



5.1 Federal Government

Pop: 1,400,685

K–12 Schools: 2,230

K–12 Students: 138,400

of K–12 DE Programmes: 5

of K–12 DE Students: 1,805+

First Nations and their regional organizations have responsibility for managing and delivering education programmes and services in a number of band-operated schools on reserve across Canada. In addition, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) delivers services directly on reserve in seven federally operated schools and covers the tuition costs for First Nation children attending provincial schools off-reserve but who still live on reserve.

Distance Programmes

At present, there is a total of five K–12 distance education programmes that fall under federal jurisdiction. Two of these are located in Ontario (i.e., Keewaytinook Internet High School and Gai hon nya ni: the Amos Key Jr. E-Learning Institute), one in Manitoba (i.e., Wapaskwa Virtual Collegiate), one in Saskatchewan (i.e., Credenda Virtual High School) and one in Alberta (i.e., SCcyber E-learning Community). There are other First Nations, Metis and Inuit organizations that have been exploring the adoption of K–12 distance education. However, for a variety of reasons – lack of bandwidth or connectivity, lack of community buy-in, lack of expertise for implementation and others—they have not yet established distance education programmes.

Governance and Regulation

Approximately 60% of First Nations students attend schools on reserve. In support of these students, AANDC provides funding support directly to Band Councils and First Nations education organizations. First Nations or their respective regional organizations have responsibility for managing and delivering education programmes and services in band-operated schools on reserve.

For students who live on reserve but attend provincial schools off-reserve, AANDC pays the tuition that the applicable province charges for non-Aboriginal students. This is paid to the First Nation in question or directly to the provincial Ministry of Education, depending on the agreement in place.

AANDC also delivers services directly on reserve in seven federally operated schools. In 2011–2012, AANDC invested approximately \$1.55 billion in First Nations K–12 education to support First Nations and Inuit students across Canada. This funding was in addition to the approximately \$200 million to support infrastructure costs for education facilities.

Each K–12 distance education programme under federal jurisdiction enters into an agreement with AANDC to determine the nature of their funding arrangement. These agreements may be directly negotiated or reached through acceptance of a proposal to specific AANDC programmes. In addition to AANDC, each of the K–12 distance education programmes also has to work with the individual Ministry of Education in the province they operate in order to gain accreditation. The accreditation process involves a validation that the K–12 distance education programme is using provincial curriculum, which allows the programme to grant provincial credit. As Ministries cannot fund enrolment in these federal K–12 distance education programmes, the programme must also enter into agreements with individual school districts/divisions to serve off-reserve students.