement in the 2020-2011 school year, dropping back to 12% the following two school years after the funding ceased. Similarly in Alberta, the provincial online learning provider (i.e., the Alberta Distance Learning Centre) was closed at the end of the 2020-21 school year (Edwardson, 2020). At the time the closure was announced, reported enrollment was at its highest in the province (see vignette entitled “Funding Model for Online Learning” in the 2022 report). Subsequently, to its closure, Alberta Education has made several changes to the funding of distance education, which have created confusion for program leaders that has resulted in uncertainty regarding the funding of students. This confusion likely led to the reported decline in online program enrollment that the *State of the Nation: K-12 e-Learning in Canada* has reported in recent years.

In 2019, Ontario became the only jurisdiction in Canada to require e-learning credits for graduation. While the existing model of e-learning includes highly centralized components, it also features a decentralized model of delivery by individual e-learning programs (Barbour & LaBonte, 2017). Accordingly, the implementation of mandatory online learning has led to an increased role for board-based e-learning programs, the Independent Learning Centre, and also set in motion a significant increase in private online schools. After first announcing four required online learning credits, Ontario began implementing the reduced requirement for students to take two online credits to graduate from secondary school, beginning with students graduating in 2023-24 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022). Prior to the mandatory e-learning announcement, there were approximately 65,000 students, or 5% of secondary students, enrolled in an e-learning course in Ontario (Barbour & LaBonte, 2018; Kapoor, 2019). In the 2023-24 school year, there was an eight percent increase in e-learning enrollment, and the number of students involved in one or more e-learning programs jumped from five to over seven percent of the student population in the province (Barbour & LaBonte, 2023). It is important to note that the most recent data the Ministry of Education was able to provide was from the 2021-22 school year (even though that data was received in October 2024), which raises questions related to the first cohort of students held to the online learning requirement who graduated in June 2024 (Procter, 2022).

Finally, recent policy and funding changes, suspended during the pandemic and reinitiated in many jurisdictions (e.g., British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Québec), impacted both district-based and provincial programs. For example, in British Columbia, the implementation of delayed 2019 policy changes for designated Provincial Online Learning Schools and District Online Learning Schools began implementation in the 2022-23 school year. In 2011 Alberta closed its provincial distance learning program, consequently changing its funding policies for e-learning, while in December 2022 one of the larger Saskatchewan district-based programs was designated a Crown Corporation with the responsibility to deliver K-12 online learning provincially. In Ontario, the implementation of mandatory online learning continues and will likely lead to increased enrollment and participation of students. However, due to the delay in certifying data that information has not been made available to the researchers yet. Finally, in Quebec, legislation regarding the primary role of the classroom, with the online environment only being supplemental if required, combined with a series of court cases, continues to discourage online activity.

3.3 Impact of Pandemic Pedagogy

In reflecting on the past five years in K-12 e-learning (i.e., distance, online, and blended learning), several observations can be made, many in the context of the pandemic and the remote learning responses of most school boards and education jurisdictions. The first was the emergence of emergency remote teaching, later dubbed remote learning, where traditional face-to-face classroom pedagogy was quickly transferred to a digital environment. The emergence of “Zoom School” where teachers broadcast lessons and students sat at screens to receive them as they would sitting in their desks in the classroom (Fox, 2021; Stewart, 2021; Wong, 2021), had no relationship to the pedagogy and instructional practices of e-learning programs.

During the pandemic, labelling of the teaching methods used as online learning became highly problematic as the term became a politicized one that with several meanings depending on the argument advanced. This was evidenced during the public discourse that occurred around the government’s e-learning proposals in Ontario throughout 2019 (see Barbour & LaBonte, 2019), which illustrated that online learning carries a stigma of being lower quality than face-to-face learning – despite research showing otherwise (Chingos & Schwerdt, 2014; Hughes et al., 2015; Means et al. 2010; Stallings et al., 2016). Researchers in online and distance learning carefully defined terms to distinguish between the highly variable design solutions that have been developed and implemented: distance learning, distributed learning, blended learning, online learning, mobile learning, and others (Barbour & LaBonte, 2015; Irvine, 2020), leading to the term “remote learning” being adopted to describe the pedagogy of the pandemic. Of particular note, during the pandemic, most jurisdictions ignored existing e-learning programs, the educators involved in them, and their existing knowledge and experience. Remote learning and e-learning programs co-existed in most jurisdictions, with mainstream educators independently reinventing teaching practices and selecting technologies. While some e-learning programs had a spike in their enrollment, many jurisdictions reported little increase in e-learning enrollments during the pandemic (i.e., 2020-21 to 2022-23 school years).

