



Education Systems of Six Select Countries

***Dominican Republic
El Salvador
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Mexico***

***Compiled by
The Long Island RBE-RN***



2015

Education Systems of Select Countries



Dominican Republic

Structure & Organization

Dominican Republic Organizational Phase		Age		DR Grade/Year	U.S. Grade Equivalent	U.S. Organizational Equivalent
Educación Pre-primaria		4			Pre-K	
	<i>(Obligatorio)</i>		5		Kindergarten	Primary
Educación Básica <i>(Compulsory Education)</i>	Primer Ciclo de la Educación Básica		6	1 ^o	1 st	
			7	2 ^o	2 nd	
			8	3 ^o	3 rd	
			9	4 ^o	4 th	
	Segundo Ciclo de la Educación Básica		10	5 ^o	5 th	Middle
			11	6 ^o	6 th	
			12	7 ^o	7 th	
			13	8 ^o	8 th	
14						
Educación Media	Primer Ciclo (Tronco Común)		15	9 ^o	9 th	Secondary
			16	10 ^o	10 th	
	Segundo Ciclo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General (Académico) ▪ Técnico-Profesional ▪ Artes 	17	11 ^o	11 th	
			18	12 ^o	12 th	
Educación Superior			19 and up			Post-Secondary/Higher Education

Language

Spanish is the national language of the Dominican Republic and is the language of instruction. A small percentage of the population speaks Haitian Creole.

Compulsory Education

Compulsory education in the Dominican Republic begins at age 5 during the final year of pre-primary education and is similar to a U.S. Kindergarten. The following 9 years, through the age of 14, are compulsory. The school year is 42 weeks long, beginning in late August and running through the first week in July. Secondary education is a 43 week school year.

Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education is divided into three cycles: age 0-2 years, aged 3 and 4, and age 5. The third cycle, for children age 5, is obligatory making it the first year of compulsory education. It is comparable to a U.S. Kindergarten.

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Primary Education

Primary education, referred to as “la educación básica” lasts for nine years from age 6 through age 14. It is organized into two 4 year cycles. The first cycle provides opportunities for students to learn basic cultural principles, health and wellness, civics and ethics, and artistic expression. The second cycle seeks to deepen learning during the first cycle as well as broadening the academic scope of studies.

Secondary Education

Secondary education, referred to as “la educación media,” is not compulsory; however, it is free. This phase of education is divided into two segments, each of two years duration. The first segment, “tronco común,” continues the development of basic academic skills learned during compulsory education. The second segment is specialized and students may choose one of three options: general/academic, technical/professional, or artistic. Students who complete secondary education are awarded a “Bachillerato,” the U.S. equivalent to a high school diploma.

Grading Systems

Dominican Republic		Suggested U.S. Equivalent
Excelente	90-100%	A
Muy Bueno	80-89%	B
Bueno	70-79%	C
Deficiente	60-69%	D
Insuficiente	0-59%	F

Resources

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/DO/languages>

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Dominican_Republic.pdf

<http://www.palmbeachschools.org/multicultural/documents/TranscriptGuide.pdf>

http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/ges/Dominican%20Republic.pdf

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El Salvador

Structure & Organization

El Salvador Organizational Phase		Age	El Salvador Grade/Year	U.S. Grade Equivalent per age	U.S. Organizational Equivalent
Educación Parvularia		4	Pre-Kinder	Pre-K	
		5	Kinder	Kindergarten	Primary
		6	Preparatoria	1 st	
Educación Básica <i>(Compulsory Education)</i>	Ciclo 1	7	1 ^o	2 nd	
		8	2 ^o	3 rd	
		9	3 ^o	4 th	
	Ciclo 2	10	4 ^o	5 th	Middle
		11	5 ^o	6 th	
		12	6 ^o	7 th	
	Ciclo 3	13	7 ^o	8 th	Secondary
		14	8 ^o	9 th	
		15	9 ^o	10 th	
Educación Media	Bachillerato	16	10 ^o	11 th	n/a
		17	11 ^o	12 th	
		18	12 ^o (optional)	13 th	
Educación Superior	Educación Superior Universitario	19	13 ^o – 15 ^o Post Grado Técnico		Post-Secondary/ Higher Education

Language

The official language of El Salvador is Spanish and is the language of instruction. There is one indigenous language, Kekchí, spoken in rural areas, but it is not widespread nor is used in schools.

