



Northwest Territories (NT)

Population: 44,826

Number of K-12 Schools: 49

Number of K-12 Students: 8,700

Number of K-12 E-Learning Programs: 1

Number of K-12 E-Learning Students: 131

Governance and Regulation

The *Education Act, 2009* allows various educational bodies to “authorize, supervise and evaluate the use of distance learning programs in the provision of the education program” (p. 72). The Department of Education, Culture and Employment defines distance learning as the deliberate use of the Internet, the world wide web, and landlines to leverage communication tools, learning management systems, and resources to overcome geographic obstacles to accessing brick and mortar courses, disciplinary expertise, and student cohort formation. Since 2004, the Department has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC), which has historically been the main provider of distance education for Northwest Territories students. Additionally, section 3.3 of the *Northwest Territories School Handbook* outlines a series of requirements that schools must adhere to in order to participate in distance learning. While the document is primarily focused on describing distance learning and specific operational items related to schools participation in the ADLC, it does recommend that schools have a dedicated online facilitator, scheduled distance learning time in student timetables, a plan for students to complete courses in a timely manner, and access to additional relevant resources.

The Northwest Territories is nearing the end of its 10 year education renewal process (called *Education Renewal and Innovation*). The territorial government has made the development of and support for building its internal distance learning capacity a priority (see <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/education-renewal/northern-distance-learning>), along with the achievement of student outcomes to the same level as the rest of Canada. The Northern Distance Learning (NDL), which is a partnership with the Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories, is expected to play a significant part in achieving those priorities. NDL will undergo a formal evaluation in 2023-2025.

K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity

The Northern Distance Learning (NDL) program is currently in its third year of a three-year expansion. NDL teachers are based in Inuvik, typically with a small number of students from the host school enrolled in classes taught by these teachers. Students in 15 other schools access the course material online from their respective schools with the help of a local support person, and interact with the teacher and classmates through videoconferencing. The program uses Moodle for its learning management system. During the 2019-20 school year 85 students were enrolled in 201 NDL courses.

Additionally, during the 2019-20 school year there were approximately 46 grades 9-12 students enrolled in 106 distance learning courses offered through the ADLC.

K-12 Blended Learning Activity

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment defines blended learning as a formal education program where students learn in part through online delivery of content and instruction, and in part in a brick and mortar setting. This definition is consistent with the study's description of online distance learning, and, accordingly, consistent with the NDL as discussed in the previous section. There were no additional data related to blended learning provided.

Emergency Remote Teaching

Schools closed on March 16, 2020 and remote teaching began on April 14. The Government of the Northwest Territories created resources to support teachers in their planning for remote learning and a webpage dedicated to parents and guardians to assist their children. One of the larger boards in the Territory, Yellowknife School District #1, also made similar resources available through their website. Paper-based assignments and resources were made available to students with limited access to digital devices or the internet, and lessons focused on storytelling were also delivered through local radio stations. Learning and teaching asynchronously was emphasized. There were attendance expectations and report cards were delivered.