



CHAPTER 2: A PROFILE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The Department of Education is responsible for the education of all citizens from pre-school to post-secondary and beyond. To meet the needs of such a diverse population, the department provides its programs and services through one of the following two branches:

- (1) The *Primary, Elementary & Secondary Branch* is responsible for school services; program development; student support services; evaluation and research; distance learning and innovation; and early childhood learning.
- (2) *The Corporate Services Branch* is responsible for strategic planning and annual reporting; budget preparation and monitoring; financial services; school bussing; policy development and accountability; school construction; teacher payroll services; and federal-provincial agreements.

Specifically, the department's responsibilities can be grouped into six main program and service areas. These are:

- (1) *Curriculum and Programs.* In the K-12 system, the Department of Education is responsible for developing and monitoring the provincial curriculum, creating or selecting learning resources, developing and implementing distance learning activities, developing programs for improved teaching and learning, developing and supporting school development, developing programs and resources for Aboriginal students, and providing teacher professional development.

In addition, inclusive support services to children with special needs are provided by administering student support programs and the allocation of a full range of personnel to school districts. The department also fosters and delivers improved early childhood learning opportunities through cooperation with other departments.

- (2) *Educational Policy and Direction.* The department sets the strategy and vision for the K-12 educational system. Decision-making is informed through conducting relevant research and analysis, and the provision of statistical indicators and background information.
- (3) *Student Assessment and Certification.* Responsibilities include the evaluation, monitoring, test development and certification processes for the K-12 system and administration of the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) tests.
- (4) *Research, Records and Reporting/Accountability.* Responsibilities include all major functions related to education system performance such as education statistics, planning, evaluation, accountability, policy development, and research. The department collects data and manages databases for core areas such as enrolment and graduate outcomes.

(5) *Support to Federal, Provincial and Territorial Agreements & Initiatives.* The department coordinates the activities of a number of federal-provincial agreements for which it is a key stakeholder. This includes agreements such as Official Languages in Education, the Community Access Program, and agreements pertaining to Aboriginal schools. The department's broader roles and interests are advanced by collaboration at a regional and pan-Canadian level through organizations such as the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada; the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training; the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority; and their sub-committees and working groups.

(6) *Finance, Administration and Corporate Services.* Responsibilities include preparation and monitoring of the annual budget, financial management, legislation and regulations, school construction, public libraries, teacher certification, teachers' payroll, and financing the K-12 educational system.

School districts

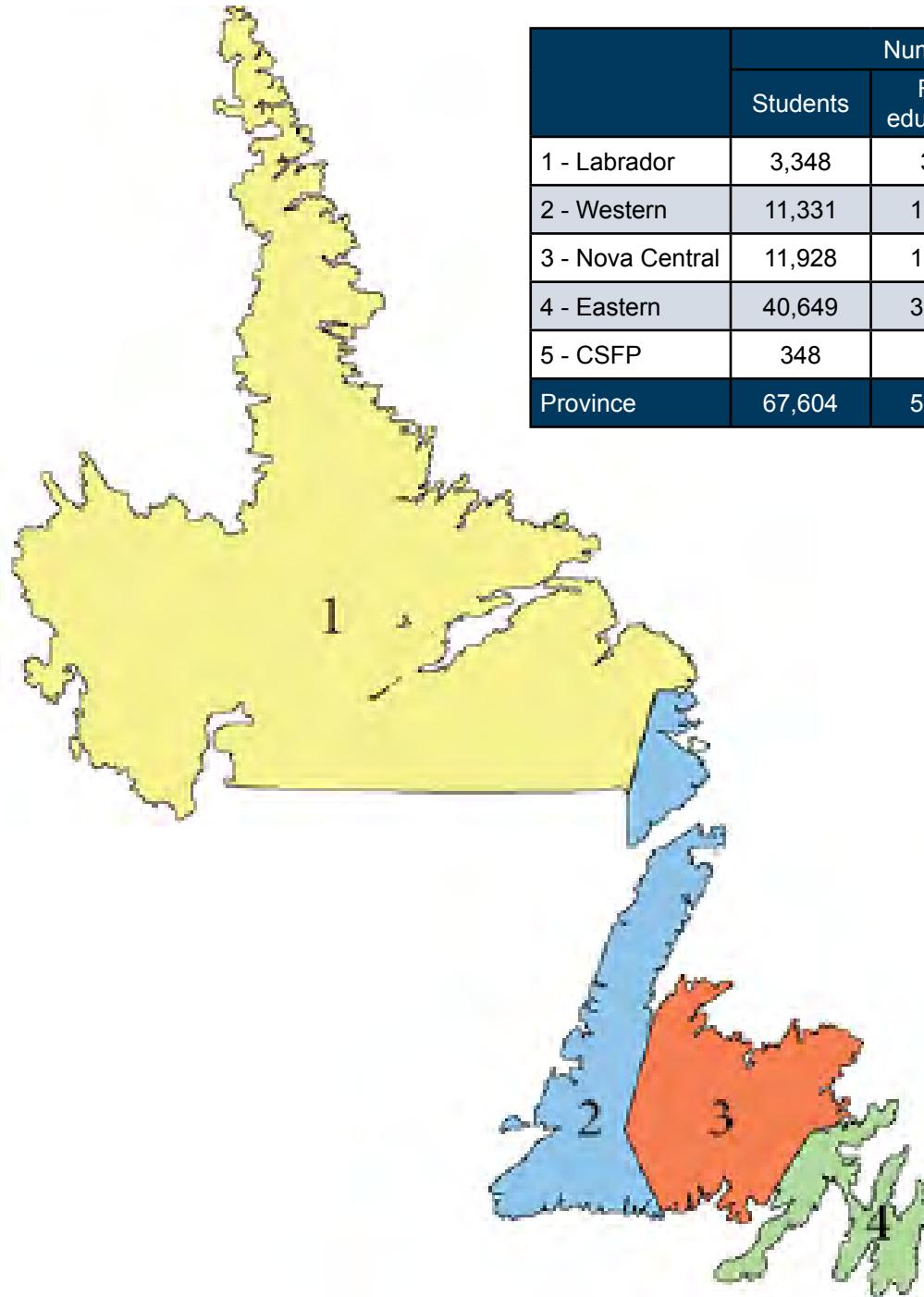
On a local level, regional school districts oversee the daily operations of schools. Each district is managed by a regional school board and is responsible for a variety of things including staffing and distributing resources; evaluating, acquiring, distributing and maintaining technological resources and buildings; transporting students; and developing instructional policies and practices.

