



Canadian Education

- Controlled at the provincial level (i.e., no federal Department of Education)
- Funding comes from the provincial government
 - hires teachers directly
 - every school receives the same basic per-student funding based upon enrollment
- Several provinces have both a government-funded public & Catholic school systems

Canadian Education

Province / territory	Kindergarten	Elementary / Primary	Junior High / Middle School / Intermediate	Senior High / Secondary
Newfoundland and Labrador	1 year	Primary (1-3) & Elementary (4-6)	7-9	10-12
Nova Scotia	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12
Prince Edward Island		1-6	7-9	10-12
New Brunswick	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12
Quebec	2 years	1-6		7-11*
Ontario	2 years	1-8		9-12
Manitoba	2 years	1-8		9-12
Saskatchewan	1 year	1-5	6-9	10-12
Alberta	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12
British Columbia	1 year	1-7		8-12
Yukon Territory	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12
Northwest Territories	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12
Nunavut Territory	1 year	1-6	7-9	10-12

* Then students attend two to three years of *Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel*

History of K-12 Distance Education in Canada

- Correspondence education began in British Columbia in 1919
- Distance education used primarily in rural areas and was primarily managed by the provincial governments
- First virtual school appeared in 1993 in British Columbia
- Followed by Ontario, Manitoba & Alberta in 1994-95
 - all primarily district-based programs

K-12 Online Learning in Canada Today

- Some form of activity in every province
- Few government regulations or guidelines
- Alberta & British Columbia are most extensive users
- Two of the largest school districts in Canada both have online learning programs

National Overview

- No or little online learning activity
- Single provincial online learning programme
- Limited district-based online learning programmes
- Provincial online learning programme with limited district programmes
- Provincial online learning programme with significant district-based & private programmes
- Use district-based online learning programmes from other provinces

Newfoundland and Labrador



- Online learning began in mid-1990s
- Single province-wide programme
 - came from models developed in earlier district programmes
- Initial focus on rural students
- No specific policies for online learning, but provincial programme is housed within MOE

Nova Scotia



- Online learning began in 2003
- Couple district-based programmes and a provincial wide pilot programme
- Initial focus on specialized subject areas (e.g., French as a second language)
- No specific policies for online learning, but provincial programme is housed within MOE

Prince Edward Island



- No real online learning activity
- MOE website links to private online training school that focuses on business and technology courses
- MOE has issued two directives since 2001 containing guidelines for the use of distance education in K-12 environment

New Brunswick



- Online learning began in 1998
- Single province-wide programme
 - grew from a single course to over 40 courses
- Initial focus on technology, then all grade 11 and 12, & other optional & advanced courses
 - used frequently by face-to-face teachers too
- No specific policies for online learning, but provincial programme is housed within MOE

Quebec



- MOE does not handle distance education anymore
 - handed responsibilities off to *Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec* (SOFAD)
- SOFAD develops and produces content
 - approximately 200 courses, only a small percentage are online
- Three English and 37 French school boards manage their own programmes

Ontario



- Online learning began in 1994
- Primarily district-based programmes using the provincial CMS and course content
 - some private school activity
- Online learning not officially recognized by MOE – masked within brick-and-mortar system

Manitoba



- Province offers three forms of distance education
 - MOE manages correspondence and audio teleconference systems
 - districts manage their own web-based programme using MOE content
- All districts appear to participate in web-based option to some extent

Saskatchewan



- Province provides two options:
 - substantial TSL course offerings, which are largely correspondence, is being phased out at the end of this year
 - smaller number of ITV offerings
- Several school districts have begun their own web-based programmes
 - first ones beginning in late 1990s, early 2000s
 - these programmes have formed SK Distance Learning Course Repository

Alberta



- Online learning began in 1994-95
- Numerous district-based, several private, and a province-wide programme
- MOE has no specific online learning policies (simply advises school-based programs to consider how they will treat online learning)

British Columbia



- First online learning programmes (1993)
- Substantial public and private activity
- MOE uses term distributed learning
 - refers to all forms of K-12 distance education, much of which is still not online
- Only province where MOE has concrete separate policies for distance education

Yukon



- Utilizes programmes from British Columbia
- MOE active in this provincial-territorial agreement
- Involved 141 students in 51 different courses in 2006-07 (less than 5000 K-12 students in territory)

Northwest Territories



- Utilizes programmes from Alberta
- MOE active in this provincial-territorial agreement
- Involved 179 students in 38 different courses from 18 different schools in 2007-08 (approximately 10,000 K-12 students in territory)

Nunavut



- Utilizes programmes from Alberta
- No additional information provided in public venues

Challenges Remaining

- Few studies of K-12 online learning in Canada
 - primarily focused in Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta and British Columbia
- Little in the way of specific policies that govern K-12 online learning
- More in-depth understanding of specific policies and activities for K-12 online learning in each of the provinces

Your
Questions
and
Comments



Michael K. Barbour

Assistant Professor
Wayne State University, USA
mkbarbour@gmail.com
<http://www.michaelbarbour.com>