

2014

Review of Aurora College Access Programs: Final Report



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Acronyms

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACCC	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
ALBE	Adult Literacy and Basic Education
ALDA	Access Longitudinal Data Analysis
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
CAE	Community Adult Educator
CanNor	Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CLC	Community Learning Centres
DS	Developmental Studies
ECE	Education, Culture and Employment
ENRT	Environment and Natural Resources Technology
ENRTP	Environment and Natural Resources Technology Program
GED	General Educational Development
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
IALSS	International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey
NABE	Northern Adult Basic Education
NWT	Northwest Territories
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SFA	Student Financial Assistance
SRS	Student Record System
TEE	Trades Entrance Exam
TEP	Teacher Education Program
TOR	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

Project Purpose

The purpose of the *Review of Aurora College Access Programs* was to determine how well Aurora College Access programs are meeting the needs of students in the NWT, and to bring forth concrete recommendations about how the programs can be modified or improved to better meet the needs of students.¹ This project was funded by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) under the Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) program.

Program Profile

Aurora College offers a number of college preparatory programs known collectively as Access programs. Aurora College Access programs primarily focus on student academic readiness. Initially, Access programs were designed to prepare students academically for entrance into selected certificate, diploma, degree, and trades programs, but the intended purposes have broadened over time and now include additional Aurora College programs. Access programs are one or two semester programs, and delivery of Access programs takes place primarily at the three campuses. Currently, Aurora College offers the following seven Access programs:

- Nursing Access
- Teacher Education Access
- Social Work Access
- Environmental and Natural Resources Technology (ENRT) Access
- Business Administration Access
- Trades Access
- Trades Access II

Methodology

This review was based on mixed social research methods that gathered both quantitative and qualitative data on program activities, outputs, and outcomes from a variety of stakeholders. These are the main sources of data gathered and analysed for the review:

- A detailed review of documentation related to Aurora College Access programs
- Surveys of Aurora College Access program stakeholders
- Interviews with key Aurora College program stakeholders
- A focus group with key Aurora College program stakeholders
- Interviews with external experts in the field of access programming

¹ Aurora College. (2012). *Request for Proposals: Review of Aurora College Access Programs* (October 26, 2012). pp. 7-8.

- A detailed statistical profile and analysis of the Aurora College's Student Record System (SRS) data relating to Access programs (2002/03 to 2011/12)
- Access programs financial information
- Other educational data

As part of the review, a logic model and a review framework were designed for the seven Access programs. The logic model describes the linkages between program activities and the achievement of program outcomes. The review framework sets out the strategy for an in-depth look at how well the programs are performing. The key evaluation issues addressed relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness. The questions for the Survey of Access Program Stakeholders were drawn directly from the review framework. Convergence of evidence from eight lines of inquiry (data sources) was used to determine the degree of relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness.

Review Findings:

Relevance

Evidence from the review supports the continued need and relevance of Aurora College Access programs in the NWT. The data gathered for the review confirms the following:

- Access programs are needed.
- The needs that the Access programs are designed to address had not changed but had intensified.
- The goals of the programs are clearly understood by stakeholders.
- The goals of the programs are consistent with current Aurora College, Department of ECE and GNWT priorities.

Success

Evidence from the review clearly demonstrates that Aurora College Access programs increase college access, in particular, for Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students comprise 86% of the enrollments in Access programs. Access programs enhance students' abilities to gain entry to and to be successful in college and university programs. The data shows the following successes:

- The majority of Access students completed their Access program (52%; n= 517).
- The majority of Access students went on to enrol in other Aurora College programs or courses (73%; n=882).
- There were no statistically significant differences between former Access students and direct entry students in completion rates during the first year of post-secondary studies.
- Access programs are meeting students' academic needs.

- Academic entrance and exit requirements for each of the Access programs are generally at the appropriate level for student success.
- The program delivery model is appropriate and the ratio of academic general courses to specialty courses is effective.
- The delivery of Access Programs across the three campuses is effective.
- Unexpected positive impacts related to academic and non-academic student outcomes occur that meet GNWT and Aurora College goals and objectives.
- Enrollments in Access Programs have doubled in the past six years (2007/08-2012/13).

Evidence from the review identifies the following challenges:

- Less than one-third (32%; n = 391) of the 1,205 students in Access programs went on to enroll in a parent or related program.
- The academic, administrative, and operational linkages between Access and parent programs are ineffective.
- Attrition rates in Access programs were high (48%; n=476).
- Former Access students were less academically successful in degree and apprenticeship programs than in certificate and diploma programs.
- Ethnicity, gender, and home community are related to student academic success within Access programs, and whether students progressed on to parent and related programs.
- The profile of students entering Access programs is changing significantly.

Cost-effectiveness

Evidence from the review reveals these findings on the topic of cost effectiveness:

- Access program funding is primarily from ALBE base funding (with some third-party funding and tuition fees).
- Current resources are being used effectively because of the good management of the Developmental Studies staff and the draw on ALBE funding to offset program shortfalls.
- Access programs are remaining within budget because of effective management and use of ALBE funding to offset program shortfalls. There is no budget for the Trades Access II.
- The proper accounting and reporting procedures are being used.
- Access programs do not duplicate other Aurora College, Department of ECE or GNWT initiatives.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Aurora College Access programs are critical to the NWT because these programs address academic prerequisite barriers and increase the number of students eligible to enter post-secondary programs. This review shows that Access programs are relevant, needed, somewhat successful, and cost-effective. The key recommendations are presented here.

1. Continue to offer Access programs at Aurora College, and initiate promotional and recruitment strategies specifically for Access programs.
2. Raise the profile of Access programs.
3. Restructure the Nursing, Teacher Education, Business Administration, Environment and Natural Resources Technology, and Social Work Access programs into a generic program that offers streaming options for students in the second semester.
4. Establish a coordinated approach to Trades Access and Trades Access II with the School of Trades, and allocate appropriate ongoing resources for the delivery of these programs.
5. Improve screening and placement in-take processes for Access students, and utilize appropriate placement tools.
6. Improve academic, administrative, and operational linkages between Access programs and certificate, diploma, and degree programs within the Aurora College system.
7. Target and address the underlying causes of student attrition such as lack of childcare, lack of consistent tutoring supports across all three campuses, lack of financial resources, lack of pre-emptive and ongoing counselling, lack of academic preparedness, and lack of support and encouragement from family members regarding the value of a post-secondary education.
8. Develop and implement strategies to better prepare and support students for academic life at the campuses in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife.
9. Offer instructors appropriate and relevant in-service and training opportunities and supports to address the challenges they face in the classroom.
10. Allocate sufficient human and financial resources for the delivery of Access programs at each campus.
11. Continue to provide Student Financial Assistance to Access students.
12. Develop better data collection systems, and link those systems to other databases such as the Student Financial Assistance and Apprenticeship databases housed in the Department of ECE.
13. Design a logic model, performance monitoring framework, and an evaluation framework so that Access programs can be monitored on a 3-year cycle.
14. Conduct research on the low rates of Access students progressing into parent and related programs and the differences in academic success between sub-groups of Access students (gender, ethnicity, and community of origin).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Program is being funded by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor). NABE is designed to improve access to basic skills upgrades, including improved literacy and numeracy so that working-age adults are better positioned to participate in the labour market. This program will ensure that more Northerners can benefit from local employment opportunities by helping prepare them to either enter the workforce directly or take vocational training.

The Northwest Territories (NWT) portion of federal funding is approximately \$9.1M and covers the period from early 2012 to March 31, 2016. A strategy and a workplan were developed prior to funding for the 2012/13 to 2015/16 period flowing to Aurora College. The strategy and workplan were based on research and developed in consultation with Aboriginal² stakeholder organizations, training partners, and students.³

One of the projects outlined in the strategy and workplan is an independent Review of Aurora College Access Programs. The purpose of the review was to determine how well Aurora College Access programs are meeting the needs of students in the NWT, and to bring forth concrete recommendations about how the programs can be modified or improved to better meet the needs of students.⁴ This is the final report for that project.

The main sections of this report are as follows:

- Section 2: Background
- Section 3: Methodology
- Section 4: Results
- Section 5: Analysis
- Section 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

A detailed methodology is included as Appendix I. Additional statistical data on Access programs is included as Appendix II. The Access Programs Review Framework is included as Appendix III. Detailed

² For the purposes of this review, the term Aboriginal is used to describe First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people.

³ Aurora College. (2012). *Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Program: Strategy and Workplan 2012-2016*, p. iii.

⁴ Aurora College. (2012). *Request for Proposals: Review of Aurora College Access Programs* (October 26, 2012). pp. 7-8.

financial information is included as Appendix IV. Detailed descriptions of participant suggestions are included as Appendix V.

1.1 Complexity of the Review

The Review of Aurora College Access Programs involved the examination of seven different Access programs: Nursing Access, Teacher Education Access, Social Work Access, Environmental and Natural Resources Technology (ENRT) Access, Business Administration Access, Trades Access and Trades Access II. Six of these seven Access programs share a common goal, which is to prepare students for entry into select post-secondary programs. In contrast, the goal of the seventh program, Trades Access II, is to prepare students to successfully pass the Trades Entrance Exam (TEE). The number of programs under review and the differences in program goals add to the complexity of the review.

Since this review is the first formal examination of Access programs at Aurora College, it is by design comprehensive. For example, the review assessed how students are performing within and beyond Access programs. Specifically, data from the Aurora College Student Record System (SRS) was used to analyse student academic performance in three areas:

- 1) in Access programs,
- 2) in programs post-Access, and
- 3) between former Access students and direct entry students in parent and related programs (see Section 1.2 for definitions of “direct entry” students and “parent and related” programs).

Examining these three aspects of student academic performance adds to the complexity of the review.

To further complicate matters, the intended purposes of Access programs have broadened over time. While the original intention of the Aurora College Access programs was to prepare students for entry into the following parent programs: Nursing, Teacher Education, Social Work, ENRTP, Business Administration, and apprenticeship or trades college programs, the intended purposes have evolved and now include entry into related programs. The following two examples illustrate the concept of broader intended purposes. Instead of students going from Nursing Access into the Nursing program, students are now enrolling in other health related programs such as the Community Health Representative Certificate or the Long-Term Care Aide Diploma, and Business Administration Access students are now enrolling in the Office Administration Diploma or Certificate programs, as well as the Business Administration programs. Furthermore, many students are now choosing entirely different pathways unrelated to their initial Access program choices.

In summary, the number of programs, the differences in program goals, and the evolving nature of the intended purposes of Aurora College Access programs have added to the complexity of this review.

1.2 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

There are several key terms and concepts that were used in this review.

Academic Success: Essentially, academic success refers to a student completing all the requirements needed to pass a course or program. Academic success implies that the student possesses the academic competencies required for enrollment in further study or practice in an occupation.

Barriers: Barriers are the obstacles that students face entering and completing educational programs. The NWT Literacy Council (2013) has identified four common barriers:

“Situational: barriers related to a learner’s circumstances, such as family responsibilities, and lack of money, housing, childcare

Attitudinal: barriers related to how learners see themselves, such as embarrassment, shame, lack of confidence, and low self-esteem

Academic: barriers related to negative experiences with school, such as residential school, leaving school early, lack of family support, poor grade level skills

Institutional: barriers related to education policy and practices, such as strict attendance rules, not recognizing prior learning, lack of student supports and resources, and high fees “⁵

Course Completions: A student was classified as “Completing” courses if that student “Completed Requirements”, received “Credit” or “Transfer Credit”, or received course “Equivalency” as defined by the *Aurora College Policy on the Grading of Courses (C.25)*. Course completion was used as a proxy indicator of student academic success because of limitations within the SRS system (see Section 3.9).

There were two exceptions for the calculation of completions of courses for the SRS data:

- If a student did not complete all of the Access courses, but was accepted into a parent or related program, then that student was deemed to have “conditionally completed” all of the courses in his or her Access program.
- Since the Trades Access II Program has a different goal than the other six Access programs (i.e., successfully writing the TEE, rather than just successfully completing courses), students in that program who may have failed some of their courses but who still passed the TEE were deemed to have “conditionally completed” all of their courses.

⁵ NWT Literacy Council. (2013). *Factors that Facilitate Adult Learner Success in the NWT*. p. 2

Direct Entry Students: A direct entry student is a student who entered a parent or related program (see definition below) without first enrolling in an Access program. In other words, the student already has the academic qualifications and prerequisites needed to enroll in the certificate, diploma or degree program.

General and Specialized Delivery Models: A general delivery model includes a blend of approximately 80% ALBE (including Alberta Education) courses and up to 20% specialty courses. Developmental Studies instructors teach most of the courses in the general delivery model using a master timetable. The Nursing Access, Teacher Education Access, Social Work Access, Environmental and Natural Resources Technology (ENRT) Access, Business Administration Access, and Trades Access programs use a general program delivery model. However, Trades Access II is an example of a specialized delivery model because it relies on trades-related curriculum and operates separately from the School of Developmental Studies.

General and Specialty Courses: A general course is an ALBE course. A specialty course is a parent-related course. As an example, Business Administration Access offers four ALBE courses and one business administration related course – Bookkeeping 1. In contrast, Trades Access II uses exclusively specialty courses such as Trades math, Trades English and Trades science.

Non-academic Outcomes: “Non-academic outcomes are positive, personal, and social outcomes related to improved self-confidence, increased ability to set and achieve goals, stronger interpersonal relationships, new communication skills and better practical skills for everyday life.”⁶

Parent and Related Programs: For the purposes of this review, the Aurora College parent programs include Nursing, Teacher Education, Social Work, ENRTP, Business Administration, Apprenticeship and Trades programs. A related program is a program that has a connection to or relationship with the parent program. For example, the Office Administration Certificate and Diploma programs would be considered related programs to the Business Administration parent program. Thus, the term “parent and related” programs is used throughout this report. See Table 2.2.3.1 (in Appendix II) for the list of Access and parent and related programs.

Programs/Courses: One of the tasks of this review was to track Access students in other Aurora College programs after they completed an Access program. One of the requirements of CanNor reporting on NABE funding is that Aurora College track students in short courses that lead to employment. This employment-type training includes both individual courses (such as First Aid, firearms training, etc.), as well as 2-3 month employment training programs (such as Camp Cook,

⁶ NWT Literacy Council. (2013). *Factors that Facilitate Adult Learner Success in the NWT*. p.5.

Building Trades Helper, etc.).⁷ Since Aurora College needs to track students in both formal programs and single short courses, the term “programs/courses” is used throughout this report. However, it should be noted that there are important differences between a 4-year degree program and a 2-week course.

Relevance, Success, and Cost-Effectiveness: These three terms are the key evaluation issues included in the Access Programs Review Framework (see Appendix III).

- **Relevance** - Does the program continue to be consistent with departmental and government-wide priorities, and does it realistically address an actual need?
- **Success** - Is the program effective in meeting its intended outcomes, within budget and without unwanted negative outcomes? Is the program making progress toward the achievement of the final outcomes?
- **Cost-Effectiveness** - Are the most appropriate and efficient means being used to achieve outcomes, relative to alternative design and delivery approaches?⁸

Statistically Significant: Statistically significant means that if a similar analysis of other Access programs data was undertaken, these same results are highly likely to emerge. In other words, the results presented in this report are not just due to chance.

2. BACKGROUND

This section provides the following information:

- An overview of Access programs at Aurora College
- A statistical profile of Access programs at Aurora College for the 2002/03 to 2011/12 period
- A summary of challenges faced by Aboriginal students accessing college programs

⁷ See Table 2.2.2.4 for full details on other Aurora College program/courses.

⁸ Treasury Board Secretariat. (2001). *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks*, p. 22.

2.1 Overview of Access Programs at Aurora College

College preparatory programs aim to increase college access, particularly for those students who do not meet specific program eligibility requirements or who need additional supports to be successful in a college environment.⁹ These preparatory programs take many forms and serve a variety of students. Some college preparatory programs focus on increasing academic readiness, and other preparatory programs specialize in support services such as counselling, financial planning, tutoring, and mentoring. These programs prepare students for further post-secondary educational options.

Aurora College offers a number of college preparatory programs known collectively as *Access programs*. In 1993, Aurora College initiated its first Access program, the Northern Nursing Access Year.¹⁰ Aurora College designed this Access program to prepare Northern learners, particularly Aboriginal learners, for the inaugural Northern Nursing program. The rationale for the Northern Nursing program acknowledged the need for Northerners in nursing, citing statistics related to the number of NWT registered nurses practicing nursing in the NWT (565) and the high turnover rates in various communities (1989 – 70% and 1992 – 29.8%).¹¹ Further justification was based on these factors:

- The need for employment opportunities in the communities
- The need to provide education as close to the students' home communities as possible
- The need to ensure that health care workers understand the language and culture of those they serve
- The need to design a northern nursing program that enhances prior learning and that integrates academic upgrading
- The strong demand for and the short supply of health care professionals, particularly professionals of Aboriginal descent
- The interest based on a 1991 Department of Health and Social Services survey among NWT high school students, adult students, and health employees in studying nursing¹²

The rationale for the Northern Nursing Access Year recognized the low high school graduation rates, particularly among Aboriginal students, and the need to prepare students academically for entry into the Registered Nursing Year 1. The Northern Nursing Access Year was designed to encourage Aboriginal participation in nursing, and it was tailored to meet the specific English, mathematics, and

⁹ National Conference of State Legislatures. (2012). *College Preparatory Programs*. Retrieved October 27, 2012, from www.ncsl.org

¹⁰ Moffitt, P. (2003). *A History of Nursing Education in the Northwest Territories*. p.1.

¹¹ Arctic College. (1992). *Arctic College Nursing Diploma: A Proposal*. p. 41.

¹² Ibid., pp. 9-12.

science entrance requirements of the diploma-nursing program.¹³ In addition to academic preparation, Nursing Access Year offered personal and financial supports to students.

Aurora College Access programs primarily focus on academic readiness although some college and career preparation courses and some support services are in place and vary by campus. Access programs are one or two semester programs initially designed to prepare students academically for entrance into selected certificate, diploma, degree, and trades programs. Delivery of Access programs takes place primarily at the three campuses, with occasional community deliveries. For example, the Trades Access program is located at Thebacha Campus and has provided programming in Fort Providence and at the Hay River Dene Reserve.¹⁴

Currently, Aurora College offers the following seven Access programs:¹⁵

Nursing Access

The Nursing Access program is for students who would like to work in the health field but who do not meet the entry requirements for admission to the Nursing program. The program offers courses in math, English, and biology and two nursing-related courses, Nursing Access 1 and 2.¹⁶ Aurora Campus, Thebacha Campus, and Yellowknife Campus offer the Nursing Access program.

Teacher Education Access

The Teacher Education Access program prepares students academically and professionally for entry into the Bachelor of Education Degree program.¹⁷ The program offers courses in English, math, science, social studies, and computers and one education-related course, School Visits. All three Aurora College campuses enrol students in this program.

Social Work Access

The Social Work Access program is for students who would like to work in the social work field and who require additional academic preparation necessary for the rigours of college-level studies. In addition, opportunities for personal reflection and growth are integral to the preparation

¹³ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁴ Aurora College. (2012). *Trades Access Programs by Delivery Location*. Retrieved November 8, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

¹⁵ Aurora College. (2012). *Request for Proposals: Review of Aurora College Access Programs* (October 26, 2012). p. 7.

¹⁶ Aurora College. (2013). *Academic Calendar 2013-2014*. p.145.

¹⁷ Aurora College. (2000). *Aurora College Teacher Education Access Program Outline*. Retrieved November 8, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

process.¹⁸ The program offers courses in English, math, social studies, personal development, and computers and one social work-related course, Introduction to Social Work. This program is available at Aurora Campus and Yellowknife Campus.

Environmental and Natural Resources Technology (ENRT) Access

The ENRT Access program prepares students to meet the academic admission requirements for Aurora College's Environmental and Natural Resources Technology Diploma Program (ENRTP). The program provides courses in English, math, science, computers, and career preparation and one environment and natural resources - related course, ENRT Foundations 1.¹⁹ Students can enrol in this program at Aurora Campus and Thebacha Campus.

Business Administration Access

The Business Administration Access program provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to enter the Business Administration Certificate or Diploma programs.²⁰ The program offers courses in English, math, computers, and career preparation and one business-related course, Bookkeeping 1. This program is available at Thebacha Campus and Yellowknife Campus.

Trades Access

The Trades Access program prepares students for entry into trades-related programs. The students gain a foundation in physical science and have the opportunity to improve their skills in communications and technical mathematics. This 20 to 26-week program has four core courses and additional electives. The program is flexible enough to ensure that individualized programming will meet the students' needs not only in math, English, and science but also in courses in First Aid, occupational health and safety, driver's education, and computer skills training.²¹ Students can enrol in this program at Thebacha Campus.

Trades Access II

The Trades Access II program prepares students to challenge the Trades Entrance Exams. The goal of the program is for students to meet the demands of attending an educational institution as well as developing good habits for the workplace and college. This ten-month program offers Trades

¹⁸ Aurora College. (2005). *Social Work Access Program Outline*. Retrieved November 6, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

¹⁹ Aurora College. (2009). *ENRT Access Program Outline*. Retrieved November 6, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

²⁰ Aurora College. (2009). *Business Administration Access Program Outline*. Retrieved November 6, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

²¹ Aurora College. (2000). *Trades Access Program Outline*. Retrieved November 6, 2012, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

math, Trades English, and Trades science; physics; applied shop; work experience; driver's education; and an orientation to the workplace.²² This program is available at Aurora Campus.

The ALBE courses form building blocks for adults without a high school diploma. The ALBE program covers six levels from basic literacy (ALBE 110) to Grade 12 equivalency (ALBE 150 – 160). Courses in the ALBE program are English, math, science, social studies, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), College and Career Preparation, and Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) Portfolio Development. The ALBE program and ALBE courses are delivered through Aurora College Community Learning Centres and campuses, Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) correctional institutions, and non-governmental organizations in the Northwest Territories to assist adult learners to improve their literacy levels so that they can participate in further education or gain employment.