In 2012/13, five regional school districts existed in the province - four Anglophone districts (the Labrador, Western, Nova Central and Eastern School Districts) and one Francophone district (Le Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (CSFP)). The CSFP was created to meet the needs of students whose first language was French. It is responsible for five schools located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador City, Cap Saint-Georges, La Grand'Terre and St. John's. The map on the following page shows the location of each school district as well as some key indicators. The CSFP is not shown on the map because the district encompasses the entire province.





A District Profile (2012/13)

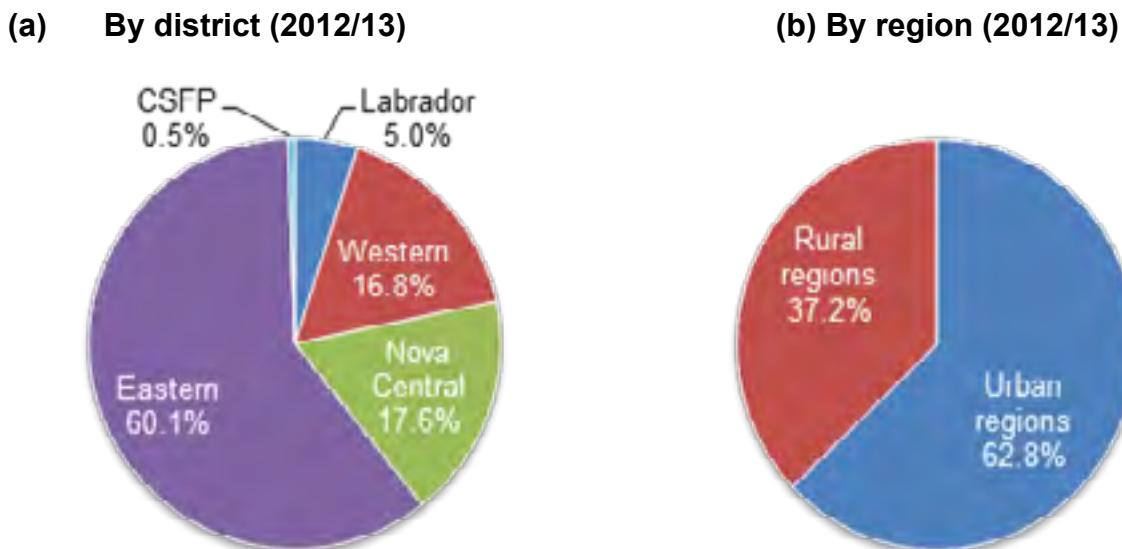


Note: The number of FTE (or full time equivalent) teachers refers to the head count of full-time teachers (those employed as 100% of an allocated unit) combined with the number of part-time teachers according to the percent of an allocated unit. Teachers who are employed less than full-time are counted in accordance with the percentage employed. In other words, a teacher who is employed in a 75% position is counted as 0.75 of a full-time equivalent teacher.

The province's students

In 2012/13, 67,604 students were enrolled in the province's public school system. While the Eastern School District was the smallest in geographic size, it had the highest concentration of students with 60.1%. In addition, about two thirds of students were located in urban¹ regions of the province with the remaining in rural regions (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Distribution of students across the province



(Source: Table 1)

Trends in student enrolment

Student enrolment has been gradually declining over the past five years. While total enrolment decreased by 4.3% (i.e. 3,027 fewer students) between 2008/09 and 2012/13, the year to year decline is growing smaller. Enrolment projections to the year 2017/18, suggest this decline will almost stabilize in the coming years (see figure 2a).

Looking back over the past five years (i.e., from 2008/09 to 2012/13), the CSFP was the only district where enrolment grew (by 29.9% or an increase of 79 students). In the other four school districts, the greatest decline occurred in the Western School District where enrolment decreased by 11.3%. The smallest decline (1.5%) in enrolment was in the Eastern School District (see figures 2b and c).

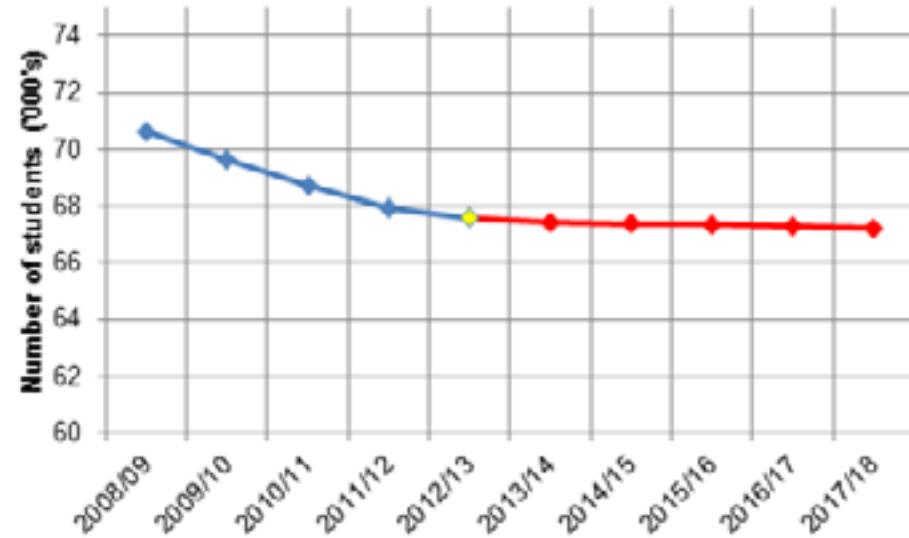
As shown in figure 2d, rural regions of the province experienced a greater decline in enrolment as compared to urban regions. Rural enrolment declined by 10.6% between 2008/09 and 2012/13 whereas urban enrolment declined by only 0.1% for the same time frame.

