



4.13 Nunavut (NU)

Pop: 35,591

K–12 Schools: 42

K–12 Students: 9,074

of K–12 DE Programmes: 1

of K–12 DE Students: 11

When Nunavut was first created, it continued to utilize the *Education Act, 1996*, a piece of legacy legislation from the Northwest Territories that was later replaced when the territory passed its own legislation. Similarly, Nunavut has also continued to utilize the legacy southern distance education programmes it inherited from the Northwest Territories.

Distance Programmes

Nunavut does not have any active K–12 distance education programmes. However, the territory has piloted distance education programmes in the past. Presently, a Nunavut-based distance education programme is under review by the Department of Education. The Department is examining how to best facilitate online distance education in classrooms across the territory and the costs associated with its delivery. The Department’s ability to deliver distance education is restricted by the lack of bandwidth capacity, the inconsistencies of availability and infrastructure across the territory.

At present, the territory relies upon the Alberta Distance Learning Center (ADLC) for the provision of distance learning courses to Nunavut secondary students (primarily in a print-based medium). During the 2012–2013 school year, 11 students were enrolled in distance education courses offered through ADLC. There may be students enrolled in distance education courses beyond the ADLC; however, this information is maintained at the school and Regional School Operations levels and is not available at the time of this update.

Governance and Regulation

There are no provisions regarding distance education for K–12 students in Nunavut’s *Education Act*. However, there are territorial agreements signed with individual distance education programmes authorized to provide services to Nunavut students in the K–12 system. At present, students wishing

to enrol in distance education courses contact their school Principal. The development of a ministerial directive regarding access to and delivery of distance education is underway.

Vignette: Students in a Southern Distance Education Program

Armaan – The distance learning programme I was enrolled in was with Vista Virtual School, a partner of the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC). I was enrolled for a total of four non-consecutive semesters of senior high school. I just did an online search to find the best programme. The courses were mostly based on online texts to read and videos to watch, with regular direction to refer to the textbooks. I was tested regularly through online assignments with questions in both multiple-choice and long answer formats. There were also a few courses that were partially or entirely completely on paper, where material had to be read in provided books and a series of booklets filled with questions on the topics had to be filled in and sent to the instructors to be graded. All exams were online and were held in the presence of an approved invigilator.

The main reason I took up distance education is because my parents moved to a small community in Nunavut for work. It was not much of a choice for me to take up distance learning. It was something I always wanted and this self-paced system would let me get as far ahead as I wanted. I found the material to be not much different than what I'd expect from a normal schooling setup. I found it relatively easy to get through, and with constant feedback and reminders from the instructors and markers, any fault was easily cleared up. The only real problems I found with that type of education were that I was never completely organized and it took away a major part of normal social interaction, with long gaps between workdays occurring regularly and my rarely ever interacting with any peers. Ultimately, I barely managed to finish before I normally would have, but apart from that, there was no real drawback. I applied to and got into the University of Calgary into my programme of choice. Content-wise, I feel like I had a better foundation due to the level of self-reliance distance learning fostered.

Zeeshan – I was enrolled in was the ADLC for a total of two academic years: grade seven and grade eight. My older brother was enrolled in it first and as it worked well for him I was enrolled as well. Two of the courses mainly consisted of reading text from either the website or from the textbook, followed by doing online assignments or doing tests. The other two courses consisted of doing readings from textbooks followed by pre-made assignment booklets, since I chose to take those two courses as text-based courses. All the courses ended with an exam taken online with an invigilator that needed to be approved beforehand by the ADLC staff.

I started distance learning because my family moved to a small town in Nunavut. To ensure I didn't fall behind, I started distance learning. The course material actually worked much better than I thought it would. The assignments took me through the lessons, which made it really easy for me to understand the concepts. The best part was the pacing. Since it was completely based on my skill level and understanding, I was free to go as quickly or as slow as I wanted. The few problems I faced concerned the

lack of feedback and the minimal amount of social interaction. Contact with teachers was always a very tricky process. With the time difference between, I always had trouble contacting them to seek direction. I mainly had to rely on e-mail for instructions. The social aspect of distance learning was very hard for me since I had no peers to interact with the entire time. However, the entire distance learning experience made me a very independent learner. I am currently in grade eleven and I feel that my two years doing distance learning has put me at an advantage since it taught me to problem solve and think for myself.