



## **Yukon (YT)**

Population: 35,874

Number of K-12 Schools: 33

Number of K-12 Students: 5,456

Number of K-12 Distance Learning Programs: 2

Number of K-12 Distance Learning Students: ~250

### **Governance and Regulation**

The *Education Act, 2002* allows the Minister of Education to provide distance education courses and charge fees for students to access those courses. Distance education is defined as a program of study or course taken by a student where the content and resources are sent to the student to work through independently of a school.

Yukon Education supports territorial-based online and blended learning programs. However, the Department still relies on a small number of distance learning providers in British Columbia.

For the most part, distance education is funded in the same manner as brick-and-mortar education. Parents may be eligible for reimbursement of essential school resources related to distance education and/or online learning as determined by the Deputy Minister.

### **K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity**

Aurora Virtual School is the only English-language online school in the territory and during the 2021-22 school year it enrolled a total of 220 students. The only French-language online program is École Nomade, which enrolled 20 students during the 2020-21 school year.

Additionally, there were also 10 students doing language courses delivered by online learning schools in British Columbia and French immersion courses in Ontario during the 2021-22 school year.

### **K-12 Blended Learning Activity**

Yukon Education defines blended learning as a formal education program in which a student learns in part through digitally managed content, instruction and feedback and in part through face-to-face group activities at a supervised physical location away from home and with some element(s) of student control over time, place, path and/or pace.

The Department funds a learning management system (i.e., *Moodle*) and digital content, which is made available to each of the territory's schools. Yukon Education uses the data from *Moodle* to formally track the number of students who are enrolled in at least one blended learning course. During the 2021-22 school year there were approximately 650 students engaged in K-12 blended learning.

## Remote Learning

### *Fall 2021 Reopening*

Schools opened to in-person learning for the 2021-22 school year with no mandatory physical distancing requirements but mandatory masking for students on buses and outside of classrooms. Even though students were in school full-time, a technology-enabled blended learning approach was adopted. This choice of mode was put in place so that teachers could combine in-person instruction with digitally managed instruction. With a bring your own device (BYOD) policy, if students needed a digital device school administrators were asked to loan the needed technology or find alternative solutions for students without internet connectivity. If caregivers chose not to have their child attend in-person learning, they also had the opportunity to enrol their child in the Aurora Virtual School or home education. To assist with a teaching focus of a 'trauma-informed leadership lens' for working with students and their 'recovery learning', a website was offered as a source for professional learning for teachers, which included pre-recorded videos (e.g., how to use assistive technology) (LaBonte et al., 2021).

### *2021-22 School Year*

As the new school year progressed, school closures for COVID outbreaks began with affected staff and students required to self-isolate at home and a mandatory mask requirement was reinstated November 13. Schools remained open to in-person learning and the planned return to school after December holidays on January 4, 2022 was not altered as in other jurisdictions. However, due to increasing community spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, new public health measures came into effect January 7, 2022 limiting personal gatherings, indoor and outdoor, a limit of 25 for recreational team sports practice with no games or travel allowed. The Yukon government began distributing rapid tests to schools and communities January 21. February saw the gradual release of community restrictions across Canada and the government increased capacities for indoor team sports for youth age 18 or under to 25 or fifty percent, whichever is less, February 5, later (February 11) for adults. However, mandatory masking remained in place in indoor and outdoor settings where physical distancing was not possible and limits on gatherings continued. Effective March 4 only the mandatory masking requirement remained in effect which was later lifted on March 18 (LaBonte et al., 2022).

## References

LaBonte, R., Barbour, M. K., & Mongrain, J. (2022). *Teaching during times of turmoil: Ensuring Continuity of learning during school closures*. Canadian eLearning Network.

<https://canelearn.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Teaching-During-Times-of-Turmoil.pdf>

LaBonte, R., Barbour, M. K., & Nagle, J. (2021). *Pandemic pedagogy in Canada: Lessons from the first 18 months*. Canadian eLearning Network.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gaNFXDCt44W9DaAC9iRAf33pDTKup2C8/view>