¹ Urban regions have a population of 5,000 residents or more and rural regions have a population of less than 5,000 residents.

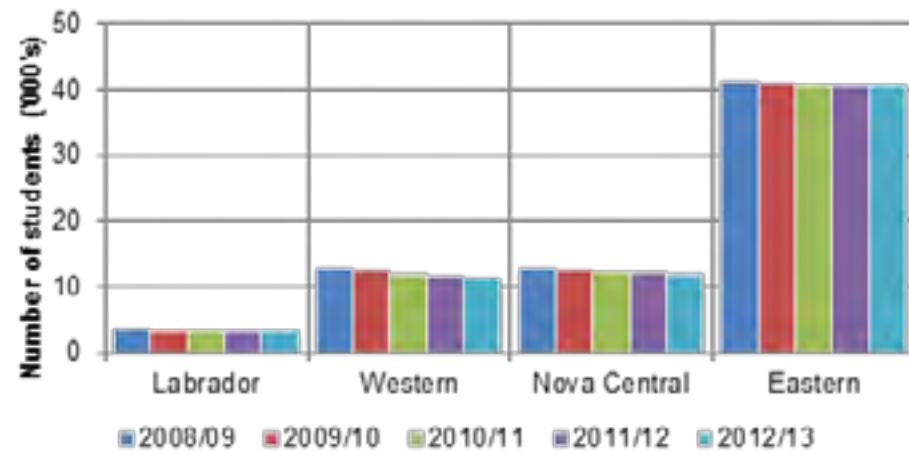


Figure 2: Provincial and district enrolment trends

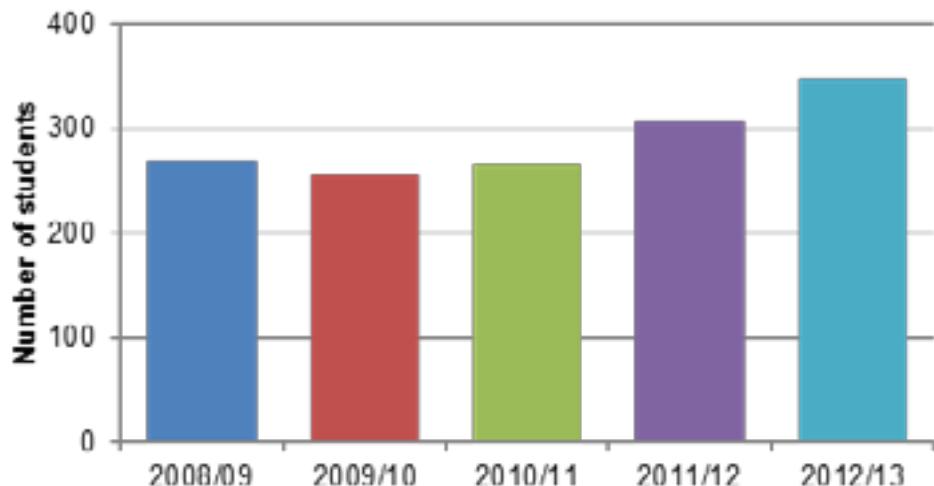
(a) Actual and projected provincial trends (2008/09 - 2017/18)



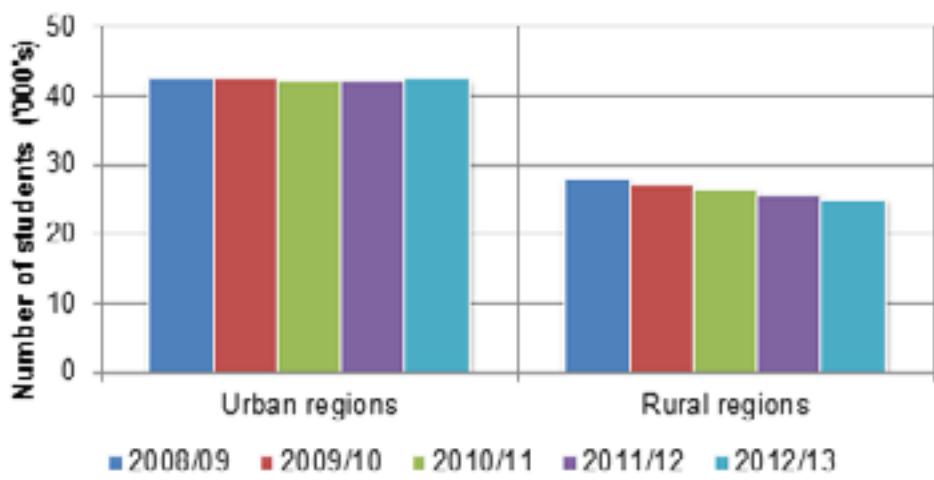
(b) Anglophone district enrolment (2008/09 – 2012/13)



(c) **Francophone district enrolment (2008/09 – 2012/13)**



(d) **Urban and rural enrolment (2008/09 - 2012/13)**



(Source: Table 2)

The province's teachers

In 2012/13, there were 5,515 full-time equivalent (FTE) educators in the province. Approximately two thirds of these were classroom teachers and an additional 14.5% were instructional resource teachers² (see figure 3a) The 'other' category in the following figure includes positions such as itinerant teachers, guidance counsellors and English as Second Language (ESL) teachers.

