

and counties containing 4,191 districts and 149 districts not in divisions or counties. Districts and divisions have their own school boards. Religious minorities may establish separate school districts with the same rights and obligations as public ones.

Attendance is compulsory from 6 to 15 years. Kindergarten is not part of the provincial school system although some urban centres provide it. The predominant grade pattern is: elementary (grades 1-6), junior high (grades 7-9), and senior high (grades 10-12). Secondary schools operate on the comprehensive or composite principle. Academic and a range of vocational subjects are taught.

Post-secondary technical education is offered at two institutes of technology, and at agricultural and vocational colleges. Six community colleges and three other colleges have university transfer and technology programs, adult education, community service and academic upgrading. Nursing diploma programs are given in hospital schools and four community colleges.

University of Alberta programs lead to degrees, diplomas and certificates at the undergraduate and graduate levels. A constituent college, the Collège universitaire Saint-Jean, has a bilingual program toward the first degree. A number of affiliated colleges provide up to two years of university education. The university, located in Edmonton, operates extension programs in other centres. As well, there are three other universities, Calgary, Lethbridge, and Athabasca in Edmonton, also the site of the Newman Theological College.

### **British Columbia**

6.4.10

The province is divided into about 90 school districts; each one elects a board of trustees for a two-year term. As well as having jurisdiction over its district, a board may establish and operate regional colleges in conjunction with one or more other districts. No legal provision is made for separate schools.

Children of 7 to 15 years must attend school but participation in an optional kindergarten year is almost universal. Elementary school extends over seven years, followed by three years of junior and two years of senior high. In the senior years, employment-oriented courses are available. As well as high school courses, technical and vocational education is provided by programs run in co-operation with the federal government, and in vocational schools throughout the province.

Most of the 17 regional colleges are operated by groups of school boards. The British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) is maintained by the education department. The colleges conduct a variety of career and transfer programs, although some specialize in particular fields such as art or fashion design. BCIT provides career training only. As well as in hospital schools, students may earn nursing diplomas from BCIT and several community colleges.

The largest degree-granting institution, the University of British Columbia, has undergraduate and graduate programs in most major disciplines. There are three other universities and a number of colleges, most church-related. The universities are supervised by two regulatory bodies that advise the government on curriculum and finance. Another government-appointed board makes recommendations on development, co-ordination and financing of all types of post-secondary institutions.

### **Yukon and Northwest Territories**

6.4.11

The Yukon school system is administered by the territorial education department. The School Ordinance of 1962 recognized three types of school: public, separate and Indian. However, since the closing of the last Indian school in 1969, all native children have gone to public or separate schools. Attendance is compulsory from 7 to 16 years. Grades 1 to 12 follow the British Columbia organization and curriculum. Some secondary schools give commercial and technical courses, and advanced trades and technical training is available at the Yukon Vocational and Technical Training Centre. An aid program allows students to continue at the post-secondary level in one of the provinces.

In the Northwest Territories responsibility for education was transferred in 1969 and 1970 from the federal Indian and northern affairs department to the territorial council. The ages of compulsory attendance are 6 to 16. The region has developed its own curriculum, covering six elementary and four secondary grades. Because high