Many educators were unprepared and untrained for the use of technologies required for remote learning. Most found the application of traditional classroom practices did not transfer well to digital environments, particularly with students at a distance (LaBonte et al., 2022). The lack of impetus to build the required pedagogical and technical skills of teachers in post-secondary programs was, and continues to be, lacking after the initial scramble to respond. The “Pandemic Pedagogy Series” reports by CANeLearn offered recommendations for how schools could be better prepared for future crises that incorporate both home-based and school-based learning opportunities mediated through online learning environments. Additionally, there is a strong need to pursue this line of inquiry through continuing research beyond the confines of the seven reports in the series. The summary report argued that more planning and deliberate attention must be provided to teacher preparation, infrastructure, education policy, and resources to be able to maintain quality instructional continuity in preparation for future crises and the expanding use of technologies and digital learning environments.

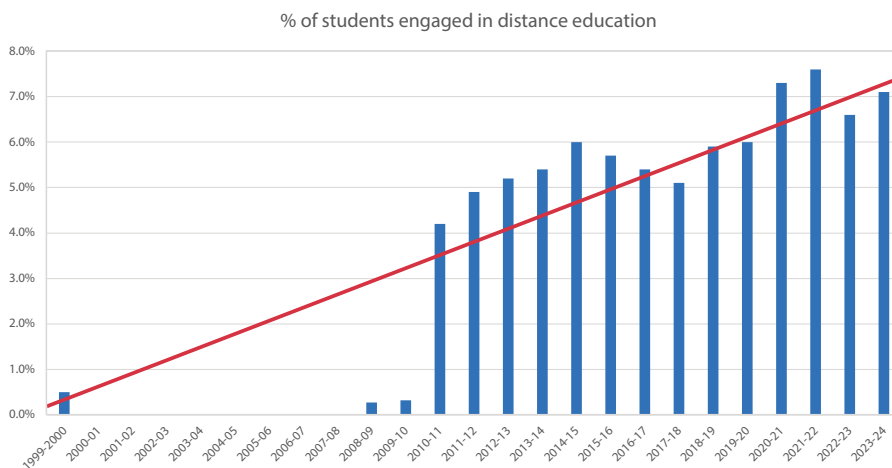
Interestingly, the exposure to digital learning technologies with students at a distance from mainstream teachers did not lead to changes in online learning programs or policy/funding, which continued to operate much as before the pandemic. The same could be said for classroom teaching practices. As noted, the policy and legislative changes suspended during the pandemic were reinitiated with few, if any, changes. Traditional classroom instructional practices returned and the experiences of remote learning, at best, may have influenced an increase in blended learning. However, the researchers have no data to support that contention. In essence, the education system in Canada returned to its status quo, the experiences borne from remote learning having little impact.

3.4 Level of Participation in e-Learning

Enrollments in e-learning programs over the past five years have remained relatively consistent in their growth. Western Canada’s involvement remained at the highest level, with roughly ten to eleven percent of the student population involved. British Columbia saw consistent growth in enrollment over the past five years. However, Alberta’s reported enrollment peaked in the 2020-2021 school year with 97,527 students, dropping to approximately 80,000 students in the 2023-2024 school year. Saskatchewan reported little change in enrollment, remaining at 8% involvement of students in the province. Yukon reported greater enrollment in e-learning than the other two territories, featuring both a Ministry-run distance learning program and a Ministry-supported blended learning program.