2.2 Statistical Profile of Access Programs at Aurora College (2002/03 to 2011/12)

This section of the report provides statistical information on these topics:

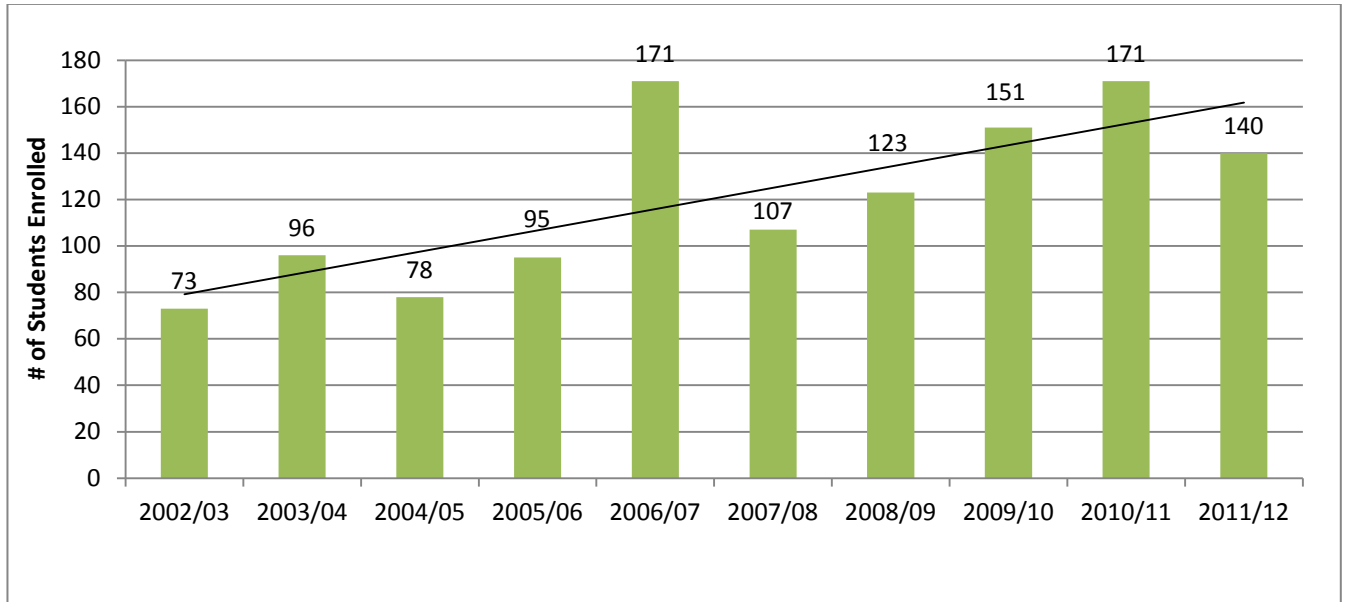
- Access programs
- Aurora College programs and courses enrolled in after students had taken an Access program (i.e., post-Access)
- How well former Access students did in the first year courses of parent and related programs compared to direct entry students (definition)

2.2.1 Access Programs

On average, there were 121 individual students enrolled in the seven Access programs at Aurora College each year between 2002/03 and 2011/12. Enrollments increased dramatically over that time span, climbing from an average of 86 students per year in the first four years to an average of 144 students per year in the last six years (as shown in Figure 2.2.1.1).

²² Aurora College. (2009, 2012). *Trades Access II Program Outline* (2009, 2012, revised but not approved). Inuvik.

Figure 2.2.1.1: Number of Students Enrolled in Access Programs (2002/03 to 2011/12)



This average of 121 students per year represents a total of 1,205 students who were enrolled in the seven Access programs between September 1, 2002 and June 30, 2012.²³

The demographic profile of students in Access programs is presented here:

- Aboriginal (86%; n = 1,031)
- Female (71%; n = 855)
- Full-time students (98%; n = 1,165)
- 25 years of age and under (55%; n = 665)

Additionally, as Tables 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2 show, the largest numbers of Access students were from the smaller NWT communities and had completed some high school before returning to further their education at Aurora College.

²³ Some students enrolled in more than one Access program over the time span considered; the number of unique students enrolled was 1,052.

Table 2.2.1.1: Home Community of Access Students (2002/03 to 2011/12)^{24,25}

	Number	Percent
Smaller Communities	407	51.7
Regional Centres	309	39.3
Yellowknife	71	9.0
Total	787	100.0

Please note:

- This information should be viewed with caution for two reasons: 1) Data for this variable was self-reported, and 2) the Student Record System (SRS) only contained data on 65% of students.

Table 2.2.1.2: Highest Schooling Completed – Access Students (2002/03 to 2011/12)

	Number	Percent
Less Than Grade 9	103	13.6
Some High School	353	46.7
Completed Grade 12	300	39.7
Total	756	100.0

Please note:

- This information should be viewed with caution for two reasons: 1) Data for this variable was self-reported, and 2) the SRS only contained data on 63% of students.

The average time students spent out of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) school system before returning to further their education at Aurora College was seven years. However, as Table 2.2.1.3 shows, this varied widely among students.

²⁴ Some information for some students was not available within the SRS. The result is that the number (N) of students for some variables was sometimes different. In this instance, the “home community” field within the SRS was missing for 418 students, so the number of students totaled 787 (rather than 1,205).

²⁵ The regional centres include Fort Smith, Hay River, and Inuvik.

Table 2.2.1.3: Length of Time Out of School before Returning to Aurora College (2002/03 to 2011/12)

	Number	Percent
1 Year or Less	158	20.4
2 to 5 Years	193	24.9
Between 5 and 10 Years	155	20.0
More Than 10 Years	268	34.6
Total	774	100.0

Please note:

- This information should be viewed with caution for two reasons: 1) Data for this variable was self-reported, and 2) the SRS only contained data on 64% of students.

As Table 2.2.1.4 shows, the majority of Access programming was delivered at the three Aurora College campuses (91%; n = 1,092).

Table 2.2.1.4: Delivery Location for Access Programs (2002/03 to 2011/12)

	Number	Percent
INUUVIK	476	39.5
FORT SMITH	318	26.4
YELLOWKNIFE	298	24.7
FORT PROVIDENCE	40	3.3
FORT SIMPSON	22	1.8
BEHCHOKO	17	1.4
FORT RESOLUTION	12	1.0
HAY RIVER	9	.7
HAY RIVER RESERVE	9	.7
FORT LIARD	4	.3
Total	1205	100.0

Among the campuses, as Table 2.2.1.5 shows, the largest number of Access students attended programs at Aurora Campus.

Table 2.2.1.5: Student Enrollments by Campus Location (2002/03 to 2011/12)

	Number	Percent
Aurora	476	43.6
Thebacha	318	29.1
Yellowknife/North Slave	298	27.3
Total	1092	100.0

Tables 2.2.1.6 and 2.2.1.7 show Access program enrollments by campus and Access program enrollments by year, respectively.

Table 2.2.1.6: Access Programs Enrollments by Campus (2002/03 to 2011/12)²⁶

		Aurora	Yellowknife	Thebacha	Totals
Nursing Access	Number	152	183	92	427
	Percent	35.6%	42.9%	21.5%	100.0%
Social Work Access	Number	41	43	10	94
	Percent	43.6%	45.7%	10.6%	100.0%
TEP Access	Number	99	32	84	215
	Percent	46.0%	14.9%	39.1%	100.0%
ENRT Access	Number	38	0	28	66
	Percent	57.6%	0.0%	42.4%	100.0%
Business Administration Access	Number	0	31	29	60
	Percent	0.0%	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%
Trades Access	Number	0	9	75	84
	Percent	0.0%	10.7%	89.3%	100.0%
Trades Access II	Number	146	0	0	146
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Number	476	298	318	1092
	Percent	43.6%	27.3%	29.1%	100.0%

Please note:

- Not every Access program is offered at every campus. For example, Trades Access II is only offered at Aurora Campus; Business Administration Access is only offered at the Yellowknife and Thebacha Campuses.
- The Trades Access program was offered only once at the Yellowknife Campus (in 2008/09).
- Some programs were delivered at the Community Learning Centres (CLCs)—that's why the N equals 1,092 rather than 1,205.

²⁶ Although the correct formal name is the Teacher Education Access program, the program is commonly referred to as TEP Access.

Table 2.2.1.7: Access Programs Enrollments by Year (2002/03 to 2011/12)

		Nursing Access	Social Work Access	TEP Access	ENRT Access	Business Administration Access	Trades Access	Trades Access II	Totals
2002/03	Number	45	12	14	0	2	0	0	73
	Percent	10.5%	12.8%	6.0%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.1%
2003/04	Number	37	6	25	12	0	0	16	96
	Percent	8.6%	6.4%	10.8%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	8.0%
2004/05	Number	39	5	24	0	0	0	10	78
	Percent	9.1%	5.3%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%	6.5%
2005/06	Number	38	8	25	0	3	8	13	95
	Percent	8.9%	8.5%	10.8%	0.0%	4.3%	4.7%	8.9%	7.9%
2006/07	Number	36	0	41	11	9	53	21	171
	Percent	8.4%	0.0%	17.7%	16.7%	13.0%	31.2%	14.4%	14.2%
2007/08	Number	42	8	20	0	0	17	20	107
	Percent	9.8%	8.5%	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	13.7%	8.9%
2008/09	Number	36	12	26	0	7	22	20	123
	Percent	8.4%	12.8%	11.2%	0.0%	10.1%	12.9%	13.7%	10.2%
2009/10	Number	46	7	20	19	18	20	21	151
	Percent	10.7%	7.4%	8.6%	28.8%	26.1%	11.8%	14.4%	12.5%
2010/11	Number	56	14	23	9	20	38	11	171
	Percent	13.1%	14.9%	9.9%	13.6%	29.0%	22.4%	7.5%	14.2%
2011/12	Number	53	22	14	15	10	12	14	140
	Percent	12.4%	23.4%	6.0%	22.7%	14.5%	7.1%	9.6%	11.6%
Total	Number	428	94	232	66	69	170	146	1205
	Percent	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Please note:

- Not every Access program is offered every year. For example, the ENRT Access program at Aurora Campus is offered every third year.

The majority of students (79%; n = 958) took only one Access program in the 2002/03 to 2011/12 time span. One-third of Access students (33%; n = 395) had been enrolled in ALBE programming before entering their Access program.

Overall, students enrolled in a total of 134 different courses across the seven Access programs. Table 2.2.1.8 shows the 25 most selected courses, the majority of which were ALBE courses. On average, each student enrolled in six courses per year within their Access program.

Table 2.2.1.8: 25 Most Selected Access Courses (2002/03 to 2011/12)

	Number	Percent
ENGLISH 150	887	9.3
MATH 140	575	6
MATH 130	529	5.6
BASIC INTRODUCTION TO COMPUTERS 130	484	5.1
NURSING ACCESS I	421	4.4
BIOLOGY 160	412	4.3
TRADES SCIENCE	381	4
TRADES MATH	353	3.7
TRADES ENGLISH	349	3.7
ENGLISH 140	287	3
NURSING ACCESS II	277	2.9
WORK EXPERIENCE	266	2.8
SOCIAL STUDIES 140	199	2.1
MATH 150	196	2.1
BIOLOGY 30	181	1.9
ENGLISH 160	174	1.8
SCIENCE 140	154	1.6
CAREER FOUNDATIONS (120/130)	145	1.5
CAREER COLLEGE PREPARATION (130/140)	138	1.4
SCIENCE 130	138	1.4
ENGLISH 30-2	127	1.3
MATH 145	119	1.2
BIOLOGY 20	113	1.2
SCHOOL VISITS	110	1.2
READY TO WORK NORTH	108	1.1
Totals	7123	74.6

Please note:

- This table presents only the top 25 most selected Access courses—that's why the N equals 7,123 (rather than 9,526) and why the % totals 74.6 (rather than 100.0).
- Courses have been updated and/or renamed over the ten-year period.

As Table 2.2.1.9 shows, the largest number of Access students were enrolled in the Nursing Access program during the 2002/03 to 2011/12 time span.

Table 2.2.1.9: Access Programs Student Enrollments by Access Program (2002/03 to 2011/12)²⁷

	Number	Percent
Nursing Access	428	35.5
TEP Access	232	19.3
Trades Access	170	14.1
Trades Access II	146	12.1
Social Work Access	94	7.8
Business Administration Access	69	5.7
ENRT Access	66	5.5
Total	1205	100.0

Of the 1,205 students who enrolled in Access programs in the 2002/03 to 2011/12 timeframe, just over half (52%; n = 517) completed all of the courses in their Access programs.²⁸ Table 2.2.1.11 shows that the highest completion rate was in the Trades Access program. Table 2.2.1.12 shows details on course completions by Access program by campus.

Table 2.2.1.11: Students Completing All Courses in Access Programs by Access Program (2002/03 to 2011/12)²⁹

	Did Not Complete		Completed		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Trades Access	46	34.1	89	65.9	135	100.0
Business Administration Access	26	40.6	38	59.4	64	100.0
TEP Access	88	43.1	116	56.9	204	100.0
Trades Access II	47	43.5	61	56.5	108	100.0
ENRT Access	25	48.1	27	51.9	52	100.0
Nursing Access	198	56.4	153	43.6	351	100.0
Social Work Access	46	58.2	33	41.8	79	100.0
Totals	476	47.9	517	52.1	993	100.0

Please note:

- The differences in completions among Access programs were not statistically significant, so no overall conclusions should be drawn from this data.

²⁸ This 52% of “Course Completions” also included 18% (n = 176) of students who were given “Conditional Completions” as defined in Section 1.2. See Table 2.2.1.10 in Appendix II for full details of conditional completions by Access program.

²⁹ Students who “withdrew” or who were “ongoing” or “in-progress” with their studies were not included in the calculation of whether they completed all of their Access courses—that’s why the N totals 993 rather than 1,205.

Table 2.2.1.12: Access Programs Course Completions by Campus (2002/03 to 2011/12)

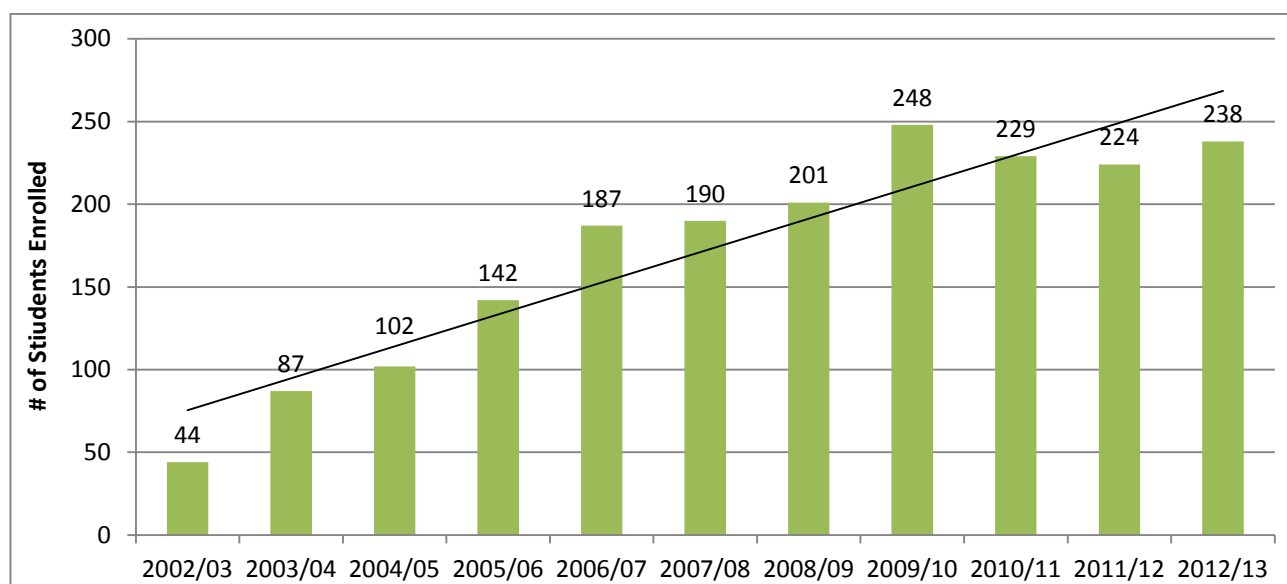
Campus			Did Not Complete All Access Courses	Completed All Access Courses	
Aurora	Nursing Access	Number	62	52	114
		Percent	54.4%	45.6%	100.0%
	Social Work Access	Number	21	12	33
		Percent	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%
	TEP Access	Number	37	45	82
		Percent	45.1%	54.9%	100.0%
	ENRT Access	Number	14	14	28
		Percent	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Trades Access II	Number	47	61	108
		Percent	43.5%	56.5%	100.0%
	Total		Number	181	365
			Percent	49.6%	100.0%
Yellowknife	Nursing Access	Number	97	60	157
		Percent	61.8%	38.2%	100.0%
	Social Work Access	Number	20	19	39
		Percent	51.3%	48.7%	100.0%
	TEP Access	Number	20	11	31
		Percent	64.5%	35.5%	100.0%
	Business Administration Access	Number	12	18	30
		Percent	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	Trades Access	Number	2	7	9
		Percent	22.2%	77.8%	100.0%
	Total		Number	151	266
			Percent	56.8%	100.0%
Thebacha	Nursing Access	Number	39	41	80
		Percent	48.8%	51.2%	100.0%
	Social Work Access	Number	5	2	7
		Percent	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
	TEP Access	Number	24	51	75
		Percent	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%
	ENRT Access	Number	11	13	24
		Percent	45.8%	54.2%	100.0%
	Business Administration Access	Number	10	17	27
		Percent	37.0%	63.0%	100.0%
	Trades Access	Number	26	28	54
		Percent	48.1%	51.9%	100.0%
	Total		Number	115	267
			Percent	43.1%	100.0%
Total	Nursing Access	Number	198	153	351
		Percent	56.4%	43.6%	100.0%
	Social Work Access	Number	46	33	79
		Percent	58.2%	41.8%	100.0%
	TEP Access	Number	81	107	188
		Percent	43.1%	56.9%	100.0%
	ENRT Access	Number	25	27	52
		Percent	48.1%	51.9%	100.0%
	Business Administration Access	Number	22	35	57
		Percent	38.6%	61.4%	100.0%
	Trades Access	Number	28	35	63
		Percent	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
	Trades Access II	Number	47	61	108
		Percent	43.5%	56.5%	100.0%
	Total		Number	447	898
			Percent	49.8%	100.0%

Please note: - Some courses were delivered in communities—that's why the N totals 898 rather than 993.
 - The differences in course completions among campuses were not statistically significant.

2.2.2 Programs/Courses Post-Access

Of the 1,205 students who enrolled in the seven Access programs from 2002/03 to 2011/12, 73% (n = 882) went on to enroll in other Aurora College programs/courses between 2002/03 and 2012/13. This translated into an average of 154 individual students enrolled in the other Aurora College programs/courses each year. Enrollments in programs/courses taken post-Access increased dramatically over that time span—climbing from an average of 94 students per year in the first four years to an average of 217 students per year in the last seven years. These 154 students per year represented a total of 1,892 student registrations³⁰ over the 2002/03 to 2012/13 time span, as shown in Figure 2.2.2.1.

Figure 2.2.2.1: Number of Access Students Enrolling in Programs/Courses Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)



The demographic profile of students taking Aurora College programs/courses post-Access was similar to the profile of students taking Access programs: Students were primarily Aboriginal (85%; n = 1,605), female (74%; n = 1,406), from the smaller NWT communities (50%; n = 626), and studying full-time (53%; n = 1,009), and they had completed some high school before returning to further their education at Aurora College (45%; n = 546).

³⁰ The actual number of unique students enrolled in programs/courses post-Access was 882; but because some students enrolled in more than one program or course post-Access, the number of student registrations was 1,892.

The only difference between Access students and students taking programs/courses post-Access was that students taking programs/courses post-Access were older: The majority (59%; n = 1,110) were over 25 years of age.

The average time between finishing Access and starting a new program was one and a half years. However, as Table 2.2.2.1 shows, the majority of students started their next program within one year of completing their Access program.

Table 2.2.2.1: Time before Starting Next Program/Course Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Started Next Program Within 1 Year	986	52.1
Started Next Program Within 2 Years	292	15.4
Started Next Program More Than 2 Years Later	614	32.5
Total	1892	100.0

The majority of programming post-Access was delivered at the three Aurora College campuses (76%; n = 1,431). As Table 2.2.2.2 shows, the largest number of Access students attended programs at Aurora Campus.

Table 2.2.2.2: Student Enrollments by Campus Location – Programs/Courses Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)³¹

	Number	Percent
Aurora	583	40.7
Yellowknife/North Slave	465	32.5
Thebacha	383	26.8
Total	1431	100.0

On average, each student enrolled in five courses per year post-Access. Of the former Access students who went on to programs/courses post-Access, 40% (n = 756) had been enrolled in ALBE programming before entering their Access program and 18% (n = 339) had been enrolled in more than one Access program before doing so.

As Table 2.2.2.3 shows, students from Nursing Access and Teacher Education Access made up the majority of students who went on to enroll in other Aurora College programs/courses post-Access.

³¹ Some courses were delivered at the Community Learning Centres—that's why the N totals 1,493 rather than 1,892.

Table 2.2.2.3: Students Enrolled in Programs/Courses Post-Access – by Access Program (2002/03 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Nursing Access	329	37.3
TEP Access	180	20.4
Trades Access	111	12.6
Trades Access II	96	10.9
Social Work Access	70	7.9
ENRT Access	51	5.8
Business Administration Access	45	5.1
Totals	882	100.0

The 59 different programs that students took after enrolling in Access can be grouped into nine categories as shown in Table 2.2.2.4.³²

³² These categories are consistent with indicators developed by CanNor for NABE reporting. See Table 2.2.2.5 (Appendix II) for details of where each of the 59 programs fit into the nine categories.

Table 2.2.2.4: Enrollments by Program Groupings – Programs/Courses Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)^{33,34}

	Number	Percent
Employment Training (Non-Credit) Courses	535	28.3
Further Academic Upgrading	376	19.9
Diploma Programs	351	18.6
Degree Programs	303	16.0
Employment Training Programs	107	5.7
Certificate Programs	103	5.5
Apprenticeship Programs	52	2.8
Access Programs	43	2.3
Pre-Apprenticeship Programs	19	1.0
Total	1889	100.0

Overall, just under two thirds (63%; n = 1,109) of students completed all of their courses in programs/courses post-Access—although there was a wide variance in completion rates (as shown in Table 2.2.2.6).

³³ “Employment Training (Non Credit) Courses” are a collection of short courses such as Driver Education Training (for various classes of driver licences), Firearms Safety, First Aid, Ready to Work North, and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). When these courses are offered separately or outside of a traditional College program, they are considered non-credit courses. However, they are popular with students because many of them (e.g. WHMIS, First Aid, driver training) need to be completed prior to students being hired for a job. “Further Academic Upgrading” refers to taking ALBE courses via regular delivery and ALBE courses via distance delivery from other institutions such as the Alberta Distance Learning Centre, Chinook College, and Northern Lakes College. “Employment Training Programs” are usually 12-14 week-long programs that provide students with the knowledge and skills to pursue employment in various areas. These programs include Camp Cook, Building Trades Helper, Introduction to Underground Mining, and Mineral Processing Operator Pre-Employment Training. “Pre-Apprenticeship Programs” are 12 weeks in length and are designed to train and prepare students to find apprenticeship-level work in the carpentry, electrical, heavy equipment technician, housing maintainer, and plumber/gasfitter trades.

