



Northwest Territories (NT)

Population: 45,605

Number of K-12 Schools: 49

Number of K-12 Students: 8,700

Number of K-12 Distance Learning Programs: 2

Number of K-12 Distance Learning Students: 177

Governance and Regulation

The current *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. The Department has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Vista Virtual School (operated by Pembina Hills) to also serve students from the Northwest Territories.

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 Alberta Distance Learning Centre (with whom the territory had MOU prior to Vista Virtual School), 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.

Finally, the Northwest Territories is nearing the end of its 10 year education renewal process (called *Education Renewal and Innovation*), which was originally launched in 2013. The territorial government has made the development of and support for building its internal distance learning capacity a priority, along with the achievement of student outcomes to the same level as the rest of Canada. The Northern Distance Learning, 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. Northern Distance Learning will undergo a formal evaluation in 2023-2025.

K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity

Northern Distance Learning teachers are based in Inuvik. Students from up to 20 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. During the 2022-23 school year 73 students were enrolled in 250 Northern Distance Learning courses.

Additionally, during the 2022-23 school year there were 104 grade 7-12 students enrolled in distance learning courses offered through the Vista Virtual School.

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 Northern Distance Learning as discussed in the previous section. There were no additional data related to blended learning provided.