Figure 3 provides a graph of estimated enrollment in e-learning programs since the first calculation by the Canadian Teachers Federation (2000) and the subsequent annual data reported in State of the Nation publications that began in 2009. As policy and funding changes shifted over the past 15 years, variations in the overall estimated percentage of students engaged in some form of distance education varied each year. However, the red line in Figure 3 provides a visual estimate of the continued growth in e-learning program enrollment, suggesting an annual growth rate of approximately 0.33%. It should be noted that estimates for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years were likely inflated with remote learning data included in Ministry-reported enrollments.

Figure 3. Summary of K-12 distance and/or online learning enrollment



Interestingly, most of the jurisdictions where there had only been a small number of students engaged in K-12 distance and online learning prior to the pandemic experienced very little pandemic effect. One of the reasons may be due to the fact that these provinces and territories had small enough school systems that they were able to manage K-12 remote learning options with a heavy reliance on their traditional K-12 distance and online learning programs. Another may be that due to their generally small numbers of students engaged in K-12 distance and online learning, the proportional impact on their level of participation is often hidden. A 1% change in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick would only require 1,000 students, whereas a 1% change in Ontario, Alberta or British Columbia would require a change of 6,000-8,000 students. As with previous years, many of the trends in the participation by jurisdiction data are even more noticeable when the proportion of students engaged in K-12 distance and/or online learning is examined (see Table 9).

Table 9. Summary of K-12 distance and/or online learning activity over the past five years

% students engaged in distance and/or online learning					
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
NL	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
NS	1.8%	2.7%	2.1%	1.7%	2.2%
PE	0.7%	0.8%	1.3%	0.8%	1.0%
NB	3.5%	4.8%	5.2%	5.3%	5.9%
QC	3.5%	3.9%	5.5%	4.4%	4.3%
ON	4.8%	5.9%	6.8%	6.4%	7.3%
MB	6.6%	4.4%	3.9%	3.2%	2.9%
SK	6.7%	12.2%	10.3%	8.2%	8.0%
AB	11.2%	13.3%	12.5%	10.0%	10.4%
BC	10.8%	12.6%	11.1%	10.1%	10.9%
YT	4.2%	7.1%	4.6%	5.3%	6.2%
NT	1.5%	1.1%	1.4%	2.0%	2.0%
NV	0.2%	0.1%	-	-	-
Federal	2.0%	2.8%	3.2%	3.0%	3.4%
Total	6.0%	7.3%	7.6%	6.6%	7.1%

In examining the data from a pre-pandemic to post-pandemic perspective, the proportion of students engaged in K-12 distance and/or online learning in Atlantic Canada was about the same – with the exception of New Brunswick, which experienced almost a 2% increase. Similarly, Ontario experienced an almost 2% increase that has continued due to the new graduation requirement. Conversely, in Western Canada both Manitoba and Alberta experienced declines, whereas British Columbia has returned to historic pre-pandemic levels. In fact, Saskatchewan was the only Western jurisdiction that experienced an increase. The jurisdictions in Northern Canada that did provide data both experienced increases too, with Yukon increasing by 2% and the North West Territories increasing by 0.5%.

Of note, Ontario reported an eight percent increase in e-learning enrollment after mandatory e-learning was initiated. It is worth noting that Ontario is the only Canadian jurisdiction with this policy. Prior to the mandatory e-learning announcement, approximately 5% of secondary students enrolled in an e-learning course in Ontario, in the 2023-24 school year, there was an eight percent increase in e-learning enrollment with over seven percent of the student population involved in one or more e-learning programs. However, it is difficult to estimate the full impact of the policy given the latest enrollment data reported by the Ministry of Education is from 2021-22 school year.

4. Jurisdictional Summaries

The following sub-sections contain a summary of the revisions to the profiles for each province, territory, and federal jurisdiction. These summaries focus specifically on highlighting any changes to the governance and regulation that exists in that jurisdiction, as well as providing updated levels of activity for distance, online, and blended learning (and, when appropriate, remote learning).