³⁴ Records for 3 students were excluded because the programs they were in fall outside of the nine categories—that’s why the N totals 1,889 rather than 1,892.

Table 2.2.2.6: Completion Rate by Program Grouping – Programs/Courses Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)³⁵

	Did Not Complete		Completed		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Apprenticeship Programs	3	5.8	49	94.2	52	100.0
Employment Training (Non-Credit) Courses	73	13.6	462	86.4	535	100.0
Pre-Apprenticeship Programs	3	15.8	16	84.2	19	100.0
Employment Training Programs	18	18.2	81	81.8	99	100.0
Certificate Programs	25	25.8	72	74.2	97	100.0
Diploma Programs	135	40.4	199	59.6	334	100.0
Access Programs	12	44.4	15	55.6	27	100.0
Degree Programs	178	60.1	118	39.9	296	100.0
Further Academic Upgrading	196	66.9	97	33.1	293	100.0
Totals	643	36.7	1,109	63.3	1,752	100.0

2.2.3 Parent and Related Programs

Of the 1,205 students enrolled in the seven Access programs between 2002/03 and 2011/12, just under one-third (32%; n = 391) went on to enroll in a parent or related program between 2003/04 and 2012/13.³⁶

The 391 students who went on to enroll in a parent or related program between 2003/04 and 2012/13 translated into an average of 39 former Access students enrolled in parent and related programs each year. As shown in Figure 2.2.3.1, enrollments increased dramatically over the time span of 2003/04 to 2012/13, climbing from an average of 28 students per year in the first four years to an average of 47 students per year in the last six years.

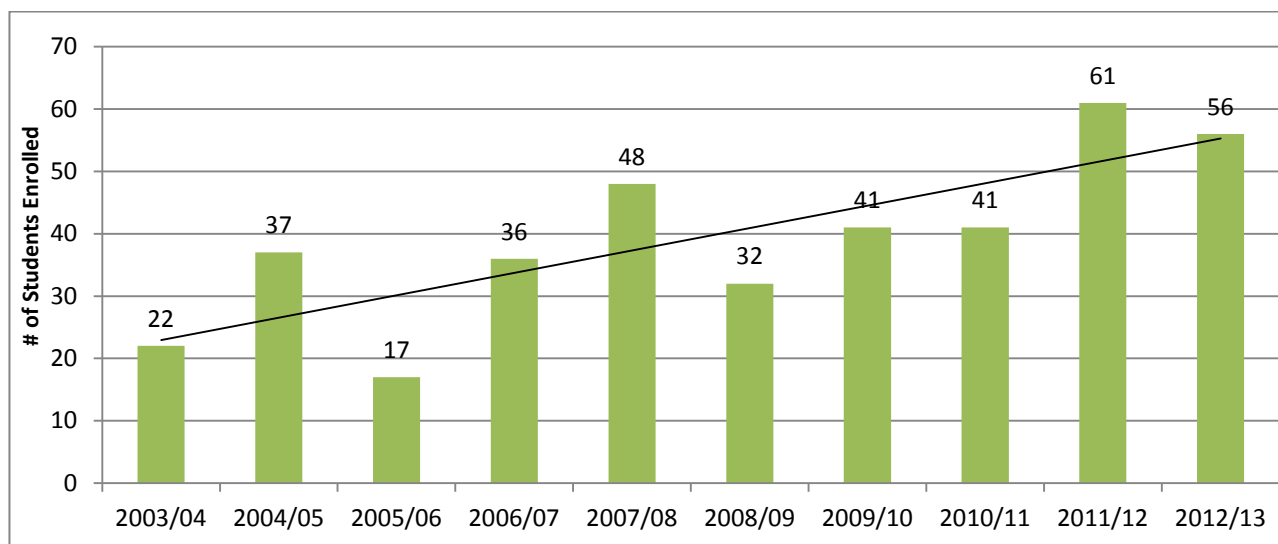
³⁵ Please note:

- Students who “withdrew” or who were “ongoing” or “in-progress” with their studies were not included in the calculation of whether they completed all of their courses in programs/courses post-Access—that’s why the N totals 1,752 rather than 1,892.

³⁶ Please note:

- This rate may be under-reported because some former Access students took their next programs in Southern Canada, so that data is not included in this SRS analysis.

Figure 2.2.3.1: Number of Access Students Enrolling in Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)



The demographic profile of Access students taking parent and related programs was similar to the profile of students taking Access programs: Students were primarily Aboriginal (84%; n = 328), female (86%; n = 337), 25 years of age or under (52%; n = 204), from the smaller NWT communities (51%; n = 199), and studying full-time (97%; n = 379).³⁷

The only difference between Access students and Access students taking parent and related programs was that Access students taking parent and related programs had completed more high school: the largest number of those students had completed Grade 12, as shown in Table 2.2.3.2.

Table 2.2.3.2: Highest Grade Completed – Access Students in Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Less Than Grade 9	55	13.9
Some High School	144	36.9
Completed Grade 12	192	49.2
Totals	391	100.0

Please note:

- This information should be viewed with caution for two reasons: 1) Data for this variable was self-reported, and 2) the SRS only contained data on 63% of students.

³⁷ As the focus of this report is Access programs and Access students, the demographic profiles of direct entry students (students who went into parent and related programs without taking an Access program) was not examined.

Table 2.2.3.3 shows that the majority of Access students who went on to enrol in parent and related programs were from the Nursing and Teacher Education Access programs.

Table 2.2.3.3: Student Enrollments in Parent and Related Programs – by Access Program (2003/04 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Nursing Access	162	41.4
Teacher Education Access	114	29.2
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Access	27	6.9
Social Work Access	26	6.6
Business Administration Access	26	6.6
Trades Access	18	4.6
Trades Access II	18	4.6
Total	391	100.0

Table 2.2.3.4 shows the top ten most selected parent and related programs that former Access students went on to. More former Access students were enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Education Degree programs compared to the other parent and related programs.

Table 2.2.3.4: Access Student Enrollments in Top Ten Most Selected Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)³⁸

	Number	Percent
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree	77	19.7
Bachelor of Education Degree	46	11.8
Office Administration Certificate	37	9.5
Business Administration Certificate	33	8.4
Personal Support Worker Certificate	28	7.2
Office Administration Diploma	26	6.6
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma	25	6.4
Social Work Diploma	22	5.6
Business Administration Diploma	21	5.4
Environmental Monitor Training	14	3.6
Totals	329	84.2

Please note:

- This table presents only the top 10 most selected parent and related programs that Access students went on to enroll in—that's why the N equals 329 (rather than 391) and why the % totals 84.2 (rather than 100.0).

Overall, former Access students comprised 13% of enrollments in parent and related programs over the 2003/04 to 2012/13 timeframe (see Table 2.2.3.6 in Appendix II for details). Even though this percentage varied widely among programs, former Access students made up an important component of many parent and related program enrollments, including those in the Bachelor of Education Degree, Social Work Diploma, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, ENRTP Diploma, and Office Administration Diploma programs as shown in Table 2.2.3.7.

³⁸ Access student enrollments in the remaining parent and related programs are listed in Table 2.2.3.5 in Appendix II.

Table 2.2.3.7: Direct Entry and Access Student Enrollments in Top Ten Most Selected Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)³⁹

	Direct Entry		Access		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bachelor of Education Degree	98	68.1	46	31.9	144	100.0
Social Work Diploma	53	70.7	22	29.3	75	100.0
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree	244	76.0	77	24.0	321	100.0
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma	79	76.0	25	24.0	104	100.0
Office Administration Diploma	98	79.0	26	21.0	124	100.0
Personal Support Worker Certificate	138	83.1	28	16.9	166	100.0
Business Administration Diploma	156	88.1	21	11.9	177	100.0
Office Administration Certificate	341	90.2	37	9.8	378	100.0
Environmental Monitor Training	219	94.0	14	6.0	233	100.0
Business Administration Certificate	666	95.3	33	4.7	699	100.0
Totals	2,092	82.1	329	18.0	2,421	100.0

The average time between finishing an Access program and starting a parent or related program was 14 months. However, as Table 2.2.3.8 shows, the majority of students went into their parent or related program within one year of completing their Access program.

Table 2.2.3.8: Length of Time before Finishing Access and Starting Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Started Parent Program Within 1 Year	253	64.7
Started Parent Program Within 2 Years	53	13.6
Started Parent Program More Than 2 Years Later	85	21.7
Total	391	100.0

As Table 2.2.3.9 shows, the largest number of students attended programs at Yellowknife Campus.

³⁹ Direct entry and Access student enrollments in the remaining parent and related programs are listed in Table 2.2.3.6 in Appendix II.

Table 2.2.3.9: Student Enrollments by Campus Location – Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)⁴⁰

	Frequency	Percent
Aurora	613	21.7
Thebacha	1009	35.8
Yellowknife	1199	42.5
Total	2821	100.0

On average, each student enrolled in six courses per year within parent and related programs.

Of the former Access students who went on to parent and related programs,

- 30% (n = 117) had been enrolled in ALBE programming before entering their Access program;
- 41% (n = 160) had received a “conditional completion” from their Access program—A “conditional completion” signifies that a student did not complete all of the courses but completed enough of the Access program to be accepted into the parent or related program; or in the case of Trades Access II, the student successfully passed the TEE; and
- 25% (n = 99) of former Access students completed more than one Access program before entering a parent or related program.

Overall, 54% (n = 206) of former Access students completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs, compared to 71% (n = 1,593) of direct entry students.⁴¹

However, this percentage of completion varied widely depending on the individual parent or related program (as shown in Table 2.2.3.10) and depending on the Access program the student was formerly enrolled in (as shown in Table 2.2.3.11).

⁴⁰ These student enrollments include direct entry students as well as former Access students—that’s why the N totals 2,821, rather than 391.

⁴¹ **Please note:**

- Students who “withdrew” or who were “ongoing” or “in-progress” with their studies were not included in the calculation of whether they completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs—that’s why the N totals 1,799 rather than 2,821.

Table 2.2.3.10: Course Completion Rates in First Year of Parent and Related Programs – Former Access Students and Direct Entry Students (2003/04 to 2012/13)

		Direct Entry	Access
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree	Number	174	38
	Percent	75.70%	49.40%
Practical Nurse Diploma	Number	17	5
	Percent	81.00%	62.50%
Indigenous Wellness & Addictions Prevention Diploma	Number	1	4
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%
Personal Support Worker Certificate	Number	110	23
	Percent	79.10%	82.10%
Community Health Representative Certificate	Number	16	2
	Percent	80.00%	66.70%
Social Work Diploma	Number	31	14
	Percent	67.40%	70.00%
Certificate in Criminal Justice	Number	9	2
	Percent	75.00%	100.00%
Bachelor of Education Degree	Number	51	13
	Percent	53.10%	28.30%
Teacher Education Diploma	Number	51	1
	Percent	91.10%	33.30%
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Diploma	Number	16	2
	Percent	57.10%	50.00%
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Certificate	Number	48	2
	Percent	88.90%	66.70%
Early Childhood Development Certificate	Number	77	3
	Percent	69.40%	33.30%
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma	Number	42	17
	Percent	80.80%	68.00%
Environmental Monitor Training Certificate	Number	152	11
	Percent	76.40%	84.60%
Business Administration Diploma	Number	97	11
	Percent	82.90%	52.40%
Business Administration Certificate	Number	374	8
	Percent	70.20%	25.00%
Office Administration Diploma	Number	51	17
	Percent	64.60%	68.00%
Office Administration Certificate	Number	173	24
	Percent	64.60%	70.60%
Certificate in Computing & Information Systems	Number	11	1
	Percent	57.90%	50.00%
Small Business Development Certificate	Number	7	0
	Percent	70.00%	0.00%
Apprenticeship Carpentry	Number	34	2
	Percent	57.60%	28.60%
Apprenticeship Electrical	Number	29	1
	Percent	74.40%	33.30%
Apprenticeship Heavy Equipment Technician	Number	9	1
	Percent	90.00%	50.00%
Apprenticeship Housing Maintainer	Number	2	1
	Percent	22.20%	33.30%
Apprenticeship Plumber/Gasfitter	Number	6	0
	Percent	75.00%	0.00%
Recreation Leaders Program	Number	5	3
	Percent	27.80%	100.00%
Totals	Number	1593	206
	Percent	71.30%	54.40%

Please note:

- The completion rates for any program where the number of students is less than 5 should be viewed with caution (as those percentages are based on very small numbers).
- The difference in course completions between direct entry students and Access students was not statistically significant.

Table 2.2.3.11: Course Completion Rates in First Year of Parent and Related Programs – Former Access Students by Access Program (2003/04 to 2012/13)⁴²

	Did Not Complete		Completed		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Social Work Access	8	33.3	16	66.7	24	100.0
ENRT Access	11	40.7	16	59.3	27	100.0
Trades Access II	7	41.2	10	58.8	17	100.0
Nursing Access	72	45.0	88	55.0	160	100.0
TEP Access	51	47.7	56	52.3	107	100.0
Business Administration Access	14	53.8	12	46.2	26	100.0
Trades Access	10	55.6	8	44.4	18	100.0
Totals	173	45.6	206	54.4	379	100.0

Please note:

- The differences in course completion rates between Access programs were not statistically significant.

2.3 Challenges Faced by Aboriginal Students Accessing College Programs

This section presents a summary of one of the main themes to emerge from the review of background documents for the Review of Aurora College Access Programs. The documents reviewed are listed in 3.1 Document Review below, and detailed citations of the sources can be found in *Access Programs: Review of Background Documents*⁴³, a background report to this review.

The challenges faced by Aboriginal students entering and completing college programs emerged as a major theme in the review of background documents for the Review of Aurora College Access Programs. This theme highlighted the need for access programming to enhance Aboriginal students' ability to gain entry to and to be successful in college and university programs. The documents describe the challenges for colleges in fulfilling mandates to deliver postsecondary programs that meet the diverse and sometimes conflicting needs of individuals, communities, and dynamic marketplace. Aboriginal students, in particular, are in need of support to make the transition to postsecondary education. An awareness of the characteristics of Aboriginal students⁴⁴ and the complex barriers they encounter in their efforts to attend and complete postsecondary programs would prove helpful in the

⁴² **Please note:**

- Students who "withdrew" or who were "ongoing" or "in-progress" with their studies were not included in the calculation of whether they completed all of their first year courses in parent and related program—that's why the N totals 379 rather than 391.

⁴³ Hogan, K. (2013). *Review of Background Documents*. Yellowknife.

⁴⁴ The list of characteristics, drawn from research, is representative of Aboriginal students in programs across Canada as well as in the North. The characteristics are meant to be representative in a general way of Aboriginal students transitioning to higher education and not meant to characterize all Aboriginal college students, nor are they meant to characterize any one group of Aboriginal students.

creation of programs and services that recognize and address Aboriginal students' needs and that seek to mitigate the barriers to the performance and retention of Aboriginal students in college and university programs.

The effects of the historical, cultural, social, and economic position of Aboriginal people in Canada play a significant role in their educational experiences and are evident in the characteristics of Aboriginal students described in the documents as follows. The majority are female, tend to be older, and have been out of school for a while before attending college. They often have family and community responsibilities and struggle to balance home, work, and school life. Although they value education and are anxious to take advantage of its benefits, some feel their families and communities may not recognize its importance. Many of their families and communities are impoverished, with low employment and literacy levels, and have a history of negative experiences with mainstream educational institutions. Many Aboriginal students, as well, have had personal negative experiences in education and are further hindered by negative self-image and attitudes that contribute to a lack of awareness of personal strengths, skills, and abilities. Most students come from smaller traditional communities and suffer culture shock in relocating to larger urban centres where many experience marginalization and even outright discrimination. Many Aboriginal students self-identify the need for support services such as financial counselling, tutoring, and mentoring; and some are in need of services to support wellness and mental health.

Many of these characteristics and the interrelated barriers Aboriginal students face in transitioning to postsecondary education are shared by non-Aboriginal students; however, Aboriginal students not only face more challenges, they face challenges of greater complexity, often simultaneously in multiple aspects of their lives. The compounding effects of these interrelated, multiple challenges can prevent Aboriginal students from gaining access to postsecondary programs and can overwhelm their ability to cope even if they are successful in entering those programs.

The personal demographics of Aboriginal students summarized above form only one category of barriers to success in transitioning to postsecondary education for Aboriginal students described in the documents. Other categories detail inhibiting historical, economic, educational, socio-cultural, and geographical conditions that Aboriginal students must struggle to overcome.

Aboriginal people's history of negative experiences with assimilative educational policies and institutions continue to impact their success in present day institutions. Further, all levels of education programs for Aboriginal people are underfunded, resulting in inferior or insufficient programming, and the lower economic status of Aboriginal families contributes to a lack of educational resources and options resulting in poorer educational outcomes. Due to these factors, Aboriginal students, in general, lack academic preparedness for postsecondary education. They are also unprepared

culturally as differences between the culture of their smaller Aboriginal communities and the mainstream culture that dominates most postsecondary institutions are often not acknowledged. And finally, the physical distance between Aboriginal students' home communities and the larger centres where postsecondary programs are delivered often results in disruption of family and traditional support systems, additional costs, and feelings of dislocation and isolation when students travel to attend school, factors that can be complicated by the remoteness of the home communities.

Across Canada, many colleges are striving to address the barriers Aboriginal students face and to meet student needs related to these barriers. One of the main strategies in this endeavour is the establishment of access programs, sometimes specifically designed for Aboriginal students, that provide academic bridging and that offer support services to enable Aboriginal students to prepare to enter and to be successful in completing college certificate, diploma, and degree programs. Aurora College, whose student body is made up of 75% Aboriginal students, approximately half of whom are enrolled in the School of Developmental Studies, aims to provide programs that qualify its students for entry into the workforce or to continue on to further education. In that endeavor, Aurora College has developed its Access programs that address academic prerequisite barriers and provide the necessary supports with the goal of increasing the numbers of its students eligible to enter postsecondary programs.

An awareness and understanding of the interrelatedness and complexity of the barriers Aboriginal students face will facilitate the continuing development of programs and services for Aboriginal students that address their needs and that lessen the severity of the challenges they face in their efforts to access and complete postsecondary programs and to improve their quality of life.

3. METHODOLOGY

Generally, this review was based on mixed social research methods that gathered both quantitative and qualitative data on program activities, outputs, and outcomes from a variety of stakeholders. These are the main sources of data gathered and analysed for the review:

- A detailed review of documentation related to Aurora College Access programs
- Surveys of Aurora College Access program stakeholders
- Interviews with key Aurora College program stakeholders
- A focus group with key Aurora College program stakeholders
- Interviews with external experts in the field of access programming
- A detailed statistical profile and analysis of the Aurora College's Student Record System (SRS) data relating to Access programs

- Access programs financial information
- Other educational data

As part of the Review of Access Programs at Aurora College, a logic model and a review framework were designed for the seven Access programs.

The Access Programs Logic Model describes the linkages between program activities and the achievement of program outcomes. It serves as a “road map,” showing the chain of results and connecting activities to outputs and then to outcomes while identifying what progress looks like along the way. The logic model provided the basis for the Access Programs Review Framework.⁴⁵

The review framework sets out a strategy for a cyclical, in-depth look at how well a program is performing. The key evaluation issues typically addressed include relevance, success, and cost-effectiveness or alternatives (although other areas can be added as required).⁴⁶ The framework identified the following: the data collection plan for the evaluation, data sources, and who was responsible for collecting which data. The framework ensured that all program activities, outputs, and outcomes had specific data sources identified, thus guaranteeing a sound research design. The questions for the Survey of Access Program Stakeholders were drawn directly from the review framework.

The Access Programs Logic Model is presented on the following page; the Access Programs Review Framework is presented in Appendix III.

⁴⁵ Treasury Board Secretariat. (2001). *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks*, p. 11.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 21 - 22.

Figure 3.1: Access Programs Logic Model

Aurora College Access Programs - Logic Model					
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Outcomes
1. ALBE and specialized curriculum 2. Aurora College staff 3. SFA funding 4. Partner Organizations (ECE, HSS, ENR, Aboriginal Organizations) 5. Third Party funding	1. Nursing Access 2. Teacher Education Access 3. Social Work Access 4. Environment and Natural Resources Technology (ENRT) Access 5. Trades Access 6. Trades Access II 7. Business Administration Access	1a. Increased number of Northern students participating in academic upgrading courses. 1b. Increased number of Northern students writing Alberta diploma examinations. 2. Increased dollars being allocated to Northern students from Student Financial Assistance (SFA) and other sources. 3. Introductory courses (such as Nursing Access I and Introduction to Social Work) are offered which link academic upgrading courses to career type programs.	1. Improved math, science, and English skills in Northern students. 2. Access to additional funding sources for Northern students (i.e., SFA and other sources). 3. Additional motivation for Northern students to pursue educational opportunities.	1. Increased number of Northern students who meet the academic entrance requirements for Aurora College certificate, diploma, degree, and apprenticeship programs. 2. Increased number of Northern students who are able to finance their entry into Aurora College certificate, diploma, degree, and apprenticeship programs via SFA or other sources. 3. Increased number of Northern students who have been motivated to enter Aurora College certificate, diploma, degree, and apprenticeship programs.	Increase the pool of Northern students in Aurora College certificate, diploma, degree, and apprenticeship programs by addressing academic, financial, and motivational barriers.

3.1 Document Review

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Review of Aurora College Access Programs identified documents to be reviewed to provide background and context for the project. Those documents, in addition to a number of supplemental documents selected by the reviewer, served as a source of data on the key review evaluation topics of the success, cost effectiveness, and relevance of the Access programs. Questions from the Aurora College Access Programs Review Framework guided the review of the documents.

The background documents were classified into two categories for review:

- 1) Internal Aurora College documents that facilitate college operations such as academic calendars, program and course outlines, and program reports
- 2) Aurora College, Government of the Northwest Territories, Federal Government, and non-governmental organization reports, surveys, studies, reviews, strategic plans, and directives related to Northern and/or Canadian Aboriginal literacy and adult basic education programming and access programming

Observations from the review of these documents were recorded in reports that served as companion documents to other lines of inquiry in the Review of Aurora College Access Programs.

The first category of background documents reviewed included the following internal Aurora College documents, supplemented by information from the Aurora College website:

- *Aurora College Annual Reports* (2011-12 and 2012-13).
- *Aurora College Academic Calendars* (2012-13 and 2013-2014).
- *ALBE and Access Final Reports* from all three campuses (2004-05 to 2011-12).
- *Access Program and Course Outlines*, including ALBE Curriculum for all seven Access programs specified in the review TOR.

