

# VIDEOCONFERENCING IN ALBERTA



*Physics students learn about orbits from the Canadian Space Agency.*

*Videoconferencing gives Alberta's schools more 'reach to teach' and offers another way to deliver education and enrich learning experiences for students.*

**– Honourable Gene Zwozdesky,  
Minister of Alberta Education**

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF VIDEOCONFERENCING IN EDUCATION?

### For Students

#### Videoconferencing can:

- ✓ Link students to outside experts
- ✓ Bring together multiple classrooms
- ✓ Connect students with a teacher in a different location
- ✓ Allow students to take virtual field trips
- ✓ Provide support for students with special needs

### For Teachers

#### Videoconferencing enables:

- ✓ Collaboration with peers
- ✓ Access to formal and informal professional development
- ✓ Participation in graduate programs through various post-secondary institutions
- ✓ Opportunities for pre-service teachers to work with experienced teachers in today's classrooms

### For Administrators

#### Videoconferencing makes possible:

- ✓ Cost, time, and travel efficiencies for administrative meetings
- ✓ Interviews and consultations across distances
- ✓ Access to formal and informal leadership professional development

### For Parents and the Community

#### Videoconferencing supports:

- ✓ Access to expertise that is not locally available
- ✓ Increased access to education for the entire community



*Edmonton students connect with Canadian artist Robert Bateman to learn how to "look, see and draw" their wild neighbours.*



## ALBERTA EDUCATION CONTACT

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## WEB LINKS

<http://www.education.gov.ab.ca>  
<http://www.vcalberta.ca>  
<http://www.albertasupernet.ca>

Alberta



## THE ALBERTA VISION FOR VIDEOCONFERENCING

### The Alberta vision for videoconferencing includes:

- Expanded access to learning
- Connected and engaged learners
- Access to specialized services
- Collaborative professional development
- Administrative efficiencies
- A sustainable, standards-based system
- A universal culture of acceptance



*A Biology class explores DNA replication with experts at the Ontario Science Centre.*

## THE ALBERTA VIDEOCONFERENCING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

✓ **Research:** Alberta Education is supporting a range of applied research projects to investigate effective practices in the use of videoconferencing in a variety of learning and teaching environments. Results are shared across the province to inform effective decision-making.

✓ **Professional Development and Training Opportunities:** Alberta Education is providing funding support for technical training, pedagogical in-service and incorporation of videoconferencing as a delivery mechanism for professional learning.

✓ **Best Practice Videos:** Alberta Education is working with partners to develop a series of best practice videos to support professional development in the area of videoconferencing.

✓ **Online Support:** VCAAlberta.ca (<http://www.vcalberta.ca>) is an online community and resource portal that provides resources and effective practices for teachers, administrators and technical staff.

✓ **Infrastructure:** The Alberta SuperNet, a high-speed, high-capacity broadband network linking government offices, schools, healthcare facilities and libraries, will make videoconferencing a feasible option for jurisdictions previously limited by bandwidth restrictions. A centralized multi-point control unit is available for jurisdictions to use. The standard for SuperNet videoconferencing is the IP-based H.323 protocol. By 2006, each publicly-funded school jurisdiction in Alberta will have a minimum of two videoconferencing locations.