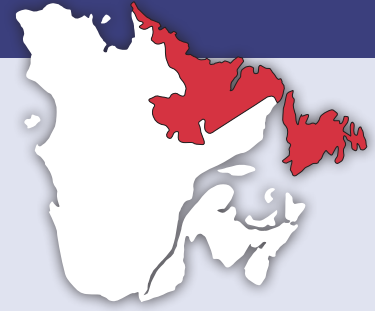
The project website contains a full jurisdictional profile that is organized in the following manner:

- a discussion of the various legislative and regulatory documents that govern how these distance, online and blended learning programs operate;
- a description of the distance, online and blended learning programs operating in that jurisdiction;
- if necessary, a summary of the jurisdiction's remote learning response during the 2022–23 school year;
- links to previous annual profiles;
- an exploration of the history of e-learning in that jurisdiction;
- links to vignettes (i.e., stories designed to provide a more personalized perspective of those involved in K–12 e-learning) for that jurisdiction;
- links to any brief issues papers (i.e., more detailed discussions of specific issues related to the design, delivery and support of K–12 e-learning) in that jurisdiction;
- the most recent responses to the individual program survey; and
- an overview of the jurisdiction's policies related to the provision of e-learning in and to other jurisdictions.

The full profiles for each of these jurisdictions can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/data/>

4.1 Newfoundland and Labrador (NL)

525,972	Population
252	Number of K–12 Schools
63,805	Number of K–12 Students
1	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~950	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

The research team did not receive a response for the third year in a row from officials in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to our repeated requests for information.

At present, the government website indicates that:

Distance education is delivered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI). Its mandate includes the development and delivery of senior high school distance education programming, development and delivery of online teacher professional development, and oversight of K-12 technology integration initiatives. CDLI currently offers 38 courses to students attending 103 schools, primarily located in rural, remote and isolated communities across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2023)

Although this information has not changed over the past three years.

Until 2018-19, the Department would report distance education enrollment as a part of its annual *Education Statistics: Elementary-Secondary* publication. However, this has not been the practice in most recent school years. Historically, approximately 1.5% of students in the province have participated in distance education courses.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/nl/>

4.2 Nova Scotia (NS)

1,058,694	Population
370	Number of K–12 Schools
133,531	Number of K–12 Students
2	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
2,974	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no significant regulatory changes in the province of Nova Scotia.

In addition to the Nova Scotia Virtual School, the province launched the new Nova Scotia Independent Online Learning program (which replaced the old Correspondence Studies Program) during the 2023-24 school year. Based on figures provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, during the 2023-24 school year there were approximately 2,464 students enrolled in offerings from the Nova Scotia Virtual School, and over 500 students enrolled in the new Nova Scotia Independent Online Learning program.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/ns/>

4.3 Prince Edward Island (PE)

159,249	Population
63	Number of K–12 Schools
20,131	Number of K–12 Students
1	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~200	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

The research team did not receive a response for the second year in a row from officials in the Government of Prince Edward Island to our repeated requests for information.

As the research team did not receive a response from the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, participation in the new virtual school pilot program for the 2023-24 school year is unknown. The most recent response received indicated that there were approximately 40 students enrolled during the 2021-22 school year.

Finally, students also continued to enroll in programs offered from New Brunswick. Based on figures provided by the New Brunswick Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture, during the 2023-24 school year there were approximately 154 students enrolled in either the English-language or French-language distance education programs.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/pe/>

4.4 New Brunswick (NB)

781,024	Population
302	Number of K–12 Schools
102,934	Number of K–12 Students
2	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
6,087	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no regulatory changes in the management of distance learning in province of New Brunswick.

Based on figures provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, during the 2023-24 school year there were approximately 3,200 regular students enrolled in the Anglophone program, while there 1,918 students enrolled in the Francophone program. Additionally, the Anglophone program offered a free online summer program that allowed 800 interested high school students and recent graduates the opportunity to take one or more courses, while the Francophone program offered four mathematics courses led by four teachers during the summer session to enable 91 students to complete a course, repeat a failed course or change their change course or get ahead with their credit count.

In terms of blended learning, the Ministry tracks the number of courses requested by teachers, but it does not track the number of students enrolled in those courses. During the 2023-24 school year there were requests to create 1189 blended courses in the learning management system from a total of 717 individual teachers, which included 412 blank courses and 777 courses that were populated with content from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, which suggested that teachers were more interested in using the existing content as opposed to developing their own content. The majority of teachers requested a single course, which the Department indicated was a sign that the teacher was teaching something new to them.