These documents were reviewed to gather data on the Access programs' philosophies, contents, goals and objectives, entry and exit requirements, and relationships with the Adult Literacy and Basic Education program and with their parent programs, as well as information on the implementation and operations of the Access programs within the Aurora College system. The results of this inquiry are

published in two background reports: *Review of Aurora College Access Program Outlines*⁴⁷ and *Summary of Developmental Studies Annual Review Reports 2004-2005 to 2011-2012*⁴⁸.

The second category of background documents reviewed included the following reports, surveys, studies, reviews, strategic plans, and directives.

Specified in the TOR:

- *Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) Review*. Terriplan Consultants, 2011.
- *Annual Report 2010-2011*. Aurora College, 2012.
- *Annual Report 2011-2012*. Aurora College, 2013.
- *Directive: Adult Literacy and Basic Education*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2000.
- *Education in the Northwest Territories – 2010*. Office of the Auditor General of Canada.
- *Inventory of Adult Education and Training in the GNWT*. Program Review Office, GNWT, July, 2009.
- *Making a Case for Literacy: The State of Adult Literacy and Adult Basic Education*. NWT Literacy Council, 2000.
- *NWT Student Financial Assistance Program Review: Final Review Report*. Terriplan Consultants, March, 2012.
- *NWT Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Program: Access Programming Research Report*. Alappaa Consulting, May, 2012.
- *NWT Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Program: Synthesis of Recent ALBE Research*. Northern Research and Evaluation, May, 2012.
- *Towards Excellence: A Report on Postsecondary Education in the NWT '05*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2005.

Supplemental to the TOR:

- *Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2011.
- *A Literature Review of Factors that Support Successful Transitions by Aboriginal People from K-12 to Postsecondary Education*. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2010.
- *A Review of the State of the Field of Adult Learning – Barriers to Participation in Adult Learning*. MacKeracher, D., Stuart, T., & Potter, J., 2006.

⁴⁷ Hogan, K. (2013). *Review of Aurora College Access Program Outlines*. Yellowknife.

⁴⁸ Hogan, K. (2013). *Summary of Developmental Studies Annual Review Reports 2004-2005 to 2011-2012*. Yellowknife.

- *Building on our Success: Strategic Plan—2005-2015*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2005.
- *Colleges Serving Aboriginal Students and Communities; 2010 Environmental Scan*. Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2010.
- *Factors That Facilitate Adult Student Success in the NWT*. NWT Literacy Council, 2013.
- *IALSS Info Series #2*. NWT Literacy Council, no date.
- *IALSS Info Series #7*. NWT Literacy Council, 2008.
- *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) Report Summary*. ABC Canada; Literacy Foundation, November, 2005.
- *Pan Canadian Study of First Year College Students: Report #1*. Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2007.
- *Pan Canadian Study of First Year College Students Report #2*. Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2008.
- *Promising Practices: Increasing and Supporting Participation for Aboriginal Students in Ontario*. Malatest, R.A. & Associates, 2010.
- *Strong Foundations - New Horizons; Continuity and Change at Aurora College 2006 – 2015*. Aurora College, 2006.
- *Supporting First Nations Students Transitioning to Post Secondary*. Assembly of First Nations, 2012.
- *Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework—2008-2018*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2009.

These documents were reviewed to gather data on the context of the Aurora College Access programs and, more broadly, on the context of the experiences of Aboriginal people transitioning to postsecondary education in Canada and in the North, specifically, the rationales for access programming, the characteristics of Aboriginal students transitioning to postsecondary education, and the challenges faced by Aboriginal students accessing college programs. The results of this inquiry are published in the background report, *Access Programs: Review of Background Documents*⁴⁹.

3.2 Surveys

The surveys were designed to gather *informed* input from stakeholders for the seven Access programs at Aurora College. These stakeholders are listed here:

- Current Access students
- Former Access students who have successfully completed an Access program

⁴⁹ Hogan, K. (2013). *Access Programs: Review of Background Documents*. Yellowknife.

- Students who were not successful in completing an Access program
- Current and former Instructors in the Access programs
- Current and former Instructors in the parent programs who teach Access graduates
- Community Adult Educators (CAEs)
- Current and former Access Program Managers and Program Chairs
- Current and former Senior Management at Aurora College
- Financial staff at Aurora College
- Select current Department of ECE staff with knowledge of Access programs
- Select former Department of ECE staff with knowledge of Access programs

In total, 11 different surveys were designed—each tailored to a specific group of stakeholders. The surveys contained a mix of both quantitative (likert-scale) and qualitative (open-ended) questions. This mix of both types of questions ensured a methodologically strong survey process.

Generally, the surveys were designed to be delivered in a face-to-face format, either individually in an interview format or in groups (i.e., students in a classroom or the CAEs at a workshop). In a few instances, stakeholders filled out their surveys on their own. Consultants piloted the plain language student surveys with ALBE students at the Yellowknife Campus prior to the onset of the key stakeholder consultation. To ensure confidentiality, the consultants collected all results; no one at Aurora College had access to individual survey results.

In early January 2013, all stakeholders were sent emails informing them of the survey. Actual surveying was conducted at Aurora, Yellowknife, and Thebacha Campuses from January 21 to Feb 15, 2013. A few stakeholders submitted completed surveys by email. Some follow-up interviews were conducted by phone.

The data from the surveys reported in this review is statistically significant.

3.3 Interviews with Key Program Stakeholders

Several key program stakeholders were interviewed for this review due to the depth of knowledge they possessed. Primarily, these interviews included having the interviewee fill out a survey and then discussing additional questions with the consultants. The additional questions were tailored to the specific area of expertise of the interviewee (e.g., their knowledge of a particular Access program or historical knowledge of Aurora College programs).

Interviews were primarily conducted in person during the data gathering timeframe, though some were conducted via telephone.

3.4 Focus Group with Key Program Stakeholders

A focus group with key Aurora College stakeholders was held November 6, 2013 to provide insights into the results of the Access Longitudinal Data Analysis (ALDA) Report. That report provided a 10-year longitudinal analysis of data on Access programs and programs post-Access, and comparisons between Access students and direct entry students in the first year of parent and related programs.

For example, the data showed statistically significant differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students in completing all of their Access courses. Focus group participants discussed this finding and provided insights as to why this was the case.

Focus group participants included Aurora College staff with knowledge of Access and ALBE programming at the College. The criteria for participation in the focus group was the ability to answer the focus group questions; experience teaching in Access programs, including the Trades Access programs; and representation from each of the three campuses.

3.5 Expert Panel

The consultation process for this review included participation of external experts in the field of access programming. The experts were individuals with a minimum of three years of experience in overseeing and managing access programs designed to help Aboriginal and other students succeed at the post-secondary level. Six experts participated in this consultation representing four Canadian colleges and one university that offer different approaches to access programming and that serve a large Aboriginal student population.

The iterative consultation process, lasting over three months, incorporated the following steps:

1. Independent feedback from each panelist responding to a set of key questions
2. Refinement of views and rating of responses to particular questions
3. Controlled feedback on specific issues
4. Consensus on key themes such as the intended purposes of access programs and strategies to meet students' needs in access programs

3.6 Access Program SRS Data Analysis

The SRS has limited capabilities when it comes to data analysis. To track student outcomes over time, data must first be exported from the SRS, cleaned, and transformed into longitudinal format, and then it must be analysed with a spreadsheet or special statistical software.

Three main datasets were exported from the SRS:

- Access program related information (student demographic information, enrollments, completions, courses and programs taken, etc.)
- Information on Aurora College programs/courses taken after students had taken an Access program (i.e., post-Access)
- Data on how well former Access students did in the first year courses of parent and related programs compared to direct entry students

Data was analysed at two levels: at the course level and at the student level.

Primarily, the course-level data was used to calculate whether each student had completed all of his or her courses. Completing a course included designations of “Completed Requirements,” “Credit,” “Transfer Credit,” and “Equivalency.” Not completing a course included “Not Completed Requirements,” “No Credit,” and “Fail.”

Course records were not included in the calculation of completing a course if they were designated as “Ongoing” or “In-Progress.” Additionally, records which showed that a student “Deregistered” or “Withdrew” from courses were also not considered in the calculation of completing that course. The *Aurora College Policy on the Grading of Courses (C.25)* and the *Aurora College Policy on Student Withdrawal (C.30)* were used to define all of these terms.

The intent of the student-level data was to see how each individual student progressed through his or her program over time. This was done through the development of “Completed All Courses” variables for each data-set, which calculated whether each student completed all of their courses from the course-level dataset. Students who were deemed to have “conditionally completed” their courses were included in those calculations (see section 1.2 for the full definition of conditional completions).

Analysing the SRS data at both the course and student levels allowed for the most thorough analysis of the data.

The data from the SRS reported within this review is statistically significant.

3.7 Financial Information

Financial information on Access programs was provided by Aurora College. This included detailed program financial information for campus-based ALBE programs and all seven Access programs for the 2002/03 to 2011/12 fiscal years (see Tables 4.4.1.1 – 4.4.1.8 in Appendix IV).

Please note that expenditures, revenues, and costs are not consistently reported across all programs. Primarily, this is because program costs for some Access programs (and at some campuses) are funded as part of regular ALBE programming and are included within ALBE budgets while program costs for other Access programs are funded and tracked separately. This inconsistency limits the ability to undertake any detailed analysis of program expenditures, revenues, and costs among programs and across campuses.

In addition to a review of specific Access program financial information from Aurora College, consideration was given to research conducted by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards (2009) that used population and economic projections to demonstrate the financial benefits to Canadian governments of eliminating the education gap experienced by many Aboriginal people. Using similar methods, the Department of ECE projected potential benefits of closing the educational gap for Aboriginal people to the NWT.

3.8 Other Educational Data

Over the past 10 years, a number of international, national, and territorial research studies have been undertaken that have direct bearing on discussions about literacy, post-secondary transitions, and educational attainment levels. The following studies and data sources were reviewed:

- International Data on Literacy
 - *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)*. Statistic Canada, 2003.
 - *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)*. PIAAC Canada, 2013.
- Canadian Data on Transitions to Post-secondary (not already listed in Section 3.1)
 - *Trends in Higher Education*. Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), 2011.
 - *High School Dropouts Returning to School*. Raymond, 2008.
- Territorial Data on Education Attainment
 - *Secondary School Graduates by Ethnicity and Community Type*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2010.
 - *2011-2012 Result for Functional Grade Levels, Alberta Achievement Tests and Attendance*. Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT, 2012.

- *Graduates, Northwest Territories by Ethnicity, Age and Gender*. NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2013.
- *Education in the NWT-2010: Department of Education, Culture and Employment*. Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2010.

3.9 Limitations

There are five limitations to the research outlined in this report. The first four are specific to the SRS data, and the fifth limitation relates to the financial data used for this report.

First, as noted in the *2012/13 Longitudinal Analysis of Student Level Access Programs Data*, without manual verification of SRS data, actual program completions of students within the Access and other programs cannot be computed.⁵⁰ Instead, “course completions” is presented as a proxy indicator of student academic success in Access programs, in programs/courses post-Access, and in parent and related programs. In the absence of manual verifications, this was the only appropriate methodological approach to the data analysis.

Second, there were a very high number of missing records for three self-reported variables: home community, highest grade level completed in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 school system (K-12), and number of years out of school before returning to Aurora College. For all three, records were only available in the SRS for roughly 40% to 60% of students. Results for those three variables should be viewed with caution.

Third, this project only analysed Aurora College data contained within the SRS, so students who went to other institutions after their Access programs would not be included in the “Programs/Courses Post Access” and “Parent and Related Programs” datasets. As a result, the numbers (and percentages) of students progressing on to other College programs and progressing on to parent and related programs may be under-reported. Anecdotal evidence from other sources analysed for this review supports the view that both of those progression rates may be under-reported. However, in the absence of a system to track all NWT students in all post-secondary education institutions, the SRS data analysis was the only viable option.

Fourth, Aurora College does not have a standardized methodology (or policy) for the calculation of program completion or graduation rates. This is due to deficiencies in the SRS noted in the *2012/13 Longitudinal Analysis of Student Level Access Programs Data*.⁵¹ In the absence of that defined

⁵⁰ Hogan, B. (2013). *Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Project 10.4: 2012/13 Longitudinal Analysis of Student Level Access Programs Data – Technical Report*. p.6.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.6.

methodology or policy, the approach outlined in section 3.1 for the calculation of course completions as a proxy for academic success is both sensible and consistent with Aurora College Policy C25 on the grading of courses. This approach is also breaking new ground for Aurora College in terms of measuring student academic success.

Fifth, expenditures, revenues, and costs are not consistently reported across all programs. Primarily, this is because program costs for some Access programs (and at some campuses) are funded as part of regular ALBE programming and are included within ALBE budgets while program costs for other Access programs are funded and tracked separately. This inconsistency limits the ability to undertake any detailed analysis of program expenditures, revenues, and costs among programs and across campuses. The analysis that is presented is the best that could be undertaken with the data available.

Despite these limitations, the numerous lines of evidence, the ability to address the limitations, and the strength of the statistical tests employed for the analysis of the SRS and survey data means that the results presented in this report are statistically valid and reliable. In other words, if a similar analysis were conducted with other Access programs data, these same results are highly likely to emerge.

4. RESULTS

The Review of Aurora College Access Programs was designed to gather input from stakeholders on three key program areas:

- Relevance
- Success
- Cost-effectiveness

Table 4.1 on the following pages summarizes the various lines of evidence used to answer the review questions.

Table 4.1: Summary of Lines of Evidence

Research Question	Document Review	Surveys	Key Informant Interviews	Focus Group	Expert Panel	SRS Data	Financial Data	Other Educational Data
Relevance								
1. Are the Access programs needed? Why?	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Have the needs changed that the Access programs were originally intended to meet? If so, do the Access programs meet the new needs? And what are those needs?	√	√	√					
3. Are the goals of the Access programs clearly stated and understood by stakeholders?	√	√	√					
4. Are the goals and objectives of the Access programs consistent with current Aurora College, ECE, and GNWT priorities?	√	√						
Success								
1) Is each of the Access programs meeting the needs of students? If not, why not?	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
2) To what extent are Access programs meeting their intended purposes with respect to a) the number (%) of students going on to enter other Aurora College programs? b) the level of academic readiness of students going on to enter other Aurora College programs?		√				√		
3) Are the academic admission requirements for each of the Access programs at the appropriate level for student success?	√	√	√	√				
4) Are the academic exit requirements for each of the Access programs at the appropriate level for student success in the parent programs?	√	√	√		√	√		
5) What are some of the best practices in Access programming?	√				√			√
6) How effective are the academic, administrative, and operational linkages between each Access program and its parent program?		√	√	√				

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Research Question	Document Review	Surveys	Key Informant Interviews	Focus Group	Expert Panel	SRS Data	Financial Data	Other Educational Data
7) For each Access program, how effective is the ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to subject matter specific courses?		√	√					
8a) For each Access program, is the program delivery model the best approach to achieve the current objectives of the program?		√	√					
8b) How successful is the specialized Access Program Delivery Model? How successful is the general Access Program Delivery Model?		√		√	√	√		
9) How satisfied are current and former students with the overall quality of the program (including instruction, instructor qualifications and experience, program facilities, program equipment and other resources, and program support services)?		√	√					
10) How satisfied are senior managers, program managers, and instructors with the quality of Access graduates?		√	√					
11a) What are the program attrition rates and causes?		√	√		√	√		
11b) What can be done to improve program retention?	√	√	√		√			√
12) Why are some students successful and other students unsuccessful in Access programs?	√	√	√		√			
13) In the first year of each parent program, how do completion rates of Access entry students compare with completion rates of direct entry students?						√		
14a) How effectively are Access programs being delivered across the three campuses?						√		
14b) How consistently are Access programs being delivered across the three campuses?	√	√	√					
15) How successful overall have the Access programs been in achieving their stated goals and objectives?	√	√	√	√		√		
16) Have there been any unexpected positive or negative impacts to the Access programs?		√	√			√		√

Research Question	Document Review	Surveys	Key Informant Interviews	Focus Group	Expert Panel	SRS Data	Financial Data	Other Educational Data
17) Do some programs need to be re-structured or eliminated?		√	√	√	√			
Cost Effectiveness								
1. Where do the program funding sources come from?		√	√				√	
2. Are current resources being used effectively?	√	√	√				√	
3. Did each of the Access programs remain within budget?		√	√				√	
4. Were the proper accounting and reporting procedures followed in the administration of the Access programs?		√	√				√	
5. Do the Access programs duplicate other Aurora College, ECE, or GNWT initiatives? If so, explain the duplication.		√	√		√		√	

4.1 Survey Respondent Information

A total of 221 surveys were collected throughout the stakeholder consultation process. However, three of those surveys were incomplete—the respondents filled in a couple of questions but basically left most of the surveys blank. Those three surveys were discarded, leaving 218 usable surveys for analysis, as shown in Table 4.1.1.

Table 4.1.1: Survey Response Rates

Survey #	Stakeholder Group	TOTALS	Response Rates
1	Current Access Students	71 (of 93)	76%
2	Former Access Students - Successful	44 (of 244)	18%
3	Former Access Students - Unsuccessful	12 (of 239)	5%
4	Current/Former Instructors – Access Programs	27 (of 27)	100%
5	CAEs	20 (of 26)	77%
6	Current/Former Program Chairs/Managers	10 (of 10)	100%
7	Current/Former Aurora College Senior Management	9 (of 9)	100%
8	Current Aurora College Financial Staff	3 (of 3)	100%
9	Current ECE Staff	4 (of 5)	80%
10	Former ECE staff	2 (of 2)	100%
11	Current Instructors – Parent Programs	16 (of 18)	89%
TOTALS		218 (of 676)	32%

The 218 usable surveys represent an overall response rate of 32% (and a confidence level of +/- 5.4%, 19 times out of 20).

However, this overall rate masks differences in the two main respondent groups: students and non-students. For the 127 student respondents (58% of the overall sample), the response rate was 22% (with a confidence level of +/- 7.7%, 19 times out of 20). For the 91 non-student respondents (42% of the overall sample), the response rate was 91% (with a confidence level of +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20).

As Table 4.1.2 shows, the largest group of respondents were from the Thebacha and Aurora Campuses.

Table 4.1.2: Respondent Location⁵²

	Number	Percent
Thebacha Campus	85	39.2
Aurora Campus	58	26.7
Yellowknife Campus	40	18.4
Community Adult Educator	19	8.8
Office of the President	9	4.1
ECE Staff	6	2.8
Total	217	100.0

Student Survey Respondents⁵³

The 127 students who responded to the survey were primarily Aboriginal (89%; n = 111), female (69%; n = 87), and over 25 years of age (55%; n = 69). The average age of student respondents was 28 years, though individual students ranged from 17 years to 58 years of age.

Student respondents were almost equally split in terms of their highest level of K-12 schooling completed: 51% (n = 65) had less than Grade 12 completed before they entered an Access program while 49% (n = 62) had completed Grade 12 or had the General Education Development (GED) certification.

Table 4.1.3 shows that the majority of student respondents were from the smaller NWT communities. The regional centres of Fort Smith, Hay River, and Inuvik made up the next biggest respondent group.

Table 4.1.3: Home Communities of Student Respondents

	Number	Percent
Smaller NWT Communities	69	55.2
Regional Centres	30	24.0
Yellowknife	12	9.6
Outside NWT	11	8.8
Nunavut	3	2.4
Total	125	100.0

⁵² Not all respondents answered every question, so the totals do not always equal 218. In this instance, one respondent did not indicate his/her location. Also, the fact that Thebacha Campus has the highest percentage of survey respondents reflects the fact that more parent programs are located there compared to the Aurora and Yellowknife Campuses (thus the pool of potential respondents is bigger at Thebacha Campus).

⁵³ In this and the following sections, “n” stands for number of students.

Table 4.1.4 shows that the largest number of students provided feedback on the Nursing Access program.

Table 4.1.4: Student Survey Respondents by Access Program

Access Program	Current Access Students		Former Access Students - Successful		Former Access Students - Unsuccessful		Totals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nursing Access	20	15.9	10	7.9	3	2.4	33	26.2
ENRT Access	12	9.5	8	6.3	3	2.4	23	18.3
Teacher Education Access	5	3.9	7	5.6	5	3.9	17	13.5
Trades Access	14	11.1	2	1.5	0	0	16	12.7
Business Admin. Access	7	5.6	7	5.6	0	0	14	11.1
Trades Access II	5	3.9	7	5.6	0	0	12	9.5
Social Work Access	8	6.3	2	1.5	1	0.8	11	8.7
Totals	71	56.2	43	34.0	12	9.5	126	100

According to the students themselves, these are the main reasons why they enrolled in Access programs:

- To upgrade their skills for entry into a diploma or certificate program (n = 102; 47%)
- To get a job or a better job (n = 68; 31%)
- For personal achievement (n = 50; 23%)
- To go to college or university (n = 44; 20%)
- To be a role model for family and friends (n = 40; 18%)
- To take a trade (n = 22; 10%)
- To access SFA (n = 18; 8%)
- To improve communication and relationship skills (n = 11; 5%)
- For other reasons, including there was nothing else to do and to help people in the communities (n = 4; 2%)

The majority of successful Access graduates (66%; n = 27) indicated that they went on from an Access program directly into a parent program.

The three key reasons why students did not enter a parent program were i) a change in career interest, ii) lack of confidence regarding academic readiness, and iii) family responsibilities. As an example, one student indicated that after completing the Social Work Access program she did not feel strong enough emotionally to face some of the issues dealt with by social workers. Some students indicated that they did not have the confidence that they were academically ready for the parent program and decided not to enrol in that specific program. Other students cited family obligations such as taking care of a grandmother or other family member as to their reasons for non-participation.

Non-Student Survey Respondents

Of the 91 non-student respondents, the largest group were from the Thebacha Campus (31%; n = 28). The CAEs⁵⁴ were the next largest group (22%; n = 20). Respondents from Yellowknife Campus (18%; n = 16), Aurora Campus (13%; n = 12), and Office of the President of Aurora College (11%; n = 9) were the next largest groups. Staff at the Department of ECE (7%; n = 6) made up the smallest group of respondents.

Responses were collected from instructors in all seven Access programs, as well as all six of the parent programs.⁵⁵

As Table 4.1.5 shows, the largest group of non-student respondents had been in their positions between 2 and 5 years. The average length of time in those positions was 6.5 years, though the individual times of respondents in their positions ranged from one-half a year to 29 years.

Table 4.1.5: Years in Position

	Number	Percent
2 Years or Less	19	21.3
Between 2 and 5 Years	33	37.1
Between 5 and 10 Years	21	23.6
More Than 10 Years	16	18.0
Total	89	100.0

4.2 Relevance

Data gathered for the review shows the following:

- Access programs are needed.
- The needs that the Access programs were designed to address had not changed but had intensified.
- The goals of the Access programs are clearly understood by stakeholders.
- The goals of the Access programs are consistent with current Aurora College, Department of ECE, and GNWT priorities.

