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

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

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

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.

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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: VCalberta.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.