

Public and Private Schools Puerto Rico

Education in Puerto Rico is compulsory for students between the ages of six and seventeen years. Puerto Rico has over 1500 public schools and over 500 private schools. There are a number of schools that teach mainly in the English language, such as St. John's, Baldwin, Wesleyan, Robinson, Cupeyville, and Parkville.

There are two distinct forms of elementary schools: urban and rural. The urban school curriculum is made up of manual training, agriculture, home economics, health and physical education, English and Spanish. The rural school provides four years of primary education. The second phase of the rural school is pre-vocational, meaning that they provide training or skills that can be used as a trade later on. The secondary phase provides courses in agriculture, industrial arts, gardening, trades, handicrafts and social work. In general, public schools do not have air conditioning; they rely on wall fans.

Access to information technology (IT) and other resources is fairly limited in most primary and secondary schools and districts. The availability of computer clusters, work stations, and web-access for students is more common in private schools. The monthly tuition price for private schools can run from \$350.00- \$1000.00 a month. School books, uniforms, and supplies are costed by parents and legal guardians; public schools provide books only. While a public school will accommodate more than thirty students in a classroom; most private schools accommodate no more than 11. Thus, providing a higher level of education.

The Puerto Rican education system is in the middle of a massive reorganization. The possibility of closing over 280 public schools, combining resources, and introducing charter schools and private school vouchers are in the talks. The changes to the school system are promoted in part by damage from Hurricane Maria. However, the island's schools have been struggling long before then.