Compulsory Education

Compulsory Education in El Salvador lasts for nine years from ages 7 to 15.

Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education lasts three years for children 4 to 6 years of age. It focuses on developing social, motor, perceptive, and language skills.

Primary Education

Primary education is free and compulsory, lasting for nine years, for children ages 7 to 15. It is divided into three cycles of three years each. The program of study includes: language, mathematics, science, health and environment, social studies, the arts, and physical education.

Students receive two grades for each subject area. The first grade is for achievement in the subject and is on a scale of 1 to 10. The second grade is for personal conduct in the class and is based on a conceptual scale of Excelente (E), Muy Bueno (MB), and Bueno(B).

Secondary Education

Secondary education, referred to as “la educación media,” continues after the completion of Primary education. Students are offered two options for secondary education: general studies lasting two years, or a technical-vocational track which takes

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three years to complete. Students pursuing the technical-vocational track may choose from four areas of concentration: business and administration, industry, health and agriculture. Public secondary institutions are referred to as “institutos nacionales” while private institutions are called “colegios” or “liceos.”

Both options culminate with the credential “Bachiller” allowing students to either continue on to higher education or to join the workforce. “Bachiller” is the U.S. equivalent of a high school diploma and should not be confused with a Baccalaureate degree.

Grading System

Grade	Scale	Grade Description	U.S. Grade	Notes
E /MB	9.00 - 10.00	Excelente (Excellent) or Muy Bien (Very Good)	A	
B	7.00 - 8.99	Bien (Good)	B	
A/S	6.00 - 6.99	Aprobado (Pass) or Suficiente (Sufficient)	C	Lowest passing grade
	0 – 5.9	Suspenso (Fail) or No Acreditada (Not Passing)		

Resources

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/El_Salvador.pdf

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=SLV®ioncode=40520>

<http://www.classbase.com/Countries/El-Salvador/Education-System>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/SV>

http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/ges/El_Salvador.pdf

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Guatemala

Structure and Organization

Guatemala Organizational Phase		Age	Guatemala Grade/Year	U.S. Grade Equivalent	U.S. Organizational Equivalent
Educación Pre-primaria		4	1	Pre-K	Primary
		5	2	Kindergarten	
		6	3	1 st	
Educación Básica (Compulsory Education)	Ciclo 1	7	1 ^o	2 nd	Intermediate
		8	2 ^o	3 rd	
		9	3 ^o	4 th	
	Ciclo 2	10	4 ^o	5 th	Middle
		11	5 ^o	6 th	
		12	6 ^o	7 th	
	Media Básico regular Or Media Básico pre-vocacional	13	1 ^o	8 th	Secondary
		14	2 ^o	9 th	
		15	3 ^o	10 th	
Educación Media	Ciclo Diversificado	16	4 ^o	11 th	
		17	5 ^o	12 th	
		18	6 ^o (optional)		
		19	7 ^o (optional)		
Educación Superior	Educación Superior Universitario	19			Post-Secondary/ Higher Education

Language

The official language of Guatemala is Spanish, however there are many indigenous Mayan and Arawak languages actively spoken. Commonly spoken indigenous languages include Garífuna, K'iche', Mam, Kaqchikel and Q'eqchi'. Many Guatemalans are bilingual in Spanish and an indigenous language, however, a percentage of elderly indigenous Guatemalans only speak an indigenous language.

Compulsory Education

Compulsory education in Guatemala is free and is obligatory through sixth grade, generally between the ages of 7 and 14 or 15. The school year begins in January and ends in October. Some children attend pre-primary school before the age of 6. There may be disparity between educational opportunities for children in urban areas of Guatemala as compared to children in rural areas, most of whom are of Mayan descent.

Pre-Primary Education

Pre-primary education serves children age four to six. Legally, pre-primary education is obligatory, however, due to the scarcity of programs for young children, many do not attend.

Primary Education

Primary education is compulsory and consists of six years of studies divided into two three-year cycles. Instruction is delivered in "basic" disciplines such as language, math, science and history. At the end of each year, students must pass a culminating exam in order to proceed to the next grade level. After completing the two cycles of primary education, students are granted a diploma.