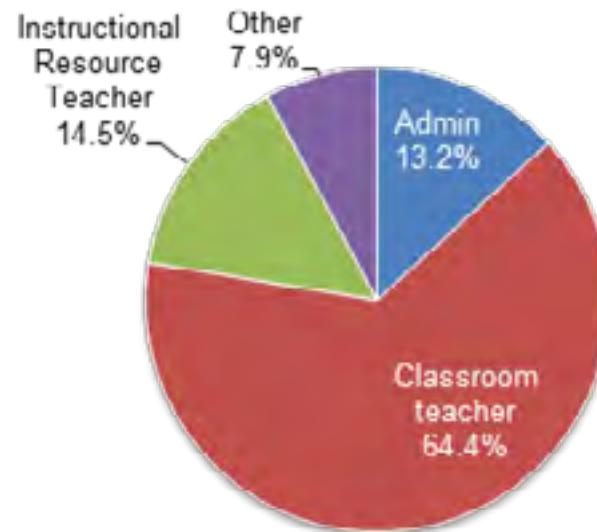
Along gender lines, women accounted for 72.2% of the FTE educators in 2012/13. Within the specific positions, only the administrative positions (i.e., principal, assistant principal and/or departmental head) had a similar percentage of men and women. In each of the other positions, the percentage of women was much higher than men (see figure 3b).

2 The instructional resource teachers (IRTs) (formerly known as special education teachers) category includes Teachers for the Severely Mentally Handicapped and Teachers for the Severely Physically Disabled.

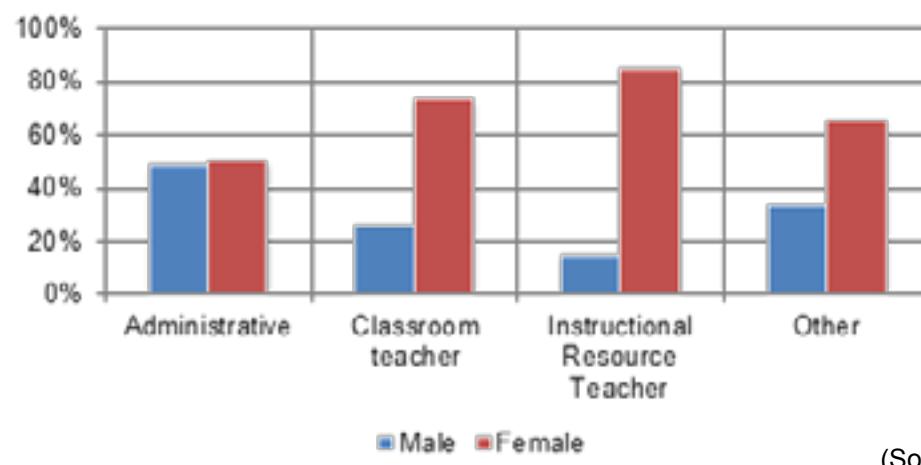


Figure 3: A profile of the province's educators

(a) Position breakdown (2012/13)



(b) Gender breakdown (2012/13)



(Source: Table 3)

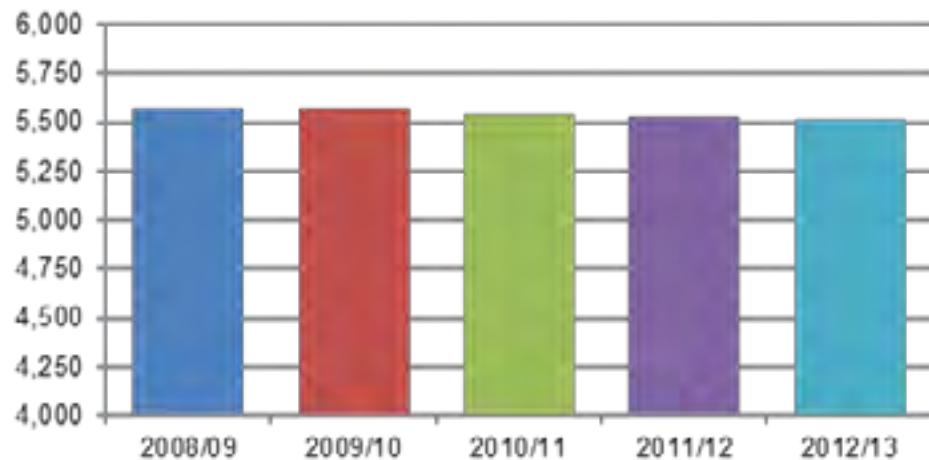
Trends in the profile of FTE teachers

Over the past five years, the number of FTE teachers in the province has remained fairly stable decreasing by only 1.0% between 2007/08 and 2012/13 (see figure 4a). However, the workforce is aging. While the majority of teachers have been between 40 and 49 years of age since 2008/09, the percentage of younger teachers (i.e. those under 30 years of age) has gradually decreased from 13.5% in 2008/09 to 11.5% in 2012/13. In addition, the percentage of teachers in the oldest age group (50 years or older) is on the rise (see figure 4b).

Along gender lines, the profile of administrative positions is changing. Over the past five years, the percentage of female administrators has increased from 49.9% in 2008/09 to 50.7% in 2012/13. This was the first time where there was a higher percentage of females than males in an administrative position (see figure 4c).