⁵⁴ CAEs were primarily from the smaller NWT Communities. Two (2) respondents within the CAE group were from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Identifying which communities or organizations those respondents are from could not be undertaken as it could lead to the identification of those who responded.

⁵⁵ There are only six parent programs because two of the Access programs – Trades Access and Trades Access II – feed into the NWT apprenticeship programs.

4.2.1 Addressing Needs

Survey respondents clearly indicated that Access Programs are needed. All of the respondents (100%) who answered that question (n = 65) indicated that Access Programs are essential. They noted that Access Programs are necessary for a variety of reasons.

Respondents felt that Access programs perform these functions:

- Provide a window of opportunity for students who need specific courses or pre-requisites to enter parent programs or for mature students who need to refresh their skills after long absences from the school system.
- Address a historic deficit in core grade success and graduation rates, and residential school legacy issues.
- Prepare students academically, emotionally, and socially for parent programs.
- Support students who want to have sustainable northern professions and careers.
- Provide programming those appeals to male students.
- Support students financially who otherwise could not or would not participate.
- Attract students who would otherwise be lost to the educational system.
- Provide students with greater awareness of career choices and employment opportunities
- Promote the trades.
- Offer courses that the students do not have access to in the smaller communities.
- Support student success.
- Provide equitable learning opportunities.
- Serve as a feeder system into parent programs.
- Act as an important bridge for students from the smaller communities—a necessary transition.
- Provide an opportunity for students to leave their home communities to build their academic skills and gain confidence.

The SRS data confirms many of these perceptions. First, former Access students comprise an important component of enrollments in several parent and related programs; thus, the Access programs serve as a feeder system into parent and related programs (see Section 5.4 for more details). Second, Access programs serve as an academic bridge for students from the smaller communities to allow them to gain access to post-secondary opportunities (see Section 2.3).

The document review supports the need for and investment in Access programs at Canadian post-secondary institutions (AFN, 2012; ACCC, 2010; CMEC, 2010). Moreover, the literacy data from IALSS (2003)⁵⁶ and the recent PIAAC 2013 data confirm the lower levels of literacy in the NWT, particularly among Aboriginal groups. “Overall, the NWT ranked 12th out of 13 provinces and territories, and the average literacy score for NWT residents, 16-24 years olds (with less than post-secondary education)

⁵⁶ NWT Literacy Council. (2008). *IALSS Info Series #7*. Retrieved February 7, 2013, from www.nwt.literacy.ca

was 19 points below the Canadian average and 25 points below the [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development] OECD average.”⁵⁷ The low literacy levels of Aboriginal people in the North not only limit the number of Northern Aboriginal candidates prepared for direct entry to certificate, diploma, and degree programs but also challenge the performance and retention of students in college programs.⁵⁸

In addition to these key perspectives on access programs, the expert panelists for this project identified seven intended purposes of access programs and ranked them in order of importance with number one as the most important. The panelists felt that, first and foremost, access programs are a critical post-secondary entry point for students looking to improve their quality of life.

Expert Panel: Intended Purposes of Access Programs

1. Serve as a post-secondary entry point (increased access) for students who have not had the opportunity to participate or succeed in a post-secondary environment due to social, economic, or cultural factors; formal education; or geographic location
2. Provide students with the necessary prerequisite courses and skills to be successful in specific post-secondary programs such as trades or nursing
3. Provide a learning environment that acknowledges and recognizes students’ unique challenges and abilities
4. Prepare and equip students to enter a program of their choice either within their province or territory or in another jurisdiction
5. Assist mature learners to enter into a formal learning environment before facing the rigours and demands of a post-secondary program
6. Increase the pool of students ready for post-secondary education by addressing academic, financial, and motivational barriers
7. Prepare students for the work force

Many educators⁵⁹ view access programs as a **second chance system** for adult students wishing to pursue further education. The focus group participants maintained that, for most students from smaller communities, it is really their **first opportunity** to access advanced courses in science and math at the 20 and 30 -1 or -2 levels. Moreover, many students are the first in their immediate or extended families to pursue post-secondary education—a phenomenon commonly known as **first generation learners**.

⁵⁷ Department of ECE. (2013). *Backgrounder-PIAAC*, p. 2.

⁵⁸ Hogan, K. (2013). *Access Programs: Review of Background Documents*, p. 4.

⁵⁹ Raymond, M. (2008). *High School Dropouts Returning to School*, p. 7.

The SRS data confirms that home community was a factor in whether or not students completed all their courses within specific Access programs. Students from smaller communities had lower course completion rates than students from the regional centres and students from Yellowknife, particularly in the Nursing Access program. Also, the NWT results from the 2011-2012 Alberta Achievement Tests for Grade 9 English and Math attest to the low levels of educational achievement of students in smaller communities. The results indicated that over 75% of Grade 9 students from small communities were achieving below an acceptable standard in English language arts and in math.⁶⁰

4.2.2 Whether Needs Had Changed

The majority of respondents (57%; n = 32) noted that the needs that Access programs were originally designed to address had not changed. However, respondents indicated that those needs had intensified for the following reasons:

- The demand for higher levels and a more comprehensive suite of students' academic skills: students who do not have a background in the social sciences are extremely disadvantaged in parent programs such as the Social Work program; students without strong writing and reading comprehension skills at the English 160 level struggle in the parent programs; students without strong academic, high school science and math courses have difficulty meeting the exit requirements in some of the Access programs.
- The demand for higher academic standards as a result of Aurora College offering degree granting programs in partnership with universities (more rigorous and higher academic expectations)
- The demand for higher academic requirements for the trades: the recommended path⁶¹ for Alberta students is an Alberta high school diploma with English 30-2, Math 30-3, a science at the 20 or 30 level, and related Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses.
- Societal demands for advanced levels of essential skills
- Changing expectations of students enrolling at Aurora College—younger students who have different expectations and life skill requirements (e.g., younger students want high school courses and Alberta Education credits)

⁶⁰ Department of ECE (2012). *2011-2012 NWT Results on AATs – adjusted for NWT Exclusion Policy*.

⁶¹ Government of Alberta. (2013). *Alberta Apprenticeship Updated Entrance Requirements*. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca

The document review, and AUCC (2011) in particular, confirms the need for higher level skills:

“Over the last 20 years, profound changes have taken place in Canada’s economy, including the occupational mix and education levels within that mix. The number of jobs filled by university graduates more than doubled from 1.9 million in 1990 to 4.4 million in 2010. Meanwhile, there were 1.2 million fewer jobs for those who had a high school diploma or less.”⁶²

4.2.3 Understanding Program Goals

The majority of respondents (78%; n = 155) indicated that they understood the goals of Access programs.

While a written rationale and overview of Access programs could not be found in any of the Aurora College documents, Aurora College senior management stated,

“The rationale for Access Programs is to address **academic prerequisite barriers**, to address **student financial assistance support**, and to create a **motivational link** that would not be present if a student was just taking stand-alone ALBE courses”; and

“[The] overall goal would be to increase the pool of candidates in selected diploma and degree programs by addressing barriers (noted in bold above) for those who are not currently eligible.”⁶³

Almost 80% of the current students clearly understood the program goals as is evident in the following sample of student comments:

“to get us ready to go into the nursing program or social work program”; “to prepare for the ENRTP”; “to prepare for the Business Administration program”; “to get high enough marks to pass the course and get accepted into the program”; and “to get into the trades by passing the level 5 Trades Entrance Exam.”

The goals and objectives for the seven Access programs, as they are stated in their separate program outlines, are consistent with the rationale described by Aurora College senior management.⁶⁴ However, with the exception of the rationale found in the Northern Nursing Access Year proposal written in 1992, the intended purposes for the other six Access Programs could not be verified as no historical documentation could be found concerning the origins of these programs.

⁶² Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). (2011). Trends in Higher Education. p. 37.

⁶³ email communication from Aurora College senior staff member, December 5, 2012.

⁶⁴ Hogan, K. (2013). *Review of Aurora College Access Program Outlines*. p. 4.

4.2.4 Consistency of Goals and Objectives with Aurora College, Department of ECE, and GNWT Priorities

The majority of respondents (94%; n = 47) noted that the goals and objectives of Access programs are consistent with Aurora College, Department of ECE, and GNWT priorities.

A review of the Aurora College's 2006-2015 strategic plan, *Strong Foundations – New Horizons*,⁶⁵ the Northwest Territories 16th Legislative Assembly's 2007 *Northerners Working Together*⁶⁶ plan, and the Department of ECE's *Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan (2011)* and *Education Renewal and Innovation Framework (2012)*⁶⁷ revealed that all support the goals and objectives of Access programs. For example, Aurora College describes its mandate "to deliver a broad spectrum of adult and post-secondary programs to meet the needs of individuals, communities, and the market".⁶⁸ Within the 2006-2015 strategic plan, Aurora College states that Northerners' low literacy levels and the associated low levels of educational attainment, particularly low graduation rates, "are a strong signal to us that Aurora College must continue to help people with Developmental Studies (Adult Basic Education) programs."⁶⁹

4.3 Success

Data gathered for the review shows the following successes and areas for further consideration:

- Access programs are meeting students' needs.
- The majority of Access students are going on to enter other Aurora College programs.
- The majority of stakeholders are satisfied with the academic level of readiness of Access graduates.
- The academic entrance requirements for each of the Access programs are at the appropriate level for student success within each Access program.
- The academic exit requirements for each of the Access programs are mostly at the appropriate level for student success within each of the parent programs.
- There are documented best-practices when it comes to Access programs.
- The linkages between Access programs and their parent programs were ineffective.
- The ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to specialty courses was effective.
- The program delivery model (e.g. classroom instruction, lectures, hands-on activities, etc.) is the best approach to achieve the current program objectives.

⁶⁵ Aurora College. (2006). *Strong Foundations – New Horizons*.

⁶⁶ NWT 16th Legislative Assembly. (2007). *Northerners Working Together*.

⁶⁷ Department of ECE. (2011). *Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan*; (2012) *Education Renewal and Innovation Framework*.

⁶⁸ Aurora College. (2006). *Strong Foundations – New Horizons*. p. 4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

- There is no significantly statistical difference in the success of the specialized Access program delivery model compared to the general Access program delivery model.
- Current and former students are very satisfied with the overall quality of Access programs.
- Senior managers, program managers, and instructors are satisfied with the quality of Access graduates.
- The majority of Access students successfully complete their Access programs.
- There are various reasons why some students fail to complete Access programs (Section 4.3.11).
- There are various strategies or actions that could be implemented to improve student retention (Section 4.3.11).
- There are various reasons why some students are successful and others are not successful in Access programs (Section 4.3.12).
- There are no statistically significant differences in completion rates between former Access students and direct entry students in the first year of parent and related programs.
- Access programs are being delivered effectively across the three campuses.
- Access programs are being delivered somewhat inconsistently across the three campuses.
- Access programs are somewhat successful in meeting their intended goals and objectives.
- There have been several unexpected positive impacts resulting from the development of Access programs.
- Access programs need restructuring (but should not be eliminated).

4.3.1 Meeting Students' Needs

Table 4.3.1.1 shows survey respondents' satisfaction with Access programs in terms of meeting students' needs. A majority of respondents (85.1%) were very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with Access programs in meeting a variety of students' needs.

Table 4.3.1.1: Satisfaction – Meeting Students' Needs

	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. academic needs	39	22.2	76	43.2	38	21.6	14	8.0	8	4.5	1	0.5
b. financial needs	28	17.4	33	20.5	61	37.9	21	13.0	11	6.8	7	4.3
c. lifeskills needs	26	14.7	78	44.1	42	23.7	21	11.9	8	4.5	2	1.1
d. other needs ⁷⁰	11	24.4	11	24.4	6	13.3	4	8.9	10	22.2	3	1.4
e. overall needs	30	16.9	73	41.2	49	27.2	21	9.6	3	1.7	1	0.6

The SRS data confirms that Access programs are meeting student needs because enrollments have increased significantly over the 2002/03 to 2012/13 timeframe. Specifically, enrollments increased from

⁷⁰ Other needs included personal and emotional needs (n = 10; 5%); academic support needs (i.e. tutors, libraries, student success centres, and study groups) (n = 10; 5%); improving communication skills and self-confidence (n = 6; 3%); quality of residences/housing shortage (n = 6; 3%); lack of childcare facilities (n = 5; 2%); employability skills (n = 5; 2%); study habits/critical thinking skills (n = 4; 2%); and counselling needs (n = 2; 1%).

an average of 86 students per year in the 2002/03 to 2005/06 period to an average of 144 students per year in the 2006/07 to 2011/12 period ($t = 10.849$; $p = .000$). The SRS data also confirms that Access programs meet the needs of students who are Aboriginal (86%), female (71%), and 25 years of age and under (55%).

According to the background documents reviewed and the expert panelists, one of the main ways that colleges across Canada are striving to meet the needs of Aboriginal students and to address the barriers these students face is through access programming that provides academic laddering and the necessary supports for students to prepare to enter college certificate, diploma, and degree programs.

For those survey respondents who indicated that Access programs were not meeting students' needs, the major reasons are listed by need below.

Not Meeting Academic Needs (13% of Respondents)

- Some students are placed in multilevel classes without the supports and resources to be successful.
- Students are not adequately prepared for parent programs (e.g., need a writing course and better critical thinking skills).
- Students are not getting all the courses they need (e.g., English 160 for the Social Work Access program).
- There are unrealistic expectations for some students to get to the level they need within one year.

Not Meeting Financial Needs (24% of Respondents)

- Students struggle financially, especially those students with families.
- Students underestimate the financial resources needed to complete their programs.

Not Meeting Other Needs (33% of Respondents)

- Students need better childcare and housing options at the three campuses.
- Students come in from small communities to attend campus programs, and they are not prepared for the culture shock—there is no advanced preparation to ease the transition.
- Student tracking is weak and feedback loops are poor—no feedback loops between CAEs and campus staff about students' progress in their programs and limited feedback loops between instructors in access and parent programming.

In addition to these key perspectives from the respondents, the focus group and the expert panelists for this project offered a number of suggestions. The focus group stipulated that **tutoring supports** and **childcare services** were critical to meeting the needs of Access students. The expert panelists compiled

the following list of practical suggestions used at various colleges and universities.

Expert Panel: Ways to Meet Student Needs in Access Programs

- Carefully screen students for Access programs
 - Students need to be working at the prescribed academic levels upon entrance
 - Students need to be fully aware of and prepared for the demands of full-time studies
- Provide supports such as pre-emptive and ongoing counselling to help students meet personal challenges
- Offer assistance with such practicalities as locating childcare services, recreational services, banks, and other services
- Identify the need for tutorial assistance early on to help address students' gaps in prior learning
- Encourage practical work experience at the volunteer and entry level employment level to provide an accurate picture of the career path chosen
- Promote cultural integration within the academic programs
- Encourage laddering opportunities
- Communicate with industry partners and integrate relevant material into the programs
- Network and share resources
- Recruit specifically for Access programs
- Encourage staff to nurture in students the value of completing the program
- Track students beyond the Access program
- Extend Access programs to two years

4.3.2 Extent to Which Access Programs Are Meeting Their Intended Purposes

The extent to which Access programs are meeting their intended purposes has two components:

- The number and percentage of students going on to enter Aurora College programs or courses
- The level of academic readiness of students going on to enter other Aurora College programs or courses

Number and Percentage of Students Going on to Enter Other College Programs

The analysis of the SRS data shows that 73% (n = 882) of Access students went on to enroll in other Aurora College programs or single courses between 2002/03 and 2012/13.

As Table 4.3.2.1 shows, students from Nursing Access and Teacher Education Access made up the majority of students who went on to enroll in other Aurora College programs/courses post-Access.

Table 4.3.2.1: Students Enrolled in Programs/Courses Post-Access – by Access Program (2002/03 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Nursing Access	329	37.3
TEP Access	180	20.4
Trades Access	111	12.6
Trades Access II	96	10.9
Social Work Access	70	7.9
ENRT Access	51	5.8
Business Administration Access	45	5.1
Totals	882	100.0

These students went on to enrol in employment training (non-credit) courses (28%; n = 535), further academic upgrading (20%; n = 376), diploma programs (19%; n = 351), degree programs (16%; n = 303), employment training programs (6%; n = 107), certificate programs (6%; n = 103), and apprenticeship programs (3%; n = 52).⁷¹

Level of Academic Readiness

A majority of survey respondents (69%; n = 37) indicated that they were either very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with the level of academic readiness of Access graduates going on to other Aurora College programs.

4.3.3 Academic Admission Requirements

A majority of survey respondents (80%; n = 134) indicated that the academic entrance requirements for each of the Access programs were at the appropriate level for student success within each Access program.

Respondents believed that the academic admission requirements are set at a fair and basic level. This basic level allows students to refresh old knowledge, to grasp new concepts, and to build student confidence. The respondents also felt Aurora College staff must enforce the academic admission requirements.

⁷¹ The actual number of unique students enrolled in programs/courses post-Access was 882; but because some students enrolled in more than one program or course post-Access, the number of student registrations was 1,892. See Table 2.2.2.4 for details.

The *Review of the Aurora College Access Program Outlines* (2013)⁷², which includes an examination of academic admission requirements, supports the perceptions of the respondents. Hogan stated that most academic entry requirements for Access programs should put most students in a position to be successful, if their reading comprehension levels are at the required levels.⁷³ Hogan did point out issues with the math and science prerequisites and the need to consider contextual issues such as student barriers and decentralized deliveries in any meaningful discussion about academic admission requirements.⁷⁴ The review elaborated on the potential problem areas with the prerequisites.

The focus group participants felt that the academic admission requirements were generally at the correct levels but that the screening processes and placement tools were inadequate and inappropriate. Generally, the focus group participants supported better screening practices including in-depth interviews, better trained staff, career and academic counselling, and appropriate placement testing tools. According to a senior Aurora College manager at the focus group, new normed and culturally appropriate placement tools were piloted by Nunavut Arctic College and Aurora College in 2013. However, the results of the pilots were unknown at the time of this review.

4.3.4 Academic Exit Requirements

A majority of survey respondents (63%; n = 63) indicated that the academic exit requirements for each of the Access programs were at the appropriate level for student success within each of the parent programs.

The SRS data confirms this perception as there were no statistically significant differences in completion rates between former Access students and direct entry students in the first year of parent and related programs (see Section 4.3.13 for more details).

Respondents trusted the educational processes in the sense that if students met the entrance requirements, worked hard, stayed focussed, and remained committed, they would succeed in meeting the exit requirements, especially with the help of dedicated and supportive instructors. In addition, respondents felt the Alberta departmental examinations offered a filter or standard in relation to exit requirements. Respondents suggested that Aurora College should monitor the spread between instructor marks and departmental marks.

Respondents raised a number of concerns about student readiness for the parent programs. While Access students may meet the exit requirements, some students may not be strong, independent learners, and non-academic issues may sabotage their success. Moreover, the linkages between the Access programs and parent programs are weak, which further limits opportunities for constructive

⁷² Hogan, K. (2013). *Review of Aurora College Access Program Outlines*. Yellowknife.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

discussion and feedback about academic exit requirements and student readiness for the parent programs.

Once again, the *Review of the Aurora College Access Program Outlines* (2013)⁷⁵, which includes an examination of academic exit requirements, generally supports the perceptions of the respondents. Hogan stated that the courses taught in the Access program and their program completion requirements mostly, but not always, match the entry requirements of the parent programs.⁷⁶ In particular, Hogan noted that the course passing marks in the Access programs are often lower than the entry requirements for the parent programs, and she identified other potential problem areas in her report.⁷⁷

4.3.5 Best Practices

As part of this review, best practices documents related to Access programs and Aboriginal student populations were examined. This section considers the studies and reports from ACCC, 2010; CMEC, 2010, Malatest and Associates Ltd., 2010, and the NWT Literacy Council, 2013.

The ACCC, founded in 1972, is a national association that serves approximately 130 publicly funded Canadian colleges. The ACCC informs the public and private sectors about post-secondary education through national research projects and reports. The ACCC takes a keen interest in Aboriginal peoples' issues related to post-secondary education access, inclusion, and community development. In 2005, the ACCC released its first report, *Canadian Colleges and Institutes – Meeting the Needs of Aboriginal learners*. Five years later, the ACCC presented an updated report, *Colleges Serving Aboriginal Learners and Communities: 2010 Environmental Scan*.

The ACCC report (2010) identified key trends in relation to Aboriginal students in Canada:

- An educational attainment gap persists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people particularly with respect to high school completion.
- The percentage of Aboriginal people with a college certificate or diploma is almost at par with the non-Aboriginal population.
- The percentage of Aboriginal people with apprenticeship or trades certification is higher than for the non-Aboriginal population.
- Higher proportions of Aboriginal people attend colleges (42 %) and technical institutes and trade schools (20%) rather than attend universities (16%).
- The majority of Aboriginal college students are female (58%) between the ages of 25 and 40.
- The highest Aboriginal student enrolments are at publicly-funded institutions.

⁷⁵ Hogan, K. (2013). *Review of Aurora College Access Program Outlines*. Yellowknife.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

- Active Aboriginal student recruitment and laddering opportunities from adult upgrading programs are essential to increase access to college education for Aboriginal students.
- Eighty colleges offer education and training programs specifically for Aboriginal students including adult upgrading and college preparatory programs, post-secondary certificate and diploma programs, trades and apprenticeship programs, university transfer and degree programs, community-based, and distance learning programs.
- The top three types of Aboriginal programming that colleges focus on are
 - Aboriginal-specific certificate and diploma programs, which are offered by 71% of colleges,
 - preparatory programs for Aboriginal students to facilitate entrance into post-secondary programs (49%), and
 - community-based Aboriginal programs (50%).
- Eighty-seven colleges offer Aboriginal student support services.
- Key funding challenges are the lack of financial assistance for students in adult upgrading and the fact that funding amounts do not recognize the costs of the diverse range of support services and upgrading needed by Aboriginal students before starting post-secondary programs.⁷⁸

The ACCC Report (2010) identified four themes that should serve as a foundation for Aboriginal student best practices in Canada:

- Aboriginal community engagement is fundamental for the effective delivery of Aboriginal programs and services.
- Aboriginal voices must be heard within and across institutions.
- Recruitment and support services are essential for Aboriginal student retention and success.
- A holistic approach is required to enable colleges to become institutions of Aboriginal inclusion or Indigenized institutions.⁷⁹

In addition to the research conducted by ACCC (2010), Malatest and Associates Ltd (2010)⁸⁰ carried out a review of promising practices for Aboriginal students transitioning into Ontario post-secondary institutions. Nine promising practices emerged from this research:

- A physical program presence on campus
- Small program changes which have a noticeable impact (e.g., nights classes for working mothers)
- Programs that enlist the support of elders and aboriginal community leaders

⁷⁸ ACCC. (2010). *Colleges Serving Aboriginal Learners and Communities*. pp. ii, iii, and 36.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp.58-59.

