

School Choice in Canada

This is a brief cross-country summary of fully- and/or partially-funded public and private school offerings, along with funding for homeschools where appropriate. It is by no means a comprehensive list, and readers should check with the ministry of education in the province where they live for more specific details.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- Conventional Public Schools:
 - Open to all
 - Schools can include many alternative-themed schools depending on the offerings in individual school districts

- Private Schools:
 - Partial funding of private schools, including Catholic and other religious schools
 - While educating 11% of all students enrolled in BC elementary secondary schools, private schools receive only 5% of the grants that the provincial budget allocates towards the operating costs of schools. The maximum grant to an independent school is one-half the per-pupil grant to a public school.
 - Private schools receive no grants for the cost of providing land, buildings, and equipment.

- Homeschools:
 - \$250 per homeschooled child if registered with a public school district

- Public Francophone Schools:
 - To be eligible for the Francophone program, the parent or guardian must meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - ❖ His or her first language is French and he or she still understands it
 - ❖ He or she received his or her primary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - ❖ One of his or her children received primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - ❖ He or she has a child who is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)

- Distance learning

ALBERTA

- Conventional Public Schools:
 - Open to all
 - Schools can include many alternative schools within the public system, including some with a religious, language, or academic focus.
- Public Catholic Schools:
 - Open to all non-Catholic and/or non-residents of the district depending on space
 - Open to resident students who are baptized Catholics or have at least one parent who is a baptized Catholic or have been placed in a foster home under the authority of the Child welfare Act where the foster parent is a resident of the Catholic district
 - May include alternative schools or programs, varying by board – for example, French immersion
- Public Francophone Schools:
 - To be eligible for the Francophone program, the parent or guardian must meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - ❖ His or her first language is French and he or she still understands it
 - ❖ He or she received his or her primary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - ❖ One of his or her children received primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - ❖ He or she has a child who is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - May include other alternative schools or programs varying according to the school board, e.g. French immersion
- Accredited Private Schools:
 - Government support is 60% of the base instruction rate for school jurisdictions for all Level 1 funded private schools and 70% of applicable per student grants for Level 2 funded private schools, plus other specific funding grants
- Charter Schools:
 - Open to all, depending on focus of school and location
- Homeschools:
 - 16% of basic per-pupil amount funded directly to parent
 - Open to all, but must register with a local school district
- Distance Learning

SASKATCHEWAN

- Conventional Public Schools:
 - Open to all
- Public Catholic Schools and a Few Protestant Schools:
 - Open to all
- Public Francophone Schools:
 - Open to children of Canadian citizens and landed immigrants:
 - ❖ whose first language learned and still understood is French OR;
 - ❖ who received instruction at the elementary level in French in Canada OR
 - ❖ who have a child who has received or is receiving instruction at the elementary or secondary level in French in Canada
- Private Schools Deemed “Historic”:
 - Receive basic per-pupil grant
 - Open to all but can discriminate on the basis of the nature of the school
- Homeschools:
 - Access to some services and learning materials
 - Must apply to local school authority for permission

MANITOBA

- Conventional Public Schools:
 - Includes Francophone schools and French immersion schools
 - Schools enroll students in the following order of priority:
 - ❖ students designated to attend that school,
 - ❖ students residing in the school division, and
 - ❖ other Manitoba students.
 - A school will enroll a student unless:
 - ❖ no space is available,
 - ❖ special equipment or physical facilities required by the student are not available,
 - ❖ enrolling the student would be detrimental to the continuity of his or her education,
 - ❖ the program is not suited to the age, ability, or aptitude of the student,
 - ❖ enrolling the student would be detrimental to the order, discipline and well-being of the students in the school, or
 - ❖ proper notification has not been provided by the parent or student.

- Private Schools, Including Catholic, Jewish, and Other Religious Schools:
 - Funded to 50% of net operating grant of regular public schools
- Homeschools:
 - Open to all, no permission required

ONTARIO

- Conventional Public Schools:
 - Open to all
 - Each board may offer alternative schools or programs which vary widely
- Public Catholic Schools:
 - Open to all non-Catholic and/or non-residents of district depending on space; otherwise a resident student must be a baptized Catholic or have at least one parent who is a baptized Catholic, or has been placed in a foster home under the authority of the Child Welfare Act where the foster parent is a resident of the school district
- Public Francophone Schools:
 - To be eligible for the Francophone program, the parent or guardian must meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - ❖ His or her first language is French and he or she still understands it
 - ❖ He or she received his or her primary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion).
 - ❖ One of his or her children has received primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - ❖ He or she has a child who is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in French (excluding French immersion)
 - May include other alternative schools or programs varying according to the school board, e.g. French immersion
- Francophone Catholic Public Schools:
 - Same language requirements as above, plus religious requirements
- Homeschools:
 - Open to all, no permission required
- Distance learning

QUEBEC

- Francophone Public Schools:
 - All students must attend the local French-language public school except for students who qualify for one of the special exemptions described below. In either school system, parents may choose elementary school religious education through one of the following three subjects—Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.