Figure 4: A changing profile of FTE educators in the province

(a) **Number of FTE teaching positions (2008/09 – 2012/13)**



(b) **Teacher's age (2008/09 – 2012/13)**

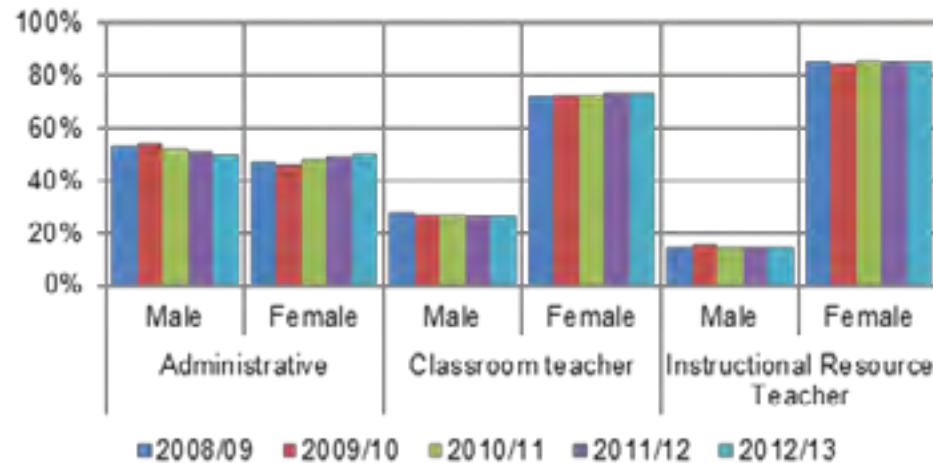


■ Younger than 30 years ■ 30-39 years ■ 40-49 years ■ 50 years or older





(c) Gender trends (2008/09 – 2012/13)



(Source: Table 4)

Pupil Teacher Ratio

The pupil teacher ratio (PTR) is a measure of human resources to the system. It is a national indicator developed by Statistics Canada to enable comparisons to be made across provincial jurisdictions. The PTR is calculated by dividing the total enrolment of all public school students by all school-based educators, including principals, assistant principals and learning resource teachers (many of whom also teach in classrooms). However, this is not meant to represent an average or ideal class size.

In 2012/13, the provincial PTR was 11.8 or one teacher for every 11.8 students. Across the five school districts, the PTR ranged from 7.3 in the CSFP to 12.7 in the Eastern School District (see figure 5a).

Since the PTR is a national indicator, it is possible to compare Newfoundland and Labrador to other Canadian jurisdictions. As shown in figure 5b, Newfoundland and Labrador had the lowest PTR in the country (11.8). The two highest PTRs were found in Alberta (15.9) and British Columbia (16.8). Information from the Yukon was not available for 2010/11.

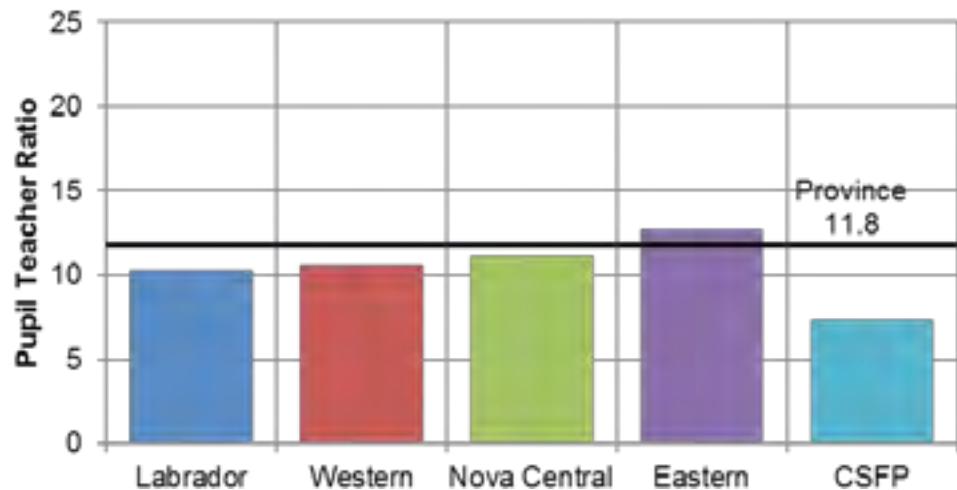


Over the past five years, the provincial PTR has decreased 12.2 in 2008/09 to 11.8 in 2012/13 (see figure 5c), As shown in figure 5d, a similar trend is seen at the district level with two exceptions:

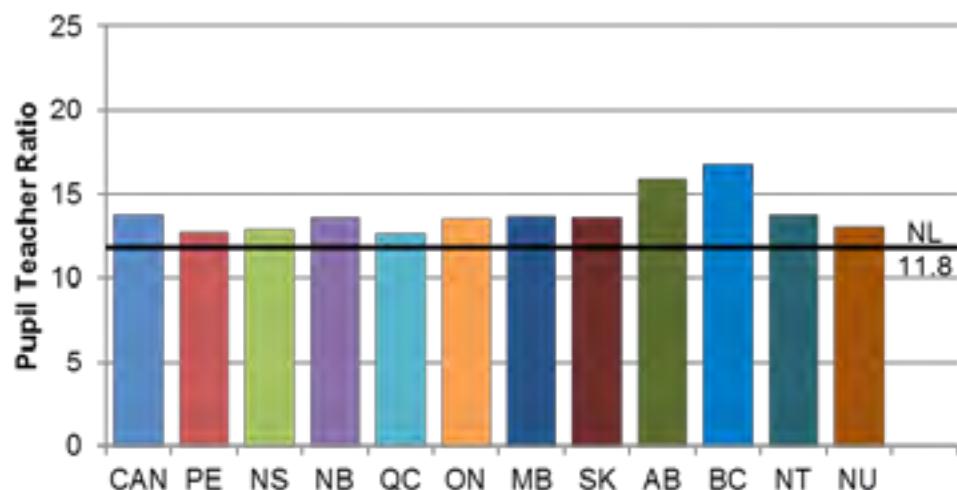
- (1) The Eastern School District PTR has remained at 12.7 over the past four years (2009/10 to 2012/13), and
- (2) The CSFP PTR increased from 6.4 in 2008/09 to 7.3 in 2012/13.

