

## 3.11 Yukon (YT)

*Population: 36,700*

*Number of K-12 Schools: 28*

*Number of K-12 Students: 5,122*

*Number of K-12 Distance Education Programs: 1*

*Number of K-12 Distance Education Students: 182*



### K-12 Distance Programs

Yukon Education supports a Distributed Learning program that is managed by the Aurora Virtual School (AVS). In 2013-13 AVS managed courses for 42 home-educated students and 140 in-school students taking at least one online course. Some of the courses were led by AVS teachers using a combination of approaches including the use of Moodle as a learning management system, Blackboard Collaborate for live interaction, and various other online tools. Other students were enrolled with distributed learning schools in British Columbia.

In the 2013-14 school year there were eight blended learning programs in Yukon schools. The Watson Lake Secondary School blended learning project (as described in the vignette in the 2013 report) was in its first full year, while other small-scale blended learning programs started up during the year in Dawson City, Carmacks, Faro, Mayo, Ross River, Teslin and Whitehorse. Overall there were 132 students enrolled in at least one blended learning course and 18 teachers leading those courses.

In addition to distance education programs, Yukon Education also supports and tracks blended learning programs that fall under Staker and Horn's (2012) "flex" model. Yukon Education believes that blended learning and distance or distributed learning are the same only in that they are both facilitated by online content and learning management, but differ in two key components: in distance learning courses the student and teacher are always in separate locations and often working asynchronously, whereas in blended learning situations the teacher and student are together in the same place at the same time. It is the physical and temporal separation factors that lead us to make a clear distinction between distance learning and blended learning. However, many Yukon teachers use informal blended learning approaches for which Yukon Education does not keep data. For example the "rotation" model is very common in many schools but is not centrally tracked as to how teachers are "blending" computer lab use into their classroom programs.

### Governance and Regulation

There have been no recent changes to the governance and regulation of K-12 distance education in the Yukon. The *Education Act*, 2002 still allows the Minister of Education to provide distance education

courses and charge fees for students to access those courses. However, the 2003 decision to provide these distributed learning courses at no cost to students up to the age of 21 continues to be followed.

The Department of Education also continues to govern the operation of individual distance education programs in the Yukon through individual Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that it signs with each individual program. For example, the territory is in the process of finalizing additional MOUs with five new school districts in British Columbia to create partnerships with their respective distributed learning schools to provide course access to Yukon students. Finally, Yukon Education was granted associate membership in the British Columbia Learning Network (BCLN)<sup>4</sup> consortium.

<sup>4</sup>See <http://bclearningnetwork.com/>