⁸⁰ Malatest, R. A., & Associates Ltd. (2010). *Promising Practices: Increasing and Supporting Participation for Aboriginal Students in Ontario*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

- Distance education and programs that allow aboriginal students to stay connected to their families and communities; intensive courses that shorten the time at the institution
- Closer integration with existing resources
- Partnerships between post-secondary education (PSE) institutions
- Networking with organizations outside of PSE institutions (e.g., local employers)
- A holistic approach to student support (e.g., offering childcare, assistance with housing, and personal counselling)
- Peer counselling and mentoring⁸¹

Also in 2010, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) conducted research⁸² on transitions by Aboriginal people from K-12 to post-secondary education. The study resonated closely with the four themes identified by ACCC (2010). In addition to stressing the importance of measures that ensure a holistic approach and Aboriginal representation, the study placed emphasis on enhanced financial supports, early interventions to improve academic readiness, and a greater range of supports to reduce the complex range of barriers and challenges faced by Aboriginal learners.⁸³

Closer to home, the NWT Literacy Council (2013) did research into factors that facilitate adult learner success in the NWT. That research identified the following eight strategies:

1. Target the situational barriers that learners face.
2. Implement prior learning and assessment recognition (PLAR) in ALBE programs.
3. Take an integrated “whole person” approach to overcome multiple barriers.
4. Identify and deal with institutional and pedagogical [instructional] barriers.
5. Embed learning in practical and realistic contexts, particularly for learners with lower levels of skills.
6. Balance academic and non-academic outcomes, both in practice and in assessment.
7. Recognize and support key transition points in people’s lives, such as parenthood.
8. Recognize the time it may take some learners to complete programs.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ibid., pp.38-39.

⁸² CMEC. (2010). *A Literature Review of Factors that Support Successful Transitions by Aboriginal People from K-12 to Post-secondary Education*. Toronto.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁸⁴ NWT Literacy Council. (2013). *Factors that Facilitate Adult Learner Success in the NWT*. p. 3.

4.3.6 Effectiveness of Linkages

Table 4.3.6.1 shows survey respondent views on the effectiveness of the academic, administrative, and operational linkages between each Access Program and its parent program. A majority of respondents (56.2%) indicated that, overall, those linkages were either somewhat ineffective, ineffective, or very ineffective.

Table 4.3.6.1: Effectiveness – Linkages between Access and Parent Programs

	Very Effective		Effective		Somewhat Effective		Somewhat Ineffective		Ineffective		Very Ineffective	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. academic linkages	6	10.2	14	23.7	11	18.6	16	27.1	8	13.6	4	6.8
b. administrative linkages	2	3.8	12	23.1	10	19.2	13	25.0	10	19.2	5	9.6
c. operational linkages	2	3.6	13	23.6	7	12.7	15	27.3	14	25.5	4	7.3
d. overall effectiveness	2	3.5	13	22.8	10	17.5	17	29.8	12	21.1	3	5.3

The key reasons identified by the respondents for the ineffectiveness of linkages are listed here:

- Lack of commitment to Access programs on the part of Aurora College management
- Lack of appreciation for the barriers that Northern students face
- Lack of financial and human resources available for Access programs
- Lack of time available for staff to build these linkages
- Lack of ongoing regular communication and feedback loops at all levels within Aurora College
- Lack of formal interaction between Access program and parent program instructors and managers (e.g., no committees, no annual reviews, no joint reports, and no joint screening of applicants)
- Inefficient student record system

Some respondents did cite the ENRT Access program at Aurora Campus as an example of an Access program with strong linkages to its parent program. The ENRTP senior instructor teaches in the ENRT Access program for one year and then teaches in the ENRTP for the next two years. Thus, the academic, administrative, and operational linkages are very strong. In addition, the Social Work Access program at Yellowknife Campus is another good example of a program with linkages to the parent program. The instructor from the parent program teaches the specialty course in the Social Work Access program.

Another program cited as having had stronger linkages at one time is the original Nursing Access program, which started in 1993, because instructors from the parent program used to teach the specialty courses in the Access program.

Focus group participants held similar views to those expressed above in relation to the reasons for the ineffective linkages and the need to cultivate stronger linkages with parent and related program staff.

4.3.7 Ratio of Specialty Courses to General Courses

A majority of respondents (88%; n = 117) indicated that the ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to specialty courses was either very effective, effective, or somewhat effective. A majority of respondents (90%; n = 128) also noted that those specialty courses were either very effective, effective, or somewhat effective at motivating students to continue in their Access programs. Finally, a majority of respondents (92%; n = 130) indicated that those specialty courses were either very effective, effective, or somewhat effective overall.

Generally, respondents held the view that specialty courses motivate students, give students exposure to specific career options, and provide information about the parent program requirements. As an example, one student respondent stated that the specialty course really focussed her, gave her insight into the program, and helped her make the decision that a career in that field was what she wanted. Another student respondent indicated that the specialty courses were effective for determining his career path, and that the courses provided him with valuable information about the parent program.

Some respondents also stated that the specialty courses serve as a pre-assessment tool for instructors, particularly for the ENRTP. ENRTP instructors see how comfortable students are on the land, in camps, and with the equipment while they are in the ENRT Access program. In addition, respondents cited the school visits in Teacher Education Access program as opportunities for both the instructors and students to assess comfort levels and viable career options.

Virtually all the courses in the Trades Access II are specialized and most of the Trades Access courses are specialized to some degree. Over 88% (n = 95) of respondents found these courses to be very effective, effective, or somewhat effective.

Some respondents (10%) felt that specialty courses in the general Access programs such as Nursing and Business Administration take valuable time away from the academics. In addition, the respondents commented on the quality of some specialty courses suggesting that a number of them had little relevance to the parent programs. Other factors noted are that students receive no credits in the parent programs for these courses, nor are the courses prerequisites for entry into the parent programs. Moreover, when parent program are not located at particular campuses, students from those campuses have fewer resources and opportunities available related to those parent programs as compared to students at campuses where parent programs are located. As an example, Yellowknife Campus students in the Social Work Access program can interact with students in the Social Work Diploma program and can take workshops from the Social Work instructors, whereas Aurora Campus students in the Social Work Access program do not have these same opportunities.

4.3.8 Delivery Model

The examination of the Access programs delivery models had two components:

- For each Access program, is the program delivery model the best approach to achieve the current objectives of the program?
- How successful is the specialized Access program delivery model and how successful is the general Access program delivery model?

Delivery Model the Best Approach

A majority of survey respondents (87%; n = 77) indicated that the delivery model of Access programs (e.g., classroom instruction, lectures, hands-on activities, etc.) was the best approach to achieve the current program objectives.

Many of the instructor respondents agreed that classroom instruction, that includes hands-on and experiential activities, has proved to be the most successful mode of delivery in the North. To enhance the delivery, instructors incorporate technology, media, and practical experiences such as shop and labs within their programs. In addition, instructors invite guest speakers knowledgeable about selected professions such as nursing, social work, and teaching.

Respondents also suggested that online learning does not work well for most Access students. They provided many examples of failed attempts using distance education delivery in both the Access programs and the parent programs. Respondents asserted that classroom instruction works best for the students.

Contrary to the opinion that online learning does not work well for most Access students, some respondents felt that there is an online initiative that holds promise. The Sunchild E-learning program coordinated by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, is an online high school completion program designed for Aboriginal learners. It has won several awards, and students seem to be experiencing good results using the program. It will be important to monitor this program over time to determine best practices and successes.

Success of the General Access Delivery Model and the Specialized Access Delivery Model⁸⁵

A majority of survey respondents (81%; n = 57) indicated that the general Access delivery model was either very successful, successful, or somewhat successful while all survey respondents (100%; n = 10) indicated the specialized Access delivery model was either very successful, successful, or somewhat successful. The views of respondents that there were differences in success between the two models were not supported by the SRS data (see Section 5.3 for details).

⁸⁵ The Trades Access II Program uses a model that relies more on specialty courses; the other six Access programs use a more generalized model that relies on a mixture of ALBE courses and courses related to the parent programs.

There was general agreement among the focus group participants that a specialized trades program should continue because of its current success and its appeal to male students. However, participants felt that the Department of ECE's apprenticeship database should be linked to student record systems at key southern trades-related colleges and Aurora College in order to better track student success in the trades. At the time of the review, data was only available related to students passing the Trades Entrance Exam and little or no data was available in terms of longer term student success in reaching journeyman status.

The SRS data showed that the model delivery type had no impact on course completions and the selection of parent and related programs. While 73% of students go on to other Aurora College post-secondary programs, less than one-third of students in Access programs go on to enroll in a parent or related program.⁸⁶ Given this information, focus group participants supported a reduction in the number of Access programs from seven programs to two programs: a generic Access program with streaming in the second semester and some type of a trades-related Access program.

Similar to the focus group, the expert panelists did not reach consensus on a preferred delivery model. Instead, panel members felt that the generalized and specialized models have unique purposes. For students who are relatively certain of their education path, a specialized program that links more directly to a parent program makes sense. For older students or students with multiple academic needs, a more general Access program is needed to address gaps in knowledge, to build confidence, and to allow for success over time.

4.3.9 Satisfaction with the Programs

Table 4.3.9.1 shows survey respondent satisfaction with the various components of Access programs. The majority of respondents were either very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with all aspects of Access programming.

⁸⁶ **Please note:**

- This rate may be under-reported because some former Access students took their next programs in southern Canada, – so that data is not included in this SRS analysis.

Table 4.3.9.1: Satisfaction – Various Components of the Programs

	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. instructor qualifications	6	35.3	7	41.2	2	11.8	2	11.8	--	--	--	--
b. instructor experience	5	29.4	8	47.1	2	11.8	2	11.8	--	--	--	--
c. instructor teaching skills	4	25.0	6	37.5	4	25.0	2	12.5	--	--	--	--
d. overall quality of instruction	34	26.4	65	50.4	26	20.2	4	3.1	--	--	--	--
e. program facilities (e.g. space, location, general environment)	35	26.9	60	46.2	26	20.0	5	3.8	4	3.1	--	--
f. program resources or equipment (labs, desks, chairs, etc.)	40	30.5	69	52.7	18	13.7	3	2.3	1	0.8	--	--
g. program support services (e.g. libraries, counsellors, student success centres)	41	31.8	55	42.6	25	19.4	6	4.7	1	0.8	1	0.8
e. overall quality of the program	45	34.4	62	47.3	21	16.0	2	1.5	1	0.8	--	--

Over 97% (n = 128) of the respondents were very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with the overall quality of the program. The respondents considered the instructors to be critical to the success of Access programs. The respondents described Access program instructors as “incredible”, “knowledgeable”, “supportive”, “helpful”, “genuine”, “well prepared”, “friendly”, “skilled”, “amazing”, and “dedicated.” Respondents believed that the demands of teaching Access students require instructors to be very experienced teachers, well versed in adult learning theory, and specialists in their subject areas.

Student respondents believed that participation in Access programs had changed their lives in positive ways. Students who had been unsuccessful in the past were now gaining confidence, experiencing academic success, passing Alberta departmental examinations, and preparing for careers.

Respondents felt the program facilities were good at the Thebacha Campus. However, respondents maintained that the facilities were less than desirable at the Yellowknife Campus and Aurora Campus. Respondents contended that the facility in Yellowknife is crowded, falling to pieces, and noisy. The main complaints about the current Yellowknife campus were the lack of a college presence in Yellowknife and the need for a standalone campus. The problem expressed about the facilities for Aurora Campus’s Access programs in Inuvik was that all programs except the Trades Access II are housed at the Community Learning Centre. Respondents stated that the Community Learning Centre is some distance away from the campus site, is inaccessible to campus resources, and is cramped.

Respondents noted that the long-standing staffing vacancies in critical positions such as librarians, student success centre staff, and counsellors and the changes caused by the reorganization have seriously affected the quality of program support services.

4.3.10 Satisfaction with Improving Student Skills and Overall Quality of Access Graduates

Table 4.3.10.1 shows survey respondent satisfaction with Access programs in improving students' skills. A majority of respondents were either very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with Access programs in improving those student skills.

Table 4.3.10.1: Satisfaction – Meeting Students' Needs

	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
a. academic skills (study skills, writing skills, etc.)	11	19.0	17	29.3	11	19.0	14	24.1	3	5.2	2	3.4
b. lifeskills (time management, improving self-confidence, etc.)	9	15.8	13	22.8	16	28.1	14	24.6	3	5.3	2	3.5
c. other skills ⁸⁷	4	17.4	9	39.1	6	26.1	3	13.0	1	4.3	--	--
d. overall quality of Access graduates	5	9.3	23	42.6	10	18.5	11	20.4	4	7.4	1	1.9

The majority of the respondents (70%; n = 38) were either very satisfied, satisfied, or somewhat satisfied with the overall quality of Access graduates (i.e., students who moved into parent programs).

Respondents cited examples of students who had overcome tremendous barriers to complete Access programs and move forward. Respondents felt that the Access programs had made a real difference for these students.

Respondents who rated the overall quality of Access graduates as somewhat dissatisfied, dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied represented nearly 30% (n = 15) of the survey respondents. The key reasons for these levels of dissatisfaction were identified as follows:

- Length of Access program (limited to 10 months)
- Unrealistic academic expectations for students
- Different levels of expectations for students between Access programs and parent programs
- Limited feedback loops between program instructors, across campuses, and in communities

Respondents contended that the 10-month period in an Access program is often insufficient for students to gain the levels and skills needed to enter post-secondary programs. This assessment is

⁸⁷ Other skills included communication/cooperation/teamwork skills (n = 9; 4.1%) and motivation/personal responsibility skills (n = 7; 3.2%).

especially true for students that barely meet Access program entrance requirements. For example, if a student enters access programming with ALBE Math 140, it is very difficult for that student to complete the math requirements (Grade 12 Math 30-2) to enter the Business Administration program or the ENRTP in 10 months. For some students who only meet the minimum entrance requirements in several subject areas, this issue intensifies, and the expectations become unrealistic for those students. Respondents suggested that better screening processes and assessment tools were needed.

Respondents raised concerns about the differences in expectations for students between Access programs and parent programs. Respondents from parent programs felt many former Access students were not ready for the rigours of post-secondary studies, not only academically but attitudinally as well. Respondents believed that ongoing communication between program instructors might help to reduce any differences in expectations for students. In addition, improved feedback loops might help to identify the types of supports needed to make students more successful in the parent programs.

4.3.11 Program Attrition and Retention

The examination of program attrition and retention had two components:

- Identification of the program attrition rates and causes
- Stakeholder views on what can be done to improve program retention

Program Attrition Rates and Causes

Of the 1,205 students who enrolled in Access programs in the 2002/03 to 2011/12 timeframe, just over half (52%; n = 517) completed all of the courses in their Access programs,⁸⁸ and the attrition rate was 48%.

Table 4.3.11.1 shows that the highest completion rate was in the Trades Access program.

⁸⁸ This 52% of “Course Completions” also included 18% (n = 176) of students who were given “Conditional Completions” as defined in Section 3.6. See Table 2.2.1.10 in Appendix II for full details of conditional completions by Access program.

Table 4.3.11.1: Students Completing All Courses in Access Programs by Access Program (2002/03 to 2011/12)⁸⁹

	Did Not Complete		Completed		Totals	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Trades Access	46	34.1	89	65.9	135	100.0
Business Administration Access	26	40.6	38	59.4	64	100.0
TEP Access	88	43.1	116	56.9	204	100.0
Trades Access II	47	43.5	61	56.5	108	100.0
ENRT Access	25	48.1	27	51.9	52	100.0
Nursing Access	198	56.4	153	43.6	351	100.0
Social Work Access	46	58.2	33	41.8	79	100.0
Totals	476	47.9	517	52.1	993	100.0

Please note:

- The differences in completion rates among Access programs was not statistically significant, so no overall conclusions should be drawn from this data.

According to the survey respondents, these are the main reasons why students fail to complete Access programs:

- Family responsibilities – childcare, sick relatives, keeping the household going (n = 53; 24%)
- Academic readiness (n = 46; 21%)
- Attendance issues (n = 41; 19%)
- Financial challenges (n = 35; 16%)
- For other reasons, including personal issues, lifestyle readiness issues, first generation learner issues, finding work, and lack of housing (n = 25; 12%)
- Not enough support at school or home for the student (n = 22; 10%)
- Fear of failure (n = 7; 3%)

Improving Program Retention

Respondents offered a number of suggestions to address the main reasons why students do not complete Access programs:

Family Responsibilities

- Provide childcare services on campus or in the community.
- Provide more social and cultural events for students and their families.
- Provide better housing options for students.

⁸⁹ Students who “withdrew” or who were “ongoing” or “in-progress” with their studies were not included in the calculation of whether they completed all of their Access courses—that’s why the N totals 993 rather than 1,205.

Academic Readiness

- Offer study skills sessions.
- Offer pre-orientation sessions in the communities.
- Inform students of the supports offered through the student success center.
- Have advisors assigned to students upon entering the Access programs.
- Provide a writing centre at each campus.
- Provide better and more stringent screening processes.
- Track students and provide services for at-risk students.
- Extend the length of time to complete Access programs.

Attendance Issues

- Enforce Aurora College policies and rules related to attendance, lateness, and absenteeism.
- Find a way to address attendance issues in a less punitive manner.
- Develop strategies to address attendance and retention issues.
- Insert attendance policy information in all program outlines.

Financial Challenges

- Encourage the Department of ECE to fund ALBE at all levels.
- Offer personal finances workshops and courses.
- Counsel students about the financial costs of going to college.

Lifestyle Issues

- Offer workshops on time management and personal finances.
- Hire a wellness counsellor at each campus.
- Facilitate mentorships.

Focus group participants supported these suggestions and reiterated that tutoring supports and childcare services would be very helpful in addressing attendance and retention issues. Moreover, they recommended the following interventions to increase student success for students from small communities: provide supports to community adult educators to improve their skills in teaching math and English at the 140 levels; encourage more contact between community leaders and influential residents with Access students; and offer pre-orientation sessions in the communities. Although no consensus was reached regarding the best approach to improving retention rates of male students, participants suggested that part-time study, modular formats, 2-week block periods, and ENRT and trades-related, hands-on programs might improve male student retention rates. However, participants believed that male students value work over education and will leave any type of program when work is available.

4.3.12 Student Success

Respondents provided input on why some students are successful and other students are unsuccessful in Access programs. According to the respondents, successful students have a number of common characteristics:

- Strong family support systems
- Commitment and seriousness about their program and learning
- Defined academic and career goals
- Intrinsic motivation
- Strong work ethics
- Strong coping skills
- Maturity
- The ability to make good choices
- Healthy lifestyles
- Realistic expectations
- Self-confidence
- The ability to know when to ask for help

In addition, the NWT Literacy Council (2013) has identified eight strategies that facilitate adult learner success (see Section 4.3.5). These strategies recognize the interdependence of personal, social, and academic aspects in learner success.

The focus group participants noted that female Access students have higher completion rates in access courses as compared to male students. Their observations are supported by ACCC (2010). The participants also noted that this is a national trend and that the types of Access programs offered at Aurora College tend to attract more female students than male students. For example, the Nursing and Teacher Education Access programs accounted for over 54% of the student enrollments at Aurora College, and the majority of the students in those programs are female. As mentioned previously, the participants felt that male students withdraw from Access programs to join the workforce if jobs are available, whereas female students remain in Access programs and complete their studies. According to the focus group, male students use Access programs as a stop gap measure between jobs and attribute more status to working than to going to school. Possible interventions to keep male students in programs suggested by the focus group were discussed in Section 4.3.11.

4.3.13 Success of Former Access Students in Parent and Related Programs

Although there were differences between former Access students (54%; n = 206) and direct entry students (71%; n = 1,593) in whether they completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs, those differences were not statistically significant. It didn't matter what Access program a

student was enrolled in – they were generally as likely as direct entry students to successfully complete their first year courses in parent and related programs.

4.3.14 Delivery Across Campuses

The examination of the delivery of Access programs across campuses had two components:

- How effectively are Access programs being delivered across the three campuses?
- How consistently are Access programs being delivered across the three campuses?

Effectiveness of Delivery Across Campuses

Overall, Access programs are being delivered effectively across the three campuses. The analysis of the SRS data shows that there were no statistically significant differences in completion rates of students in Access programs at different campuses. Regardless of which campus students were enrolled at, they had similar completion rates in their Access programs. There were, however, some differences across campuses in how those former Access students did after they finished their Access programs (see Section 5.4 for details).

Consistency of Delivery Across Campuses

To determine the level of consistency of delivery across the three campuses, the consultants reviewed the 2013 winter semester timetables and found the following similarities across the campuses:

- Integration with ALBE students (except Trades Access II)
- Master timetabling of ALBE and Access programs (except Trades Access II)
- Multiple level groupings for certain subjects
- Full range of math levels
- Full range of English levels
- A range of science levels
- Specialty courses
- Developmental Studies instructors teaching the Access courses in most cases

Despite the similarities, respondents felt that the Access programs were delivered somewhat inconsistently across the campuses. One indicator was that students moving from one campus to another campus could not expect to find the same courses or programs at all three campuses. The most obvious inconsistencies are found in the deliveries of the Trades Access and Trades Access II at Aurora and Thebacha campuses. For example, the courses, electives, schedules and length of time differ between the programs, and Trades Access II is a standalone program separate from Developmental Studies. In addition, there are inconsistencies among other Access programs in the numbers and kinds of courses delivered in similar programs as seen in Table 4.3.14.1. Moreover, respondents cited differences in standards, campus resources, screening procedures, tutoring practices, and instructor qualifications.

Also, Hogan (2013) found a number of inconsistencies in the delivery of Access programs' specialty courses across the three Aurora College campuses. However, given Aurora College's decentralized delivery system, differences in program deliveries from campus to campus are not surprising.