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Secondary Education

Secondary Education, also referred to as “educación de nivel medio” is divided into two distinct cycles, “Ciclo Básico” and “Ciclo Diversificado”. During “Ciclo Básico”, students receive three years of general education akin to middle or junior high school in the U.S. Upon completion of “Ciclo Básico,” students receive a diploma. “Ciclo Básico” is technically mandatory under the law, however, a lack of available institutions makes it difficult for students to continue their studies.

“Ciclo Diversificado” is elective and lasts for two or three years depending on the career path chosen. Students have the opportunity to specialize in a professional area such as education, agriculture and business. Students completing this second cycle are granted a title permitting them to practice in the profession studied. This title is often referred to as a “Bachillerato” and is the U.S. equivalent of a high school diploma. A *Bachillerato* is required to attend post-secondary, university level educational institutions. While sounding similar, a *Bachillerato* should not be confused with a Baccalaureate degree achieved after completing four years of post-secondary education.

Secondary Education Grading System

Scale	Grade Description	U.S. Grade	Notes
90-100	Excelente (Excellent)	A	
80-89	Muy Bueno (Very Good)	A-	
70-79	Bueno (Good)	B	
60-69	Aceptable (Acceptable)	B-	Private Schools: 61 is minimum passing grade.
51-59	Mínimo aceptable (Barely Acceptable)	C	Public schools: 51 is minimum passing grade.
0-50	Reprobado (Fail)	F	

Resources:

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Guatemala.pdf

<http://www.classbase.com/countries/Guatemala/Education-System>

<http://www.avivara.org/aboutguatemala/educationinguatemala.html>

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=GTM®ioncode=40520>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/GT>

http://www.nafsa.org/_file/_ges/guatemala.pdf

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Haiti

Structure & Organization

Traditional System					
Haiti System Organizational Phase		Age	Haiti Grade/Year	US Grade Equivalent	US Organizational Equivalent
Etudes Primaires	Pre-scolaire	3 - 5	Pré-scol	Pre-K Kindergarten	Pre-School Early Primary
	Preparatoire I	6	Douzième (12 ^e)	1 st	Primary
	Preparatoire II	7	Onzième (11 ^e)	2 nd	
	Elémentaire I	8	Dixième (10 ^e)	3 rd	
	Elémentaire II	9	Nuevième (9 ^e)	4 th	Intermediate
	Moyen I	10	Huitième (8 ^e)	5 th	
	Moyen II	11	Septième (7 ^e)	6 th	
Etudes Secondaires	Secondaire	12	Sixième (6 ^e)	7 th	Middle
		13	Cinquième (5 ^e)	8 th	
		14	Quatrième (4 ^e)	9 th	
		15	Troisième (3 ^e)	10 th	Secondary
		16	Seconde (2 ^e)	11 th	
		17	Première (1 ^e) Rhetorique	12 th	
		18	Philosophie Terminale		

Reform System					
Haiti Reform System Organizational Phase		Age	Haiti Grade/Year	US Grade Equivalent	US Organizational Equivalent
Fondamentale	Pre-scolaire	3 - 5	Pré-scol	Pre-K Kindergarten	Pre-School Early Primary
	Première Année Fondamentale	6	1 ^e AF	1 st	Primary
	Seconde Année Fondamentale	7	2 ^e AF	2 nd	
	Troisième Année Fondamentale	8	3 ^e AF	3 rd	
	Quatrième Année Fondamentale	9	4 ^e AF	4 th	Intermediate
	Cinquième Année Fondamentale	10	5 ^e AF	5 th	
	Sixième Année Fondamentale	11	6 ^e AF	6 th	
	Septième Année Fondamentale	12	7 ^e AF	7 th	Middle
	Huitième Année Fondamentale	13	8 ^e AF	8 th	
Neuvième Année Fondamentale	14	9 ^e AF	9 th	Secondary	
Seconde Classique (Academic) Seconde Technique (Technical)	Première Année (Technical & Academic)	15	1 ^e		10 th
	Seconde (Technical)	16	2 ^e		11 th
	Seconde Année Rhetorique (Academic)				
	Terminale (Technical)	17	3 ^e		12 th
	Troisième Année Philosophie (Academic)				

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Foreword

Education has been a constitutional right in Haiti as declared in the first constitution in 1805, as well as the constitution enacted in 1987. Throughout history but especially in the last two decades, Haiti has worked hard to reform the education system and increase access to education for all of its citizens. However due to financial and societal complications, the Ministry of Education has had difficulty fulfilling the obligation. The devastation caused by the 2010 earthquake placed monumental burden on an already strained infrastructure.