One development during the 2023-24 school year was a second instance of the learning management system was setup with the goal of migrating courses for educator professional learning. This was intended to better optimize the New Brunswick Virtual Learning Centre (NBVLC) environment for student use. The new Professional Learning (PL) Hub hosted courses for teachers, early childhood educators and other professional learning uses. For ease of management, teacher versions of student facing courses remained accessible as “Teacher Resource Courses” in the NBVLC learning management system.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/nb/>

4.5 Quebec (QC)

9,056,044	Population
2,767	Number of K–12 Schools
1,157,761	Number of K–12 Students
89+	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~50,000+	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no regulatory changes in the province of Quebec. Although on December 7, 2023, the *Projet de loi n° 23, Loi modifiant principalement la Loi sur l’instruction publique et édictant la Loi sur l’Institut national d’excellence en éducation* was adopted, which made distance education services possible, by regulation, in two contexts: (1) exceptional or unforeseeable situations and (2) special home or hospital teaching services.

During the 2023-24 school year there were 84 distance learning pilot projects, spread over 61 educational establishments and organizations, involving 3,012 students. The approved pilot projects focused on (a) students who were involved in athletics, (b) hospitalized or convalescing students, or (c) to offer other school subject that did not fit into the student’s schedule.

During the 2023-24 school year there were 97 students enrolled in online learning offered by LEARN and an estimated 40,000 or more students accessed LEARN’s tutorial content for the purposes of blended learning. The most recent data from the Société de formation à distance (SOFAD), which is three years old, when there were more than 38,000 pupils representing over 85,000 enrollments. Finally, there was no enrollment data was provided by either the Quebec Online School or the *Centre d’apprentissage en ligne de la CSSBE* (operated by the Beauce-Etchemin School Board).

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/qc>

4.6 Ontario (ON)

15,109,416	Population
4,835	Number of K–12 Schools
2,054,336	Number of K–12 Students
584	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~150,000	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no significant regulatory changes in the province of Ontario. Interestingly, the Ministry of Education's response to this year's survey updated the language used from e-learning to online learning.

The requirement that Ontario students take two online credits to graduate from secondary school beginning with students graduating in the 2023-24 school year came into effect (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022). It is important to note that the most recent data the Ministry of Education was able to provide was from the 2021-22 school year (even though that data was received in October 2024), which raises questions related to the first cohort of students held to the online learning requirement who graduated in June 2024.

During the 2021-22 school year (the most recent school year for which data are available), approximately 106,000 students participated in online learning programs offered by one of the 60 English-language and 12 French-language publicly-funded school boards. Additionally, the most recent data from TVO's Independent Learning Centre was that more than 22,000 students were enrolled in distance courses (although that data was from the 2020-21 school year). Finally, during the 2021-22 school year 511 private schools offered online learning, 70 of which were fully online. Approximately 34,645 online learning credits were earned by students through these private online schools.

Finally, the Ministry does not track the wide variety of digital tools that may be used to support blended learning being provided in Ontario schools. However, the Ministry was able to report that there were 1,172,742 unique student logins in the provincial learning management system from either classroom-based or online students during the 2023-24 school year.

Remote Learning

Effective with the 2023-24 school year, school boards offered remote learning instruction directly, partnered with another school board to provide remote learning instruction on their behalf, or worked with other school boards to deliver remote learning collaboratively. While the ministry is responsible for developing policy, the implementation of policy, allocation of funding and the delivery of education programs and services to students is the responsibility of district school boards and local schools. This gives boards and schools the flexibility to make decisions about program delivery to best serve their students.

For the 2023-24 school year, the ministry provided school boards with \$10.1 million through the annual Grants for Students fund to help school boards with remote learning enrollment and support the cost of salary and benefits of administrative staff (i.e., principal, vice-principal, school office support, information technology). In addition, within the 2023-24 Grants for Student Needs, there was over \$497 million in projected funding, largely through the Pupil Foundation Grant, for resources such as student technological devices, textbooks and learning materials, classroom supplies, classroom computers, and educational software.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/on/>

4.7 Manitoba (MB)

1,465,440	Population
832	Number of K–12 Schools
214,132	Number of K–12 Students
~38	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~6,300	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

Following a significant period of examination of both the K-12 education system as a whole and distance and online learning options the province announced a process to develop a provincial remote learning strategy. The Government of Manitoba defines remote learning as:

synchronous and/or asynchronous learning, and includes a variety of formats and delivery methods, such as online learning, video calls, phone calls, and hard-copy packages. (Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, 2023, p. 24)

However, a recent provincial election resulted in a change of government, and the development of this strategy has been put on hold.