Figure 5: Pupil Teacher Ratio

(a) Provincial and district PTR's (2012/13)



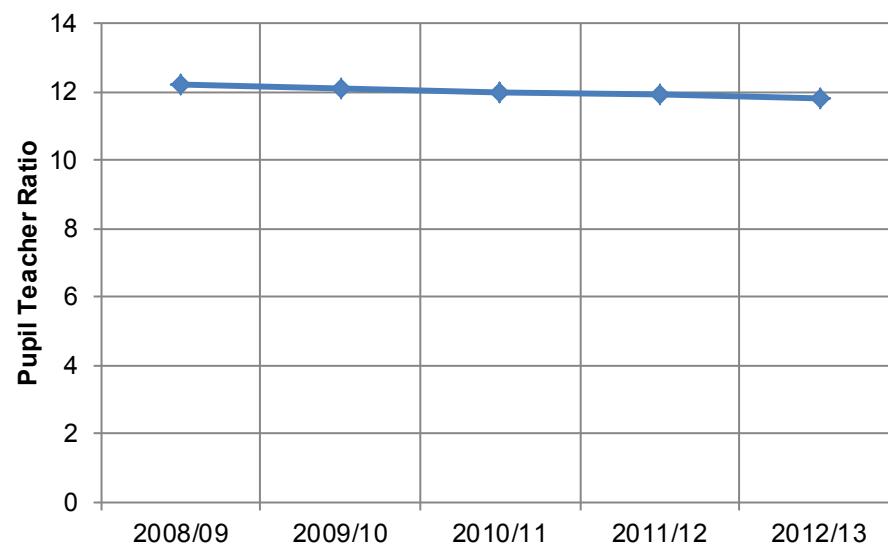
(b) PTR's across Canada (2010/11)³



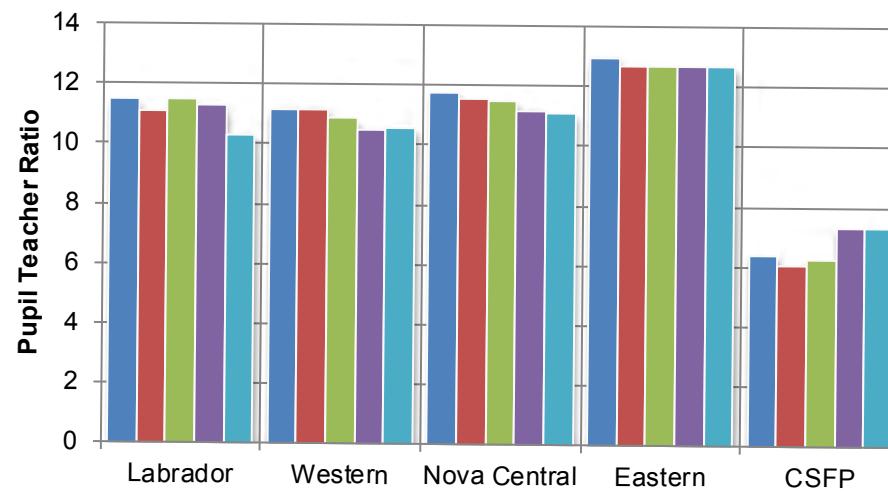
³ This is the most recent data provided by Statistics Canada.



(c) Provincial trends in the PTR (2008/09 – 2012/13)



(d) District trends in the PTR (2008/09 – 2012/13)



(Source: Table 5)

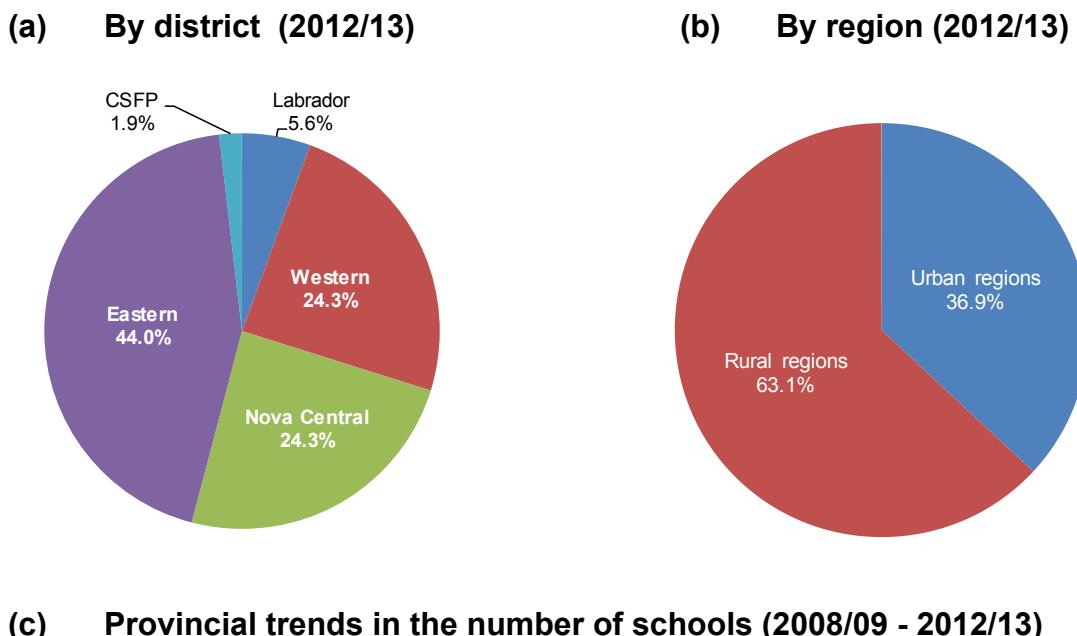


The province's schools

In 2012/13, there were 268 public schools in the province. As shown in figure 6, close to half of the schools were in the Eastern School District and approximately two thirds were in rural regions of the province.