The majority of schools in Haiti are non-public, managed by religious, non-profit and community organizations. Expenses related to school are a major financial burden for families and the de facto barrier to education for children.

Language

Haiti recognizes two official languages: French and Haitian Creole. French is largely the language of instruction, especially in private schools.

Compulsory Education (Pre-primary and Primary)

Compulsory education in Haiti is complicated. Haiti has attempted to reform education multiple times but adoption of the reforms has been slow and resistant. Under the traditional system, compulsory education lasts six years, through the age of 11 or 12. Upon completion of primary studies, students are awarded a "Certificat d'Etudes Primaires"

The reform system, based on the French educational system, is intended to replace the traditional system. It consists of a nine year set of three cycles of three years each. The first two cycles are similar to an American elementary school and the third, similar to an American middle or junior high school, is considered the first leg of secondary education.

The academic year generally runs from October through July with two breaks for Christmas and Easter.

Secondary Education

Secondary education is based on the traditional French system. It lasts for seven years, divided into a three year cycle and a subsequent four year cycle. At the end of the three year cycle, students passing the state examination for promotion receive a "Baccalauréat 1^e partie" certificate. Upon completion of the next four years, students passing state requirements receive a "Baccalauréat 2^e partie" denoting the end of secondary education. Secondary education in the reform system is slightly different and has not yet been implemented consistently across Haiti.

The high school completion rate of Haitian youth is very low. It is important to note that this reality does not reflect Haitian disregard for education, rather a consequence of limited resources and poverty.

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Grading Systems

Haiti				US Equivalent
10-Point Scale	20-Point Scale	100-Point Scale		
8.75-10.00	19-20	90-100	Tres Bien (Excellent)	A
7.5-8.74	17-18	80-89	Bien (Very Good)	B
6.25-7.49	14-16	65-79	Assaz Bien (Good)	C
5.0-6.24	11-12	50-64	Passable (Pass)	D
0-4.99	0-10	0-49	Nul/Mal (Poor)	F
Admise en = promoted to			Retenu = retained	

Resources

<http://educationforhaiti.org/the-school-system-in-haiti/>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/HT>

[http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/LATIN AMERICA and the CARI BBEAN/Haiti/Haiti.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/LATIN_AMERICA_and_the_CARI_BBEAN/Haiti/Haiti.pdf) (Note: This document is the most recent available and is from the 2006-07 “World Data on Education”.)

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=3320®ioncode=40520&SPSLanguage=EN>

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Honduras

Structure & Organization

Honduras Organizational Phase		Age	Honduras Grade/Year	U.S. Grade Equivalent	U.S. Organizational Equivalent
Educación Pre-Básica		3	Pre-Kinder	Pre-K	Primary
		4		Pre-K	
		5	Grado 0	Kindergarten	
Educación Básica (Compulsory Education)	Ciclo 1	6	1 ^o	1 st	Intermediate
		7	2 ^o	2 nd	
		8	3 ^o	3 rd	
	Ciclo 2	9	4 ^o	4 th	Middle
		10	5 ^o	5 th	
		11	6 ^o	6 th	
	Ciclo 3	12	7 ^o	7 th	Secondary
		13	8 ^o	8 th	
		14	9 ^o	9 th	
Educación Media	Bachillerato	15	10 ^o	10 th	
		16	11 ^o	11 th	
		17	12 ^o (optional)	12 th	
Educación Superior	Educación Superior Universitario	18 and above			Post-Secondary/ Higher Education

Language

Spanish is the national language of Honduras. Some inhabitants speak Garífuna, an indigenous Arawak language, but it is not widespread nor is it used for instruction.

Compulsory Education

The educational system in Honduras underwent a substantial reorganization beginning in 2008. While the prior system only required 6 years of education, currently, compulsory education in Honduras consists of 9 years: roughly equal to ages 6 through 14 and referred to as “*Educación primaria*” or “*Educación básica*.”

Pre-primary Education

Children age 3 to 5 may attend pre-school centers. These programs tend to be developmental in nature. Academic development begins at age 5, known as “*Grado Cero*” (Grade 0).