During the 2023-24 school year there were two province-wide distance learning programs: InformNet and the Ministry's Teacher Mediated Option. These programs provided remote learning to approximately 3,300 students. There was also an additional approximately 2,940 students participating in distance/remote learning at their local school or school division through the provincial learning management system.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/mb/>

4.8 Saskatchewan (SK)

1,209,107	Population
755	Number of K–12 Schools
195,582	Number of K–12 Students
20	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
15,581	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no regulatory changes in the province of Saskatchewan.

As of 2023-24, there were 15 provincial schools in eight school divisions, one provincial school operated by the Saskatchewan Distance Learning Centre (SKDLC) as a Crown Corporation (which provides two offerings: a regular school year and a summer school), two independent schools, and four First Nation schools categorized as having online learning schools offering Prekindergarten to Grade 12 learning courses to Saskatchewan students. There were 15,581 unique students involved in K-12 distance education or online learning programs.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/sk/>

4.9 Alberta (AB)

4,543,111	Population
2,518	Number of K–12 Schools
766,280	Number of K–12 Students
47	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~80,000	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

The research team did not receive a response for the third year in a row from officials in the Government of Alberta to our repeated requests for information.

There were no known regulatory changes to distance and/or online learning during the 2023-24 school year.

At present, Alberta Education (2024) lists 47 different distance and/or online learning programs as a part of their website directory. Historically, approximately 10% to 12% of students in the province have participated in distance and/or online learning courses. As such, a conservative estimate suggests that approximately 80,000 were engaged in distance and/or online learning during the 2023-24 school year.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/ab/>

4.10 British Columbia (BC)

5,519,013	Population
1,938	Number of K–12 Schools
696,422	Number of K–12 Students
69	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
75,823	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

The 2023-24 school year was the first year of the ministerial agreements and provincial online learning schools. Following an expression of interest process, 21 public online learning schools operated by 18 boards and 16 independent online learning schools operated by 16 independent school authorities were selected by a review panel. The Ministry and provincial online learning schools continued their collaborative approach to prepare for a successful implementation of the *Accountability and Quality Assurance Framework and Process* in the 2024-25 school year. The *Online Learning BC* website launched in 2023 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2023). Finally, online learning schools without Ministerial agreements are now district online learning schools, which serve students residing within their district boundaries..

In 2023-24 there were a total of 69 online learning schools comprised of 21 public provincial online learning schools, 16 independent provincial online learning schools, and 32 district online learning schools that enrolled approximately 75,832 unique students in one or more courses. Finally, the Ministry of Education does not gather formal data on blended learning programs.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/bc/>

4.11 Yukon (YT)

43,744	Population
33	Number of K–12 Schools
5,960	Number of K–12 Students
2	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
367	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no regulatory changes in the Yukon territory.

Aurora Virtual School is the only English-language online school in the territory and during the 2023-24 school year it enrolled a total of 367 students (i.e., 83 full-time and 284 supplemental). There was no data provided related to the only French-language online program, École Nomade. Additionally, there was no reference to distance learning enrollment in programs from British Columbia. Finally, there were approximately 526 students and 100 teaching staff engaged in K-12 blended learning.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/yk/>

4.12 Northwest Territories (NT)

45,605	Population
49	Number of K–12 Schools
8,700	Number of K–12 Students
1	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
172	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

There have been no regulatory changes in the Northwest Territories.

During the 2022-23 school year 90 students were enrolled in Northern Distance Learning. Additionally, there were approximately 82 students enrolled in distance learning courses offered through the Vista Virtual School in Alberta.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/nt/>

4.13 Nunavut (NV)

39,407	Population
45	Number of K–12 Schools
10,902	Number of K–12 Students
0	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
Unknown	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



e-Learning Updates

The research team did not receive a response for the third year in a row from officials in the Government of Nunavut to our repeated requests for information.