Table 4.3.14.1: Comparison of Access Program Deliveries Across Campuses

Winter Semester 2013	Aurora Campus	Yellowknife Campus	Thebacha Campus
Access Programs	Teacher Education Access Social Work Access Nursing Access ENRT Access Trades Access II	Business Admin Access Social Work Access Nursing Access	Teacher Education Access Nursing Access Business Admin Access Trades Access ENRT Access
Math	120/130 140 145 150/160	120/130 140/145/150 140 145	120/130 140 Math 20-2 Math 30-2 Trades math Business math
English	120/130 140 150/160	130/140 150	130 140 150 160
Science	130 Bio 20 Bio 30	140 Nursing Access Biology	140 Bio 30 Trades science
Social Studies		140	140 160
Specialty	Nursing Access II All Trades Access II courses	Bookkeeping 1 Intro to Social Work Nursing II	Nursing Access Bookkeeping 1 Foundations 1
Other	CCP Computers	PLAR ICT 140	PLAR ICT 130 ICT 140 CC 140

Source: Aurora College Developmental Studies Senior Instructors at Aurora, Yellowknife, and Thebacha Campuses. (February 2013).

4.3.15 Success in Achieving Intended Goals and Objectives

A majority of respondents (80%; n = 84) indicated that Access programs were either very successful, successful, or somewhat successful in achieving their intended goals and objectives.

The SRS data indicates that Access programs are somewhat successful in achieving their intended goals and objectives. The indication of "somewhat" can be explained by the remaining challenges programs face despite their many successes.

These are the successes:

- A majority of Access students completed their Access programs (52%; n = 517)
- A majority of Access students went on to enrol in other Aurora College programs (73%; n = 882)
- There are no statistically significant differences between former Access students (54%; n = 206) and direct entry students (71%; n = 1,593) in whether they completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs

These are the challenges:

- Less than one-third (32%; n = 391) of the 1,205 students in Access programs went on to enroll in a parent or related program.
- The academic, administrative, and operational linkages between Access and parent programs are ineffective.
- Attrition rates in Access programs were high (48%; n = 476).
- Former Access students were less academically successful in degree and apprenticeship programs than in certificate and diploma programs.
- Ethnicity, gender, and home community are related to student academic success within Access programs, and whether students progressed on to parent and related programs.
- The profile of students entering Access programs is changing significantly.

Please note that this progression rate of Access students into parent programs may be under-reported because some former Access students enroll in similar programs at southern Canadian post-secondary institutions, and that data is not included in the SRS analysis.

Other educational data noted that the percentage of Aboriginal people with a college certificate or diploma is almost at par with non-Aboriginal people, but the percentage of Aboriginal people with degrees is much lower compared to non-Aboriginal people (ACCC, 2010). The review showed that Aurora College Access students have less success in degree programs than in certificate and diploma programs. The focus group offered several reasons why Access students prefer diploma and certificate parent and related programs. These reasons are:

- Certificate and diploma programs are less demanding than degree programs.
- Certificate and diploma programs require a shorter time commitment.
- Certificate and diploma programs allow students to achieve professional success with good wages and opportunities for promotion.
- Certificate and diploma programs are a stepping stone for students who wish to attend Southern colleges and universities.
- Students place less value on a degree program when they can do well with a diploma or certificate.

4.3.16 Unexpected Impacts

Respondents identified three positive unexpected outcomes: the impact on family, the improvement in personal and social skills, and increased interest in higher level courses and ongoing successes in writing Alberta examinations.

- The first positive unexpected outcome is the positive impact on the students' families when they move to Inuvik, Yellowknife or Fort Smith. According to respondents, students become more aware of and take greater interest in education. They are better able to help their children and other family members and serve as educational role models in their home communities. In addition, children can experience a wider range of recreational and quality educational opportunities in a larger community. The Access programs can have positive impacts on the students' lives, their families, their communities, and their professional lives.
- The second positive unexpected outcome is the improvement in the students' personal and social skills. As students gain confidence in their skills and abilities, their lives transform, and they share their knowledge and confidence with others. Many students become mentors to other students.
- The third positive unexpected outcome is the increased interest in upper level high school/ALBE courses and the Access students' ongoing successes in writing the Alberta departmental examinations. Based on a sample of Aurora College students' Alberta departmental examination results (n = 255) for English Language Arts 30-1 and 30-2, Biology 30, Social Studies 33, Applied Mathematics 30, and Pure Mathematics 30 during the academic years 2006/2007 to 2012/2013, it appears that the number of Aurora College students writing these examinations each year has not increased substantially, but the number of students passing the examinations has more than doubled from 32% in 2006/2007 to 65% in 2012/2013. Since 2010/2011, the majority of Aurora College ALBE and Access students in the sample successfully passed the examinations.⁹⁰

Respondents identified three negative unexpected outcomes: potential SFA abuse, outdated program and course outlines, and negative perceptions about Access programs.

- The first negative unexpected outcome relates to SFA. Since students in Access programs are eligible for SFA, respondents felt that students sometimes enrol in the programming only for the funding. According to the respondents, some students hop from one Access Program to another with no intention of entering a parent program. Students are only eligible for a certain number of semesters under SFA, and each time students access SFA this number decreases. In addition, abuse of SFA could endanger access to this funding for all students. However, data

⁹⁰ Aurora College. (2013). *Alberta Departmental Examinations 2006/2007 to 2012/2013*.

from the SRS shows that 79% of students take only one Access program and that the majority of students enrol in other College programs post-Access (see Section 5.3 for details).

- The second negative unexpected outcome is the continued use of outdated program and course outlines – some dating back to 2000. According to Aurora College policies, program and course outlines are to be reviewed each year and to be updated as necessary.⁹¹ However, as a result of discussions with the Department of ECE in 2009 and 2011, Aurora College staff believe that if Access programs are revised, student will not be eligible for SFA. This places Aurora College in a compromising position with its own policies and with students. In addition, components of the program outlines are used publicly in the Aurora College calendars and on its website. Respondents were adamant that this situation should be resolved, as current Access programs do not match the existing program outlines.
- The third negative unexpected outcome is the perception that only a few students from Access programming enter into parent and related programs, and these students experience high failure rates in those parent and related programs. The SRS data confirms the first part of this perception – as less than one-third of Access students enrol in parent and related programs. However, the SRS data does not support the latter part of that perception – that former Access students are struggling academically once they reach those programs (see Section 5.3 for details).

4.3.17 Programs Restructured or Eliminated

Almost all respondents (97%; n = 55) indicated that Access programs should not be eliminated. However, the majority of respondents (72%; n = 43) also indicated that Access programs do need to be restructured.

Respondents emphasized the value of Access programs in engaging learners and bringing them back to education. In addition, Access and ALBE students make up approximately 30%⁹² of the total full-time student enrollment at Aurora College. Since students in these programs are potential candidates for certificate, diploma and degree programs, efforts to eliminate the barriers they face are critical to their ability to move ahead in their education. The NWT Literacy Council has classified barriers faced by adult learners in the North in three categories: institutional, situational, and attitudinal barriers.⁹³

Respondents believed that a number of institutional barriers exist within Access programs. The areas that require immediate attention are the Access program and course outlines, exit requirements, information in the academic calendar and on the Aurora College website, student policies, linkages

⁹¹ Aurora College. (1995). *Aurora College Policy Manual: Policy C43*. Retrieved March 1, 2013, from www.auroracollege.nt.ca

⁹² Aurora College. (2013). *Aurora College Annual Report 2011-2012*. p. 33.

⁹³ NWT Literacy Council. (2013). *Factors that Facilitate Adult Learner Success in the NWT*. p. 3.

across programs, internal and external attitudes about Access programs, screening and in-take processes, resources, and support services. Many respondents felt that Aurora College needs a new model for Access programs that is realistic, adequately resourced, and supported by all stakeholders.

Respondents also felt that situational and attitudinal barriers bear careful consideration and attention as being very influential determiners of academic success. These issues relate to SFA, housing, and childcare needs, and instructor and management attitudes about Access students.

The focus group participants have supported the continuation of the specialized Access Program model for trades-related programs and have proposed a new structure for general Access programs (see Section 5.5 for details). Aurora College will need to study the models and determine the implications of these models for students, staff, and the college environment.

4.4 Cost Effectiveness

Data gathered for the review revealed these findings on the topic of cost effectiveness:

- Access program funding is primarily from ALBE base funding (with some third-party funding and tuition fees).
- Current resources are being used effectively because of the good management of the Developmental Studies staff and the draw on ALBE funding to offset program shortfalls.
- Access programs are remaining within budget because of effective management and use of ALBE funding to offset program shortfalls. There is no budget for the Trades Access II.
- The proper accounting and reporting procedures are being used.
- Access programs do not duplicate other Aurora College, Department of ECE or GNWT initiatives.

4.4.1 Program Funding Sources

Funding for Access programs comes primarily from ALBE base funding (with some third-party funding and tuition fees).

Detailed program financial information for campus based ALBE programs and all seven Access programs for the 2002/03 to 2011/12 fiscal years is provided in Tables 4.4.1.1 – 4.4.1.8 in Appendix IV. A summary of program costs for two of those years is presented in Tables 4.4.1.9 and 4.4.1.10 that follow. These tables show Access Program costs for the one year prior to and the one year following implementation of the CanNor funding.

Table 4.4.1.9: Summary of Access Program Costs 2010/11

	Aurora Campus	Yellowknife Campus	Thebacha Campus
ALBE (campus-based)	\$208,479	\$418,172	\$450,843
Nursing Access	\$105,715	\$49,439	\$0
Teacher Education Access (includes 3 rd party funding)	\$275,131	\$55,563	Funded through ALBE budget
Social Work Access	\$199,655	Funded through ALBE budget	\$0
Business Administration Access	\$0	Funded through ALBE budget	Funded through ALBE budget
ENRT Access	\$0	\$0	Funded through ALBE budget
Trades Access (includes 3 rd party funding)	\$0	\$0	\$33,810
Trades Access II (includes 3 rd party funding)	\$274,447	\$0	\$0

Table 4.4.1.10: Summary of Access Program Costs 2011/12

	Aurora Campus	Yellowknife Campus	Thebacha Campus
ALBE (campus-based)	\$612,125	\$351,201	\$424,825
Nursing Access	\$132,035	\$107,553	\$0
Teacher Education Access (includes 3 rd party funding)	Funded through ALBE budget	\$107,740	\$37,800
Social Work Access	Funded through ALBE budget	Funded through ALBE budget	\$0
Business Administration Access	\$0	Funded through ALBE budget	Funded through ALBE budget
ENRT Access	\$0	\$0	Funded through ALBE budget
Trades Access (includes 3 rd party funding)	\$0	\$0	\$43,781
Trades Access II (includes 3 rd party funding)	\$191,590	\$0	\$0

Respondents felt that the program funding for Access programs is inadequate. Generally, respondents seemed unclear about program funding sources for Access programs.

4.4.2 Resources Being Used Effectively

A majority of survey respondents (60%; n = 6) indicated that current Access program resources are being used effectively. This included effective use of both financial and non-financial resources. Given the limited resources available to the seven Access programs prior to CanNor funding, respondents contended that staff worked hard to keep the costs at a minimum and to remain within budget.

4.4.3 Remaining Within Budget

A majority of survey respondents (71%; n = 5) noted that Access programs are remaining within budget.

Respondents pointed out that the Access programs remained within budget largely because of the good management of the Developmental Studies staff and the draw on ALBE funding to offset program shortfalls.

4.4.4 Proper Accounting and Reporting Procedures

Survey respondents clearly indicated that the proper accounting and reporting procedures are being used in the administration of Access programs. All of respondents who answered that question (n = 3) indicated those proper procedure are being used.

4.4.5 Duplication with Other Aurora College, Department of ECE or GNWT Initiatives

A majority of survey respondents (68%; n = 40) noted that Access programs do not duplicate other Aurora College, Department of ECE or GNWT initiatives.

The remaining respondents (> 32%) contended that Access programs do duplicate other upgrading initiatives or avenues to obtain a high school diploma or pre-requisite courses for entry into post-secondary programs. For example, Fort Smith residents have three options in addition to Access programs. They can return to high school, take the Phoenix program, or enrol in ALBE.

The expert panelists did not reach consensus regarding duplication with other initiatives.

Expert Panel: Two Views on Duplication of Access Programs with Other Initiatives

First View

“The purposes of Access Programs are distinctly different from other upgrading initiatives. An Access Program provides an opportunity for one final year of preparation for further academic post-secondary studies. An access year could be a sequel that follows other formal learning avenues such as adult basic education, but it caters to the specific needs of students who wish to go on to post-secondary education.”

Second View

“Some duplication is unavoidable. The ABE faculties at our institutions are recruited in part for their understanding of the benefits of integrating essential skills in their teaching practice. Access programs and bridging programs at our colleges allow students to upgrade math and English while simultaneously taking courses that are core to their career programs.”

4.4.6 Other Important Financial Information

The Centre for the Study of Living Standards released a study in 2009 that looked at the financial benefits to Canadian governments if the education gap for Aboriginal people was closed. The Department of ECE used the same best case scenario and projections to determine the benefits to the NWT. According to the Department, the benefits to the NWT of eliminating the education gap of Aboriginal people could be increased tax revenue of \$58.3 million and decreased social program expenditures of \$139.8 million – which added up to total benefits of \$198.1 million in 2026. Over a twenty year period, the cumulative benefits could be \$1.9 billion.⁹⁴

Additionally, in the review of the documents which discussed the challenges faced by Aboriginal students accessing college programs, financial issues are cited as a key determiner of Aboriginal people's ability to access and complete post-secondary programs.⁹⁵ Given the magnitude of barriers that Aboriginal people face (see Section 2.3), respondents and stakeholders in this review as well as those stakeholders involved in the *Adult Literacy and Basic Education Review*⁹⁶ and the *NWT Student Financial Assistance Review*⁹⁷ recommended that students receive financial support for ALBE and Access programs.

5. ANALYSIS

The following section presents a synthesis and analysis of the findings outlined in Section 4.0.

The extent to which Access programs are relevant, successful, and cost effective is presented first. The differences among sub-groups of survey respondents are outlined next, followed by differences between stakeholder perceptions of Access programs and data from the SRS. Then, other key findings are identified. Finally, the overall strengths of and the challenges faced by Access programs are highlighted.

5.1 Relevance, Success and Cost-Effectiveness

Overall, Access programs are:

- Relevant
- Somewhat successful
- Cost-effective

⁹⁴ Department of ECE (2011). *Aboriginal Student Achievement Education Plan*. Appendix B. pp.1-2.

⁹⁵ ACCC, 2010; AFN, 2012; CMEC, 2010; Malatest, 2010; NWT Literacy Council, 2013.

⁹⁶ Terriplan Consultants. (2011). *The Adult Literacy and Basic Education Review*. Yellowknife: GNWT.

⁹⁷ Terriplan Consultants. (2012). *The NWT Student Financial Assistance Program Review*. Yellowknife: GNWT.

Access programs are relevant because they are needed, the needs that the programs were designed to address had not changed, the goals of the programs are clearly understood by stakeholders, and the goals of the programs are consistent with current Aurora College, Department of ECE and GNWT priorities.

Access programs are somewhat successful because the positive aspects of the programs outweigh the negative aspects of the programs.

On the positive side, Access programs are meeting students' academic needs; the majority of Access students are going on to enter other Aurora College programs; the majority of stakeholders are satisfied with the academic level of readiness of Access graduates; the academic entrance requirements for each of the Access programs are at the appropriate level for student success within each Access program; the academic exit requirements for each of the Access programs are mostly at the appropriate level for student success within each of the parent programs; the ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to specialty courses was effective; the program delivery model (e.g. classroom instruction, lectures, hands-on activities, etc.) is the best approach to achieve the current program objectives; current and former students are very satisfied with the overall quality of Access programs; senior managers, program managers and instructors are satisfied with the quality of Access graduates; the majority of Access students successfully complete their Access programs; there are no statistically significant differences in completion rates between former Access students and direct entry students in the first year of parent and related programs; Access programs are being delivered effectively across the three campuses; Access programs are somewhat successful in meeting their intended goals and objectives; and there have been significant unexpected positive impacts that meet GNWT and Aurora College goals and objectives.

On the negative side, the linkages between Access programs and the parent programs were ineffective; Access programs are being delivered somewhat inconsistently across the three campuses; there have been several unexpected negative impacts resulting from the development of Access programs; Access programs need restructuring (but should not be eliminated); attrition rates in Access programs are high (48%); and less than one-third of the Access program students went on to enroll in a parent or related program (though this rate may be under-reported because some former Access students enroll in programs in southern Canada, and that information is not included in this SRS analysis).

Access programs are cost effective because funding is primarily from ALBE base funding (with some third-party funding and tuition fees); current resources are being used effectively; Access programs are remaining within budget; the proper accounting and reporting procedures are being used; and generally, Access programs do not duplicate other Aurora College, Department of ECE or GNWT initiatives. Access programs support key priorities and goals of these institutions.

5.2 Differences in Perceptions Among Survey Respondent Sub-Groups⁹⁸

For the most part, the overall survey responses presented in Section 4 are consistent among the various sub-groups of respondents (i.e., male and female respondents, younger and older respondents, and student and non-student respondents). However, there were some statistically significant differences between some sub-groups of respondents across a number of the survey questions.⁹⁹

Differences in survey responses were found among and between these sub-groups:

- Respondents from different Access programs,
- Respondents from different campuses,
- Student respondents from different communities,
- Student and non-student respondents, and
- Younger and older respondents.

Access Program

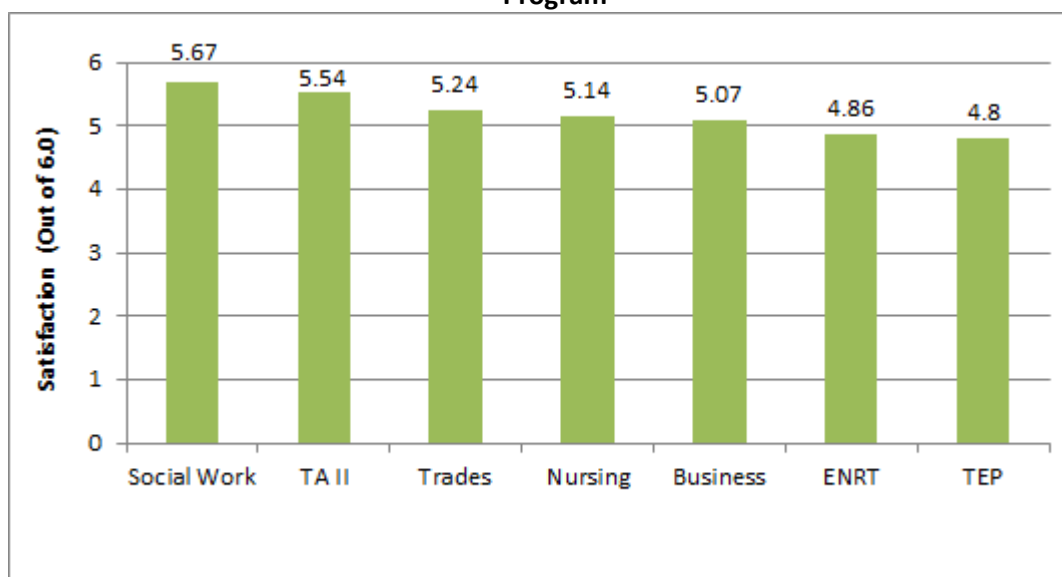
Overall, survey respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with the overall quality of Access programs, rating them a 5.13 out of 6.0.¹⁰⁰ However, further analysis of the survey data showed that there were differences in stakeholders' levels of satisfaction depending on which Access program they were rating ($F = 2.265$; $p = .042$). These differences are shown in Figure 5.2.1.

⁹⁸ In this and the following sections, “m” is the mean or average, “t” is the independent samples test statistic, “F” is the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test statistic, and “p” is the significance level.

⁹⁹ Because of the mass of raw data generated by the surveys and the SRS, unless otherwise noted, only those relationships that were statistically significant are reported.

¹⁰⁰ **Please note:**

- that the consultants used the following scale for analytical and descriptive purposes in this section: very satisfied (5.00 to 6.00); satisfied (4.00 to 4.99); somewhat satisfied (3.00 to 3.99); somewhat dissatisfied (2.00 to 2.99); dissatisfied (1.00 to 1.99); and very dissatisfied (between 0 and 0.99).

Figure 5.2.1: Respondents' Level of Satisfaction with Overall Quality of Access Programs – by Access Program¹⁰¹

Respondents were more satisfied with the overall quality of the Social Work, Trades Access II, Trades and Nursing Access programs than they were with the Business, ENRT and Teacher Education Access programs.

Additionally, there were also differences in respondents' levels of satisfaction with program facilities based on the Access program the respondent was rating ($F = 2.434$; $p = .030$). Overall, respondents were satisfied with Access program facilities, rating them a 4.96 out of 6.0. However, respondents were more satisfied with the program facilities in the Social Work ($m = 5.56$), Trades Access II ($m = 5.35$) and Trades Access programs ($m = 5.23$) than they were with the Business Access ($m = 4.93$), ENRT Access ($m = 4.81$), Teacher Education Access ($m = 4.79$) and Nursing Access ($m = 4.62$) programs.

Campus

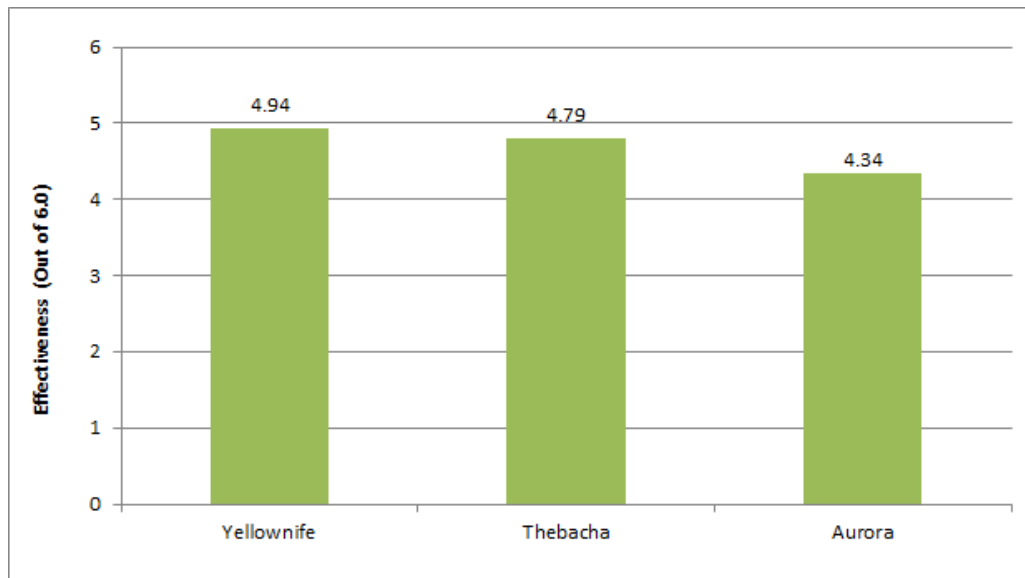
Overall, survey respondents indicated that the ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to specialty courses was effective, rating this ratio a 4.68 out of 6.0.¹⁰² However, further analysis of the survey data showed that there were differences in stakeholders' views of this effectiveness depending on which campus they were from ($F = 4.437$; $p = .014$). These differences are shown in Figure 5.2.2.

