



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: 103

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.

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, including: having 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 10-year education renewal process (called *Education Renewal and Innovation*) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action created the rationale for a territorial distance learning program for small community high schools with an emphasis on equitable learning conditions, synchronous and relational, as similar as possible to face-to-face opportunities students enjoy in schools in larger centers. The government’s distance learning solution, called Northern Distance Learning, is a partnership with the Beaufort Delta Divisional Education Council. Northern Distance Learning is expected to continue advancing the government’s priorities and commitments. Currently, Northern Distance Learning is undergoing a formal evaluation.

K-12 Distance and Online Learning Activity

Northern Distance Learning teachers are based in Inuvik. Students from up to 22 other schools access daily high school programming in a five block schedule with the help of a local support person(s) Students interact with teachers and classmates through videoconferencing and use of a learning management system on devices provided by the program. During the 2024-25 school year 81 students were enrolled in 209 Northern Distance Learning courses.

Additionally, during the 2024-25 school year there were 22 grade 7-12 students enrolled in 48 distance learning courses offered through the Vista Virtual School (operated by Pembina Hills

School Division in Alberta). Of these 48 enrollments, 26 were marked as complete and the others were withdrawn without funding.

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.

References

Government of the Northwest Territories. (n.d.). *Education Renewal*.
<https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/education-renewal>