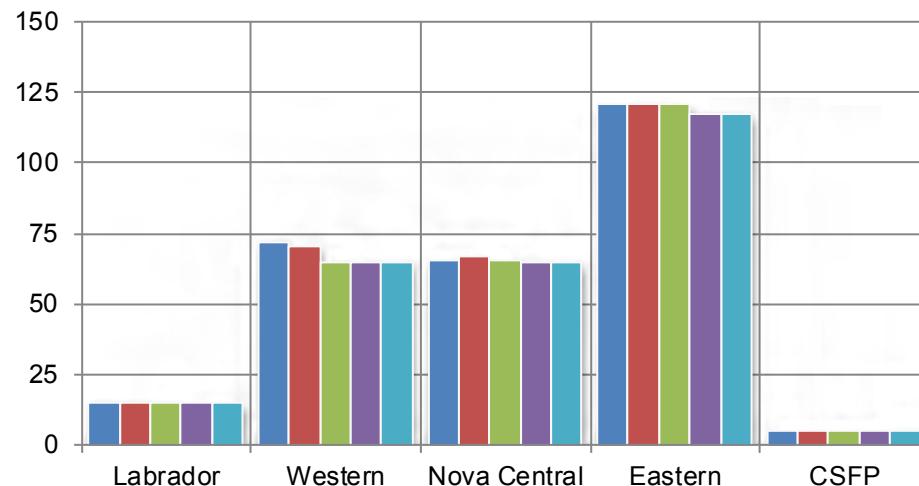
During the past five years, the total number of schools declined by 5.1% from 279 in 2008/09 to 268 in 2012/13. The Western School District experienced the greatest change with seven schools closing between 2008/09 and 2010/11. However, the number of schools has remained fairly stable over the past two or three years depending on the district (see figures 6c and 6d).

Figure 6: A profile of schools in the province





(d) District trends in the number of schools (2008/09 - 2012/13)



(Source: Table 6)

School configuration

Schools can be grouped based on the grades they offer. Currently, there are six different school configurations in the province. They include:

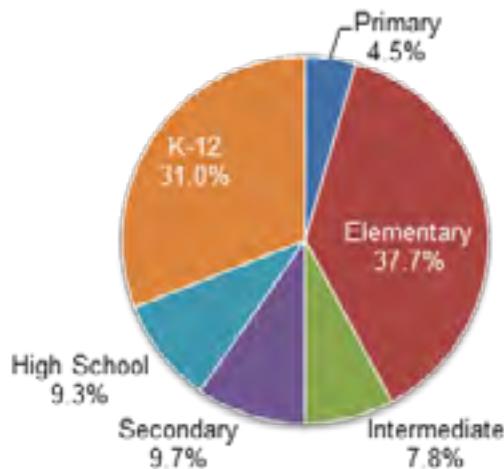
School configuration	Range of grades available
K – 12	All grades between Kindergarten and Grade 12
Primary	Any combination of grades between Kindergarten and Grades 3, 4 or 5 with no higher grades present
Elementary	Kindergarten to Grades 6 or 9 or any combination in this range
Intermediate	Often includes Grades 7 to 9 but can include 1 or 2 grades above or below (e.g., Grades 6 to 9)
Secondary	Any combination of grades between Grades 7 and 10 to 12
Senior High	Grades 9 to 12 or Grades 10 to 12

In 2012/13, the majority of the province's 268 schools were either elementary or K-12. Combined, these two configurations accounted for over two-thirds of the schools (see figure 7a). In terms of population density, approximately half of the schools in urban regions were configured for the elementary grades whereas rural areas had a majority of K-12 schools (see figure 7b).

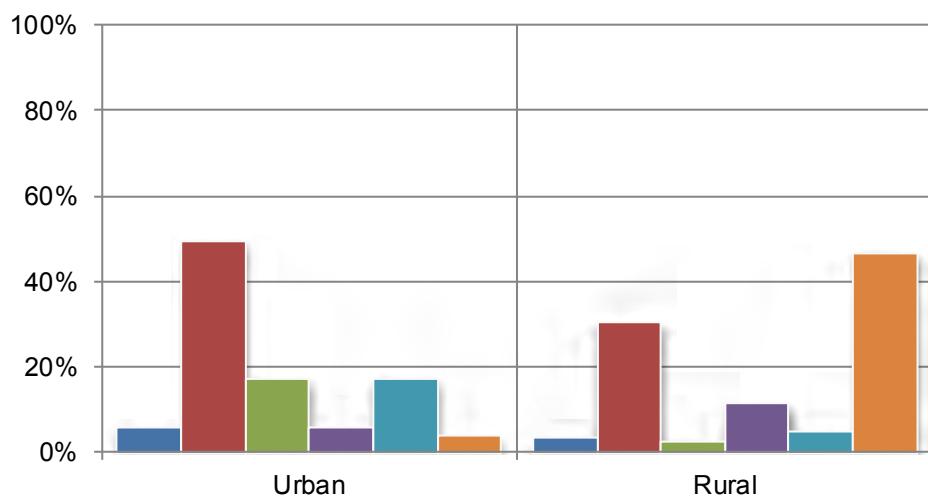
With the exception of the Eastern School District, the majority of schools in each district were K-12 (see figure 7c). For example, the percentage of K-12 schools ranged from 53.3% in the Labrador School District to 38.5% in the Nova Central School District. In the Eastern School District, close to half of the schools (49.2%) were elementary.