- Anglophone Public Schools:
 - These are the most common situations that allow a child to receive instruction in English.
 - ❖ Children who are permanent residents of Quebec and who qualify for a certificate of eligibility for instruction in English
 - ❖ Children who are permanent residents of Quebec and who are entitled to receive instruction in English under a special authorization
 - ❖ Children who are living in Quebec temporarily and who qualify for a temporary authorization to receive instruction in English
 - A certificate of eligibility is generally delivered to children
 - ❖ Who did most of their elementary or secondary studies in English in Canada OR
 - ❖ Whose brother or sister did most of his or her elementary studies in English in Canada OR
 - ❖ Whose father or mother did most of his or her elementary studies in English in Canada OR
 - ❖ Whose father or mother attended school in Quebec after August 26, 1977 and could have been declared eligible for instruction in English at that time
 - ❖ In the first two cases, the father or mother of the child must be a Canadian citizen. In the third case, the father or mother must be a Canadian citizen unless he or she did his or her studies in Quebec.

- Accredited Private Schools:
 - Receive about 40% of public school grants

NEW BRUNSWICK

- Public Schools:
 - The public secular school system is divided into Francophone and Anglophone sectors.
 - The students must be proficient in the language of instruction.
 - The students must attend their local school unless the district superintendent grants permission to attend a different school.

- Homeschools:
 - Permitted with annual application to the minister of education
 - Homeschooled students are not eligible to receive a secondary school diploma
 - No funding is available
- Distance learning:
 - Available for high school students

NOVA SCOTIA

- Public Schools:
 - The public secular school system is divided into Francophone and Anglophone sectors.
 - The students must be proficient in the language of instruction.
 - The students must attend their local school unless the district superintendent grants permission to attend a different school.
- Homeschools:
 - Permitted, provided the student is registered with the department of education
 - No funding is available
- Private Special Education Schools
 - Some funding is provided for students with learning disabilities for use at private special education schools, a policy that is currently under review.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

- Public Schools:
 - The public secular school system is divided into Francophone and Anglophone sectors.
 - The students must be proficient in the language of instruction.
 - The students must attend their local school unless the district superintendent grants permission to attend a different school.
- Homeschools:
 - Permitted, provided the student is registered with the department of education
 - No funding is available
 - Home-schooled students may take courses at local public schools with the permission of the principal.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

- Public Schools:
 - The public secular school system is divided into Francophone and Anglophone sectors.
 - The students must be proficient in the language of instruction.
 - The students must attend their local school unless the district superintendent grants permission to attend a different school.
 - There is one Innu Native school.
- Homeschools:
 - Permitted, provided the student is registered with the department of education
 - No funding is available
 - Textbooks are provided free of charge.
- Distance Learning:
 - Available for rural and remote-residence high school students

YUKON

- Public Schools:
 - Open to all
- Public Catholic Schools:
 - Open to all in this order of priority:
 - ❖ Catholic families
 - ❖ Siblings of students already enrolled
 - ❖ Non-Catholic families
- One Francophone School
- Homeschools:
 - Encouraged
 - Open to all
 - Must register with ministry of education
 - Access to learning materials, equipment, etc.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

- Regular Public Schools:
 - Include aboriginal and Montessori programming
 - open to residents of district
- Public Catholic Schools:
 - Open to all
- Public Francophone Schools
- Private Schools:
 - Funded at 40% of the local district adjusted school funding formula
- Homeschools:
 - Encouraged
 - Parents who register with the local district are entitled to receive support and access to resources, learning materials, equipment, etc,
 - Parents who register with the local district may receive reimbursement for costs up to 25% of the local per-pupil amount

NUNAVUT

- Public Schools:
 - Include bilingual aboriginal schools
- One Francophone School
- Distance Education