There were no changes in the regulatory framework for Nunavut. However, the Minister of Education issued an *Operational Directive: Kindergarten-12 Distance Learning* on May 29, 2023 indicating that the Vista Virtual School and the Centre francophone d'éducation à distance were currently the two authorized distance learning providers.

As the Department of Education failed to provide an update for 2023-24, the level of K-12 distance, online, and blended learning in the territory is unknown.

The full provincial profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/nv/>

4.14 Federal

1,807,250 ¹	Population
524 ²	Number of K–12 Schools
~117,940 ²	Number of K–12 Students
4	Number of K–12 E-Learning Programs
~4,000	Number of K–12 E-Learning Students



1 2021 Census data from Statistics Canada

2 refers to those reporting a 2023–24 nominal roll directly to ISC

e-Learning Updates

There were no changes in the regulatory framework for schools that fall under the federal jurisdiction of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Under the Education Transformation and to reflect the Principle of First Nation Control of First Nation Education, ISC respects that the sharing of data is a First Nation decision and, as a result, has not provided program level data since the 2016-17 school year.

At present, four Indigenous e-learning programs have been identified: Keewatinook Internet High School and Wahsa Distance Education Centre (Ontario), Wapaskwa Virtual Collegiate (Manitoba), and SCcyber E-learning Community (Alberta). It is estimated that there were approximately 4,000 students engaged in distance and online learning during the 2023-24 school year. Given ISC no longer provides data on blended learning indicators, there is no estimate of the approximate number of students engaged in blended learning.

The full federal profile can be found at <https://k12sotn.ca/fnmi/>

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6. Call for Sponsors – 2025 State of the Nation: K–12 E-Learning in Canada Study

The 2025 version of the *State of the Nation Study: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* study will represent the eighteenth annual report produced by this research initiative. During that time we have provided annual update of the K-12 policy and activity reports for each of the provinces, territories, and those programs under federal jurisdiction. We have also published numerous brief issue papers on topics of interest to the field within Canada, and vignettes from a variety of K-12 e-learning programs across the different provinces and territories. We have collected annual data from individual programs in each jurisdiction through an annual survey. Finally, we have ensured that recent reports and website updates are available in both English and French.

As this time we are seeking funding for the 2025 K-12 e-learning study of Canada. If your organization is interested in participating through sponsorship by supporting the eighteenth anniversary edition of the *State of the Nation Study: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* report, please contact Michael Barbour, principal investigator at mkbarbour@gmail.com.

Your participation as a sponsor helps support more widespread participation from online and blended programs across the country in the K-12 e-learning in Canada project and is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate your organization's interest in, and commitment to, supporting online and blended learning. Your company or organization will be recognized for its support of virtual schools seeking to effectively expand educational options for K-12 students across Canada.

Please review the sponsor benefits and opportunities for the *State of the Nation: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* study:

- Recognition in all post-study press releases, presentations and distribution of information;
- Opportunity to provide input into the program survey;
- Participate in project conference calls;
- Project sponsor name and logo listed on all promotional materials;
- Project sponsor name and logo listed on the final report;
- Receive hard copies of the final report;
- Receive Executive Summary of the final report for use on company website and for marketing purposes; and
- Receive recognition as a leader for cutting-edge research of K-12 e-learning in Canada for sponsoring the research study.

Additionally, for the sixteen annual report we are looking for sponsors who are interested in imagining a future for this annual study – a future that may share features of the existing study and report, but a future that could also look quite different. Looking ahead, given what we know and have learned over the years from the annual *State of the Nation: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* report, what would you like to have more information about, more examples to follow, more data to use to provide for the future of e-learning within your organization?

For-profit and non-profit institutions, organizations, individuals, foundations and companies are welcome to partner with the *State of the Nation: K-12 E-Learning in Canada* research team for sponsoring the study. Please consider sponsorship of this important survey and report to be conducted annually. Your consideration is deeply appreciated.

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