Figure 7: Grade configurations of schools in the province

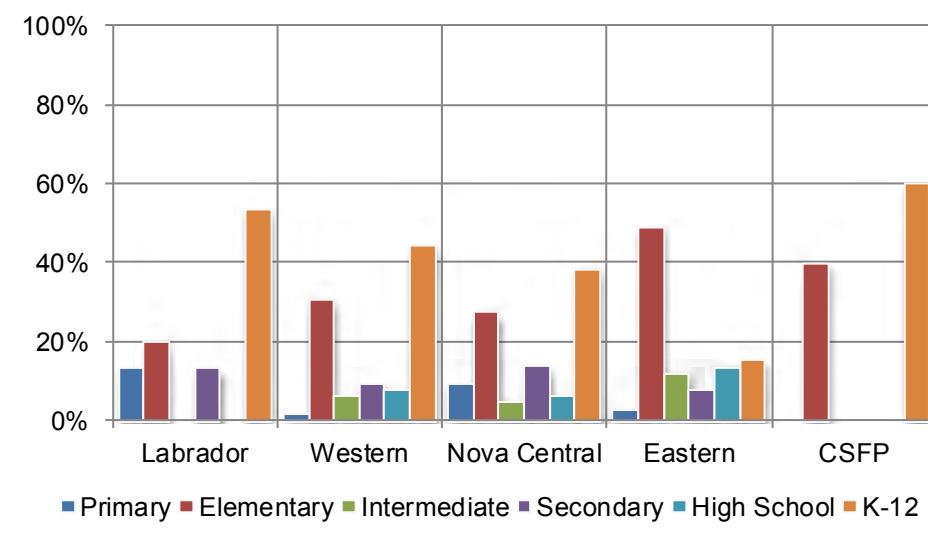
(a) Provincial breakdown (2012/13)



(b) By region (2012/13)



(c) District breakdown (2012/13)



(Source: Table 7)



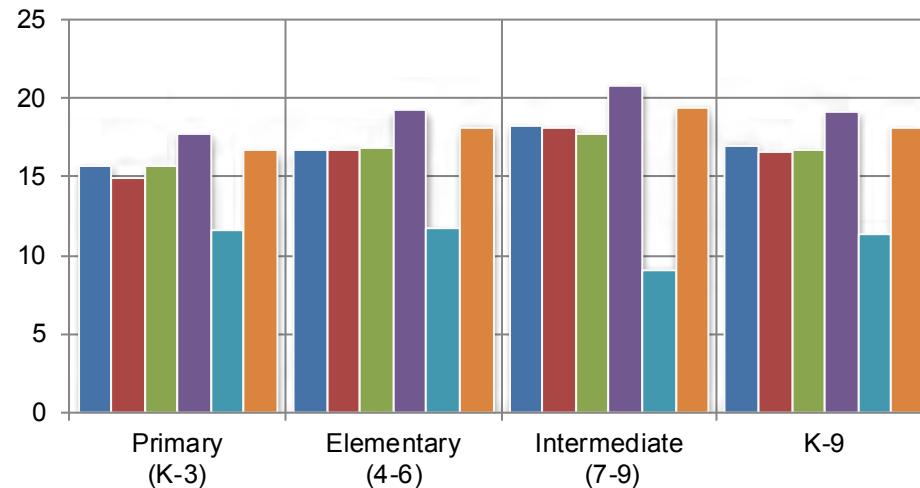
Average class size

Average class size is defined as the total number of students in classes divided by the total number of classes. In 2012/13, the provincial average class size ranged from 16.6 in the primary grades to 19.5 students in the intermediate grades. Figure 8a shows the average class size for the primary, elementary, intermediate and K-9 grades at the district level. The Eastern School District had the highest average class size in each of the four grade levels. The smallest average class sizes in the province were in the CSFP where it ranged from 9.1 for the intermediate grades to 11.8 for the elementary grades.

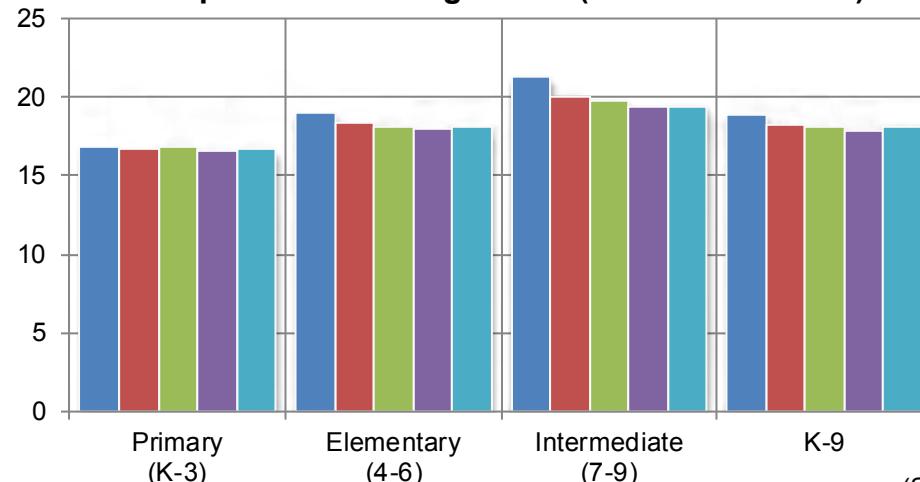
Provincially, average class sizes have been stable over the past five years (see figure 8b). At three of the four grade levels, the highest and lowest average class sizes are only separated by a point or less. The exception was at the intermediate level, where the change is slightly more pronounced. During this time, average class size decreased from 21.3 students per class in 2008/09 to 19.5 in 2012/13.

Figure 8: Average class size

(a) District and provincial breakdown (2012/13)



(b) Trends in provincial average class (2008/09 – 2012/13)



(Source: Table 8)