

schools under the authority of the education department. They must conform to department regulations on curriculum, textbooks and teacher certification. As legal corporations, separate school boards can levy taxes and receive government grants but not always at the same level as the public system.

Private schools. Between 3% and 4% of all elementary-secondary students attend schools operated independently of the public systems. Provincial policies on private institutions vary from direct operating grants to minimum provincial control. Independent schools have been established as alternatives to the public system, based on religion, language, or academic or social status.

Special education. A number of strategies have been developed to educate children with special needs or abilities, an estimated 5%-10% of all students. They may be accommodated in separate institutions, public or private, or in special or integrated classes in regular schools. For quick learners, there are enriched and accelerated elementary and secondary programs. Education for the handicapped varies from province to province, and is most common in city systems. Schools for the blind and deaf are sometimes administered directly by a province, sometimes by interprovincial agreement. Many local systems operate schools or classes for disabled children. Nonetheless, the trend, and the official goal in several provinces, is for handicapped students to stay in regular school as long as possible.

6.2.2 Federal schools

Although education is a provincial responsibility, the federal government has assumed direct control over the education of persons beyond the jurisdiction of the provinces — native peoples and armed forces personnel and their families.

6.2.2.1 Department of Indian and Northern Affairs

Education of registered Indian and Inuit children is an obligation of the Indian and northern affairs department. The minister is authorized to maintain schools for Indian children directly or provide education services through a provincial government, the commissioners of Yukon and Northwest Territories, a public or separate school board, or a religious or charitable organization.

On reserves, the federal government owns and operates some 250 schools. The minister makes regulations on matters such as buildings, inspection and teaching. More than 100 native band councils now manage their own schools.

About half the native children attend provincial public schools. The federal government reimburses the provinces, either by paying tuition or contributing to the school's capital costs. Most children of secondary age attend public schools. Indian representation is increasing on local provincial school boards — approximately 100 Indians are now formal school board members in various provinces. In Yukon and Northwest Territories, Indian and northern affairs co-operates with territorial departments of education to educate native children. The last school there to be administered directly by the federal government closed in 1969.

Counselling units are maintained in Ottawa and Winnipeg to assist northern native students attending high school, technical school, college and university in southern Canada. These units were established in the mid-1960s and have worked with an increasing number of students each year.

6.2.2.2 Department of National Defence

The defence department maintains schools for dependents of service personnel at military establishments in Canada and overseas. The policy is to avoid building schools wherever the children can attend existing institutions. Provinces are reimbursed on a per-pupil basis for armed service dependents in public schools. The curriculum in such schools follows that of the province where they are located. There are 11 overseas schools in Belgium, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany. The elementary curriculum in these schools is a composite of various provincial programs; grades 7 to 13 follow the Ontario curriculum.