Primary Education

“*Educación básica*” is compulsory for children ages 6 to 14 and is divided into three cycles, each three years in duration. During “*educación básica*,” students complete a curriculum consisting of health education, reading/literature, mathematics, natural sciences, social studies, the arts, and technology.

Secondary Education

Secondary education, known as “*educación media*,” continues with grades 10 through 12 and is intended for students 15 to 17 years of age. Students have a choice of following a two year academic or a three year pre-vocational track. The academic track leads to a “*bachillerato científico humanista*” and the pre-vocational track

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leads to a “*bachillerato técnico profesional*,” the U.S. equivalent of a high school diploma. Both credentials allow graduates to either enter the workforce or continue studies at a University or trade school.

Grading System

Numerical Scale	Percentage Scale	Grade Description	U.S. Grade Equivalent
5	90 - 100	Sobresaliente (Excellent)	A
4 – 4.9	80 – 89	Muy Bueno (Very Good)	B
3 – 3.9	60 – 79	Bueno(Good)	C
2-2.9	0 – 59	Reprobado/Aplazado No Satisfactorio (Fail)	F

Resources:

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Honduras.pdf (see p 8 for chart)

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=HND®ioncode=40520>

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/HN>

http://www.siteal.iipe-oei.org/sites/default/files/perfil_honduras_2013_07.pdf

http://www.nafsa.org/_file/_ges/honduras.pdf

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Structure & Organization

Mexico Organizational Phase		Age	Mexico Grade/Year	U.S. Grade Equivalent	U.S. Organizational Equivalent
Preescolar/Preparatorio		3	Primero preescolar	Pre-K	Pre-School
	Preescolar	4	Segundo preescolar	Pre-K	
		5	Tercero preescolar	Kindergarten	Primary
Educación Primaria y Secundaria (Compulsory Education)	Primaria	6	1 ^o	1 st	
		7	2 ^o	2 nd	
		8	3 ^o	3 rd	
		9	4 ^o	4 th	
		10	5 ^o	5 th	
	Secundaria	11	6 ^o	6 th	Middle
		12	7 ^o	7 th	
		13	8 ^o	8 th	
Media Superior		14	9 ^o	9 th	Secondary
		15	10 ^o	10 th	
		16	11 ^o	11 th	
Educación Superior		17	12 ^o	12 th	Post-Secondary/ Higher Education
		18 and above			

Language

Spanish is the national language of the Mexico and is the language of instruction. There is a percentage of the population of Mexico that continues to speak various indigenous languages.

Compulsory Education

In 2009, the age of compulsory education in Mexico was lowered to include 4 and 5 year olds. In 1993, the law was changed to extend compulsory education through the first two years of high school. Thus, compulsory education in Mexico is from age 4 through 15.

Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education in Mexico lasts from age 3 through age 5. As of 2009, ages 4 and 5 are considered compulsory, however, these first two years are not pre-requisite to attend Primary Education. There are three preschool options: general programs, indigenous programs and community programs.

Primary Education

Primary education begins at age 6 and lasts for 6 years, generally until age 11. For students who enter school older than age 6 or who must repeat grades, obligatory primary education can last through age 15. As with

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preschool, there are 3 primary school categories for children: general, indigenous and community. In addition, there is a separate primary education program for adults needing a basic education. Regardless of program type, primary education is required to continue onto the secondary level.

Secondary Education

Secondary education is divided into two segments. The first three years, generally from age 12 to 14, are part of the compulsory education system and are requisite for admission to the final three years. Students older than 16 who have not completed the first three years have the option to move into secondary studies for the workforce or to the adult education system.

The final three years generally serves students aged 15-17 and is referred to as “educación media superior.” This final phase prepares students for the workforce or gives them the option to continue on to higher education. Three diploma options for students are “*el bachillerato general*,” “*el bachillerato tecnológico*,” or “*la educación profesional técnica*.”

Grading Systems

Mexico			U.S. Equivalent
9 – 10	90 – 100	Muy Bien (MB)	A (Very Good)
8	80 – 89	Bien (B)	B (Good)
6 – 7	60 – 79	Suficiente (S)	C (Average Sufficient)
0 – 5	0 – 59	Reprobado (R)	F (Fail)

Resources

<http://www.ethnologue.com/country/MX>

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Mexico.pdf

<http://www.palmbeachschools.org/multicultural/documents/TranscriptGuide.pdf>

http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/ges/Mexico.pdf