¹⁰¹ See Table 4.1.4 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

¹⁰² **Please note:**

- that the consultants used the following scale for analytical and descriptive purposes in this section: very effective (5.00 to 6.00); effective (4.00 to 4.99); somewhat effective (3.00 to 3.99); somewhat ineffective (2.00 to 2.99); ineffective (1.00 to 1.99); and very ineffective (between 0 and 0.99).

Figure 5.2.2: Respondents Views of the Effectiveness of the Ratio of ALBE Courses to Specialty Courses – by Campus¹⁰³



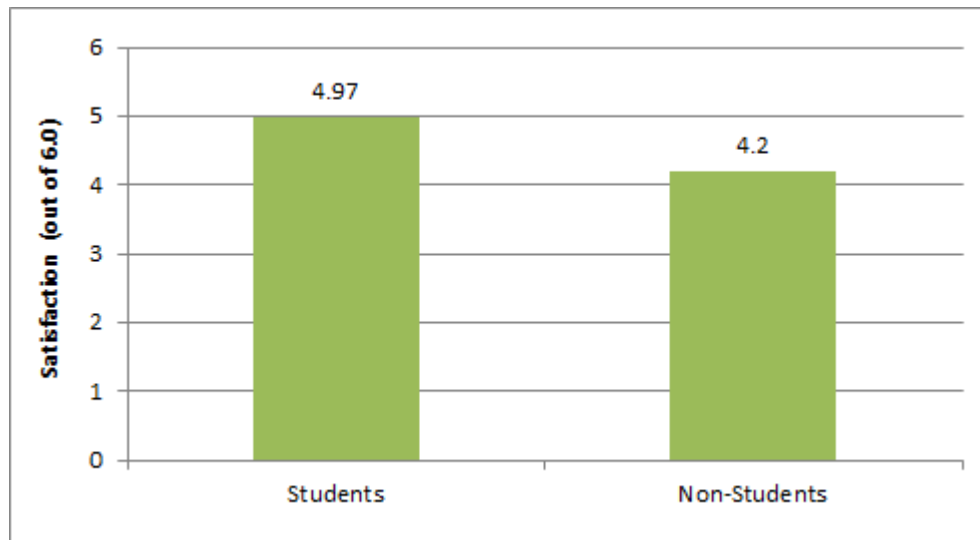
Respondents from the Yellowknife and Thebacha Campuses indicated the ratio was more effective than respondents from the Aurora Campus.

Student Respondents and Non-Student Respondents

Overall, survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied with Access programs in meeting students' academic needs, rating them a 4.69 out of 6.0. However, further analysis of the survey data showed that there were differences in stakeholders' levels of satisfaction depending on the type of respondent ($t = 4.875$; $p = .000$). These differences are shown in Figure 5.2.3.

¹⁰³ See Table 4.1.2 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

Figure 5.2.3: Respondents’ Level of Satisfaction with Access Programs Meeting Students’ Academic Needs – by Type of Respondent¹⁰⁴



Students were more satisfied than non-students with Access programs meeting students’ academic needs.

Additionally, there were several other areas where student and non-student respondents differed in their satisfaction with Access programs, including the following:

- Satisfaction with meeting students’ lifeskill needs ($t = 7.095$; $p = .000$)
 - Students were more satisfied ($m = 4.88$) than non-students ($m = 3.82$)
- Admission requirements being at the appropriate level ($t = 4.808$; $p = .000$)
 - more students (90%; $n = 114$) than non-students (61%; $n = 53$) thought the levels were appropriate
- Exit requirements being at the appropriate level ($t = 3.432$; $p = .000$)
 - More students (83%; $n = 43$) than non-students (53%; $n = 53$) thought the levels were appropriate
- The success of the specialized delivery model ($t = 3.079$; $p = .001$)
 - Students ($m = 4.91$) thought the specialized model was more successful than non-students ($m = 4.28$)

Younger and Older Respondents

There were two areas where younger respondents (i.e., 25 years of age and under) and older respondent (i.e., over 25) differed in their satisfaction with Access programs:

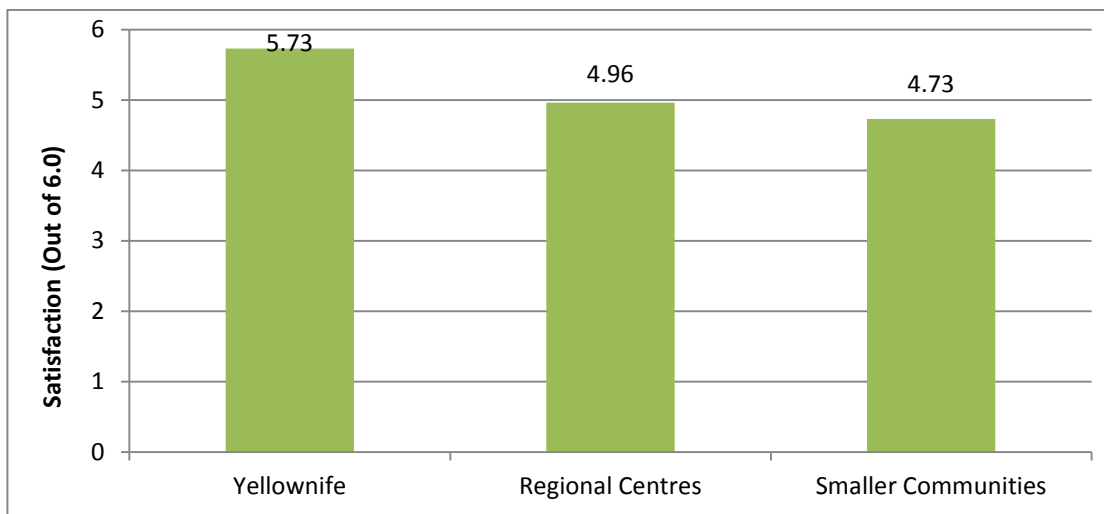
¹⁰⁴ See Table 4.1.1 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

- Satisfaction with meeting student financial needs ($t = 4.875$; $p = .000$)
 - Respondents 25 years of age and under were more satisfied ($m = 4.54$) than respondents who were over 25 ($m = 3.84$)
- Exit requirements being at the appropriate level ($t = 7.196$; $p = .000$)
 - more respondents who were over 25 (92%; $n = 26$) thought the levels were appropriate than did respondents who were 25 and under (68%; $n = 17$)

Home Community of Students

Overall, student respondents indicated they were satisfied with Access programs in meeting their lifeskill needs, rating them a 4.91 out of 6.0. However, further analysis of the survey data showed that there were differences in students' levels of satisfaction depending on their home community ($F = 7.872$; $p = .042$). These differences are shown in Figure 5.2.4.

Figure 5.2.4: Student Respondents' Level of Satisfaction with Access Programs Meeting Their Lifeskill Needs – by Home Community¹⁰⁵



Student respondents from Yellowknife were more satisfied with programs in meeting their lifeskill needs than were students in the regional centres¹⁰⁶ and the smaller communities.

5.3 Differences between Stakeholder Perceptions and the SRS Data

For the most part, the perceptions of stakeholders as expressed in the surveys, interviews, and focus group are consistent with the SRS data analysed for this review.

¹⁰⁵ See Table 4.1.3 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

¹⁰⁶ The regional centres include Fort Smith, Hay River and Inuvik.

However, there were four areas where the perceptions are not supported by the program data:

- Differences in student academic success among Access programs
- Differences in success between the specialized Access delivery model and the general Access delivery model
- That many students enrol in multiple Access programs and do not enrol in other types of post-secondary programs
- That former Access students experience high failure rates in the parent and related programs

There Are No Statistically Significant Differences in Student Academic Success Among Access Programs

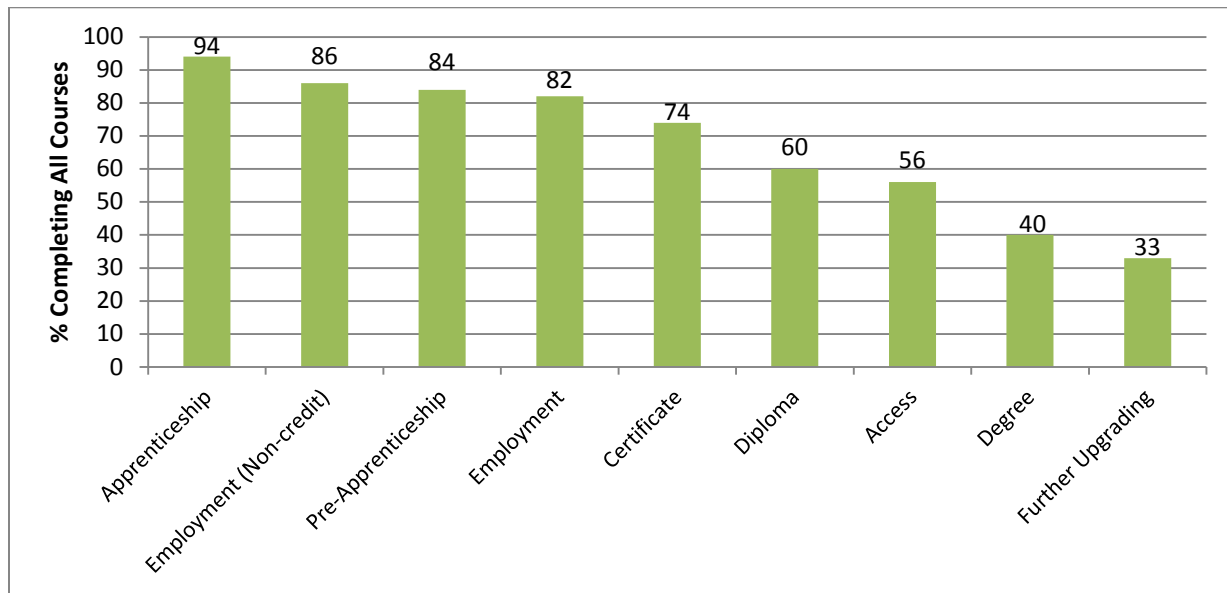
The analysis of the survey data showed differences in respondent views of student academic success among the seven Access programs. This analysis included differences in levels of satisfaction with the overall quality of each of the seven Access programs (see Section 5.2 for details).

The SRS data showed that the actual Access program students were enrolled in had no statistically significant relationship to student s' academic success. Specifically, there were no statistically significant differences among Access programs in terms of students completing their Access courses, completing their programs/courses post-Access, or completing their first year courses in parent and related programs compared to direct entry students.

In other words, it didn't matter what Access program a student enrolled in – what mattered more regarding academic success were other factors such as: 1) the program/course enrolled in post-Access; 2) the parent or related program enrolled in; or 3) the type of parent and related program enrolled in.

For example, the analysis of the SRS data revealed that the program students were enrolled in post-Access was related to whether or not students completed all of their courses ($F = 186.821$; $p = .000$). As shown in Figure 5.3.1, there was a wide variance in course completions in programs/courses post-Access based on the program grouping.

Figure 5.3.1: Completed All Courses by Program Grouping – Programs/Courses Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)¹⁰⁷

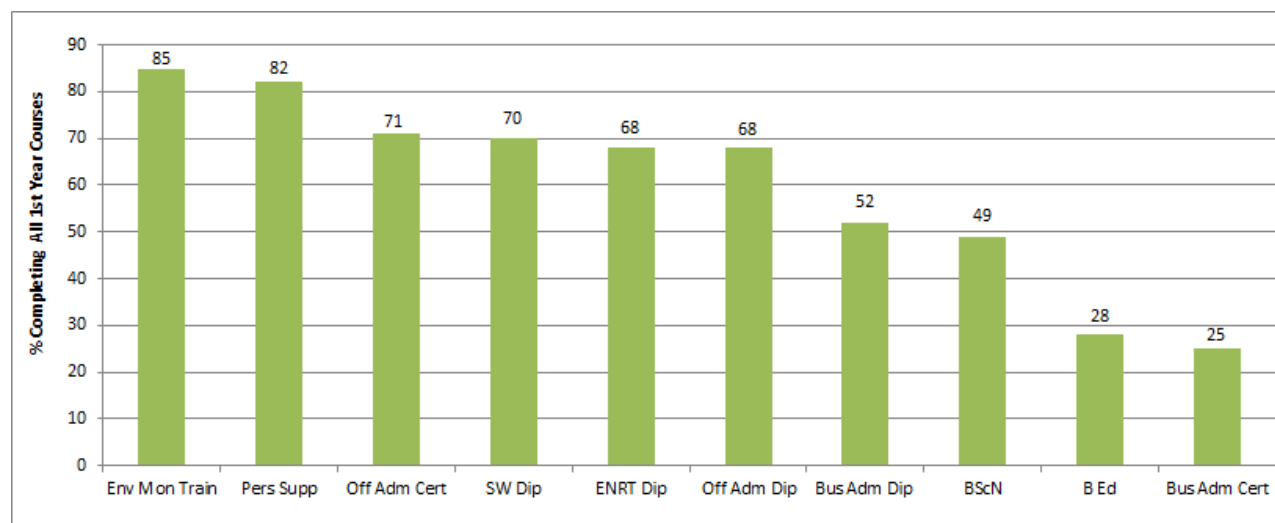


The SRS data also revealed that the parent or related program a former Access student was enrolled in had an impact on whether or not students completed all of their first year courses in that parent or related program ($F = 14.736$; $p = .000$).

As Figure 5.3.2 shows, former Access students had the greatest academic success in the Environmental Monitor Training, Personal Support Worker, Office Administration Certificate, Social Work Diploma, ENRT Diploma, Office Administration Diploma, and Business Administration Diploma programs; they had less academic success in other parent and related programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Education, and Business Administration Certificate programs, all of which require high school completion or equivalent.

¹⁰⁷ See Table 2.2.2.6 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

Figure 5.3.2: Access Students Completing First Year Courses – Top 10 Most Selected Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)¹⁰⁸



Finally, the analysis of the SRS data confirmed that parent and related program type was related to whether or not former Access students completed all of their first year courses in that parent or related program ($F = 13.450$; $p = .000$). Former Access students had the greatest academic success in diploma (63%; $n = 113$) and certificate (60%; $n = 127$) parent and related programs; they had less academic success in degree (40%; $n = 123$) and apprenticeship (31%; $n = 16$) parent and related programs. Degree and apprenticeship programs have external standards.

There Are No Statistically Significant Differences Between Model Delivery Types

The analysis of the survey data showed differences in respondent views of the success of the specialized Access delivery model ($m = 5.4$) compared to the general Access delivery model ($m = 4.51$) (see Section 4.3.8 for details).

The analysis of the SRS data did not confirm these perceptions. The SRS data showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the success of the two types of delivery models. Specifically, there were no statistically significant differences between delivery models in terms of students completing their Access courses, completing their programs/courses post-Access, or completing their first year courses in parent and related programs as compared to direct entry students.

In other words, it didn't matter what delivery model an Access program used, students were equally as likely to complete their courses, progress on to other programs/courses and parent and related programs, and complete their first year courses in parent and related programs.

¹⁰⁸ See Table 2.2.3.7 for the numbers of students these percentages are based on.

Students are Not Enrolling in Multiple Access Programs

One of the themes identified in the qualitative data gathered for this review was that many students enrol in multiple Access programs with no real intention of progressing on to other programs. The analysis of the SRS data clearly shows this not to be true.

The analysis of the data shows that the majority of students (79%; n = 958) took only one Access program in the 2002/03 to 2011/12 timespan. Additionally, the majority of Access students 73% (n = 882) went on to enroll in other Aurora College programs (or single courses) between 2002/03 and 2012/13.

Students are Not Experiencing High Failure Rates in Parent and Related Programs

Another theme identified in the qualitative data was that former Access students experience high failure rates in the parent and related programs. The analysis of the SRS data clearly shows this not to be true.

Although there were differences between former Access students (54%; n = 206) and direct entry students (71%; n = 1,593) in whether they completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs, those differences were not statistically significant. In other words, it didn't matter whether students were formerly enrolled in an Access program, or whether students were direct entry students, students were as likely statistically to pass all of their first year courses.

5.4 Other Key Findings

Several other key findings were identified during the review:

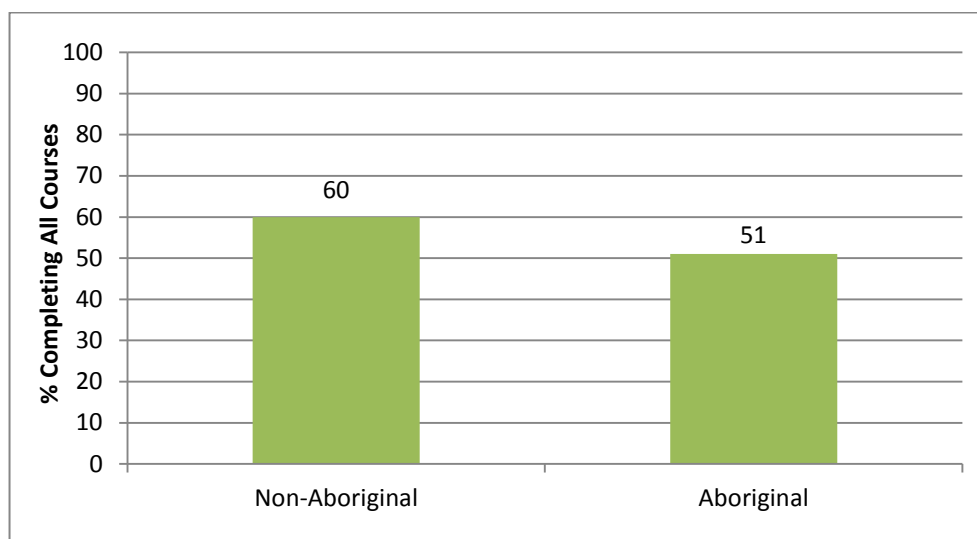
- The ethnicity of students was related to student academic success within Access programs, and to whether students progressed on to parent and related programs.
- The gender of students was related to student academic success within Access programs.
- The home community of students was related to student academic success within specific Access programs.
- The campus of delivery was related to student academic success within programs/courses post-Access and within parent and related programs.
- Students formerly enrolled in ALBE did not continue on to other programs/courses post-Access or did not continue on to parent and related programs at the same rates as other Access students who had not been previously enrolled in ALBE.
- Enrollments are increasing significantly within Access programs, in programs/courses taken post-Access by former Access students, and in parent and related programs by former Access students.
- Former Access students make up an important part of overall parent and related program registrations.

- The profile of students entering Access programs is changing significantly.

Ethnicity

The analysis of the SRS data revealed that ethnicity was related to whether or not students completed all of their Access courses ($t = 2.119$; $p = .034$). As Figure 5.4.1 shows, non-Aboriginal students (60%; $n = 159$) had higher Access course completion rates than Aboriginal students (51%; $n = 834$).

Figure 5.4.1: Access Course Completions – by Ethnicity (2002/03 to 2011/12)



Focus group participants agreed that Aboriginal students were less likely to have academic success in Access programs than non-Aboriginal students for a variety of reasons: Aboriginal students face multiple barriers to post-secondary education (see Section 2.3 for details), many Aboriginal students are “first generation learners” (meaning they are the first in their immediate or extended families to go to college), there are gaps in the education of some Aboriginal students (particularly those from smaller communities), and many Aboriginal students have had to deal with both “English as a second language” issues and the legacy of residential schooling.

Gender

The analysis of the SRS data confirmed that gender was related to whether or not students completed all of their courses within specific Access programs, particularly the Teacher Education Access program ($t = 2.039$; $p = .000$) and in the Trades Access program ($t = 1.532$; $p = .001$). Female students (60%; $n = 178$) in the Teacher Education Access program had higher course completion rates than male students (38%; $n = 26$), and female students (74%; $n = 47$) in the Trades Access program had higher course completion rates than male students (61%; $n = 88$).

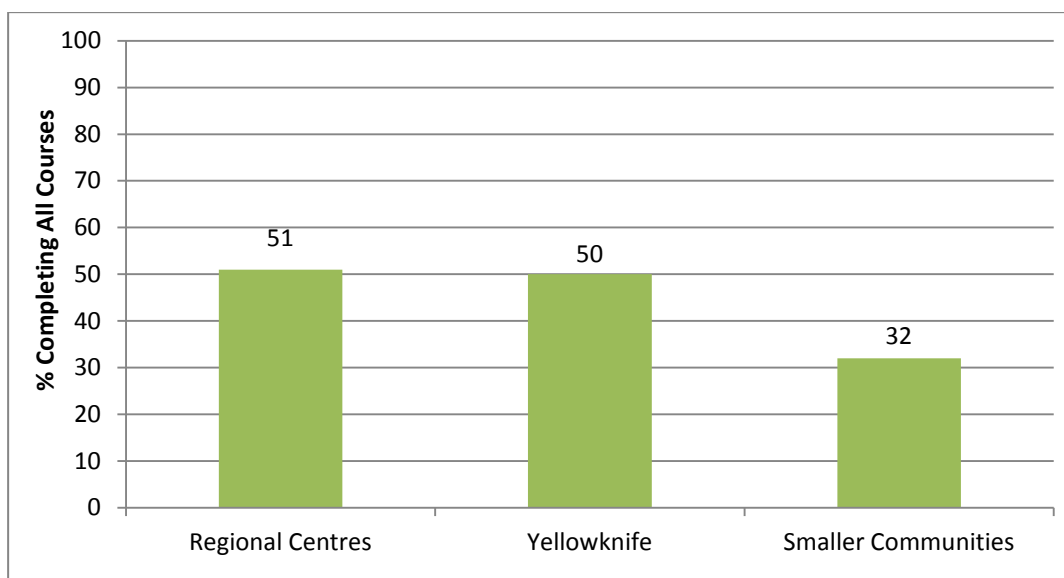
Additionally, the analysis of the SRS data revealed that female students in Access programs (86%; n = 411) were more likely to continue on to parent and related programs than were male students (14%; n = 66).

Focus group participants agreed that gender had an impact on student academic success (see Section 4.3.12 for details).

Home Community

The analysis of the SRS data confirmed that home community was related to whether or not students completed all of their courses within specific Access programs, particularly the Nursing Access program ($F = 6.220$; $p = .013$). As Figure 5.4.2 shows, students from the smaller communities (32%; n = 103) had lower course completion rates in the Nursing Access program than students from the regional centres (51%; n = 88) or Yellowknife (50%; n = 26).

Figure 5.4.2: Nursing Access Course Completions – by Home Community (2002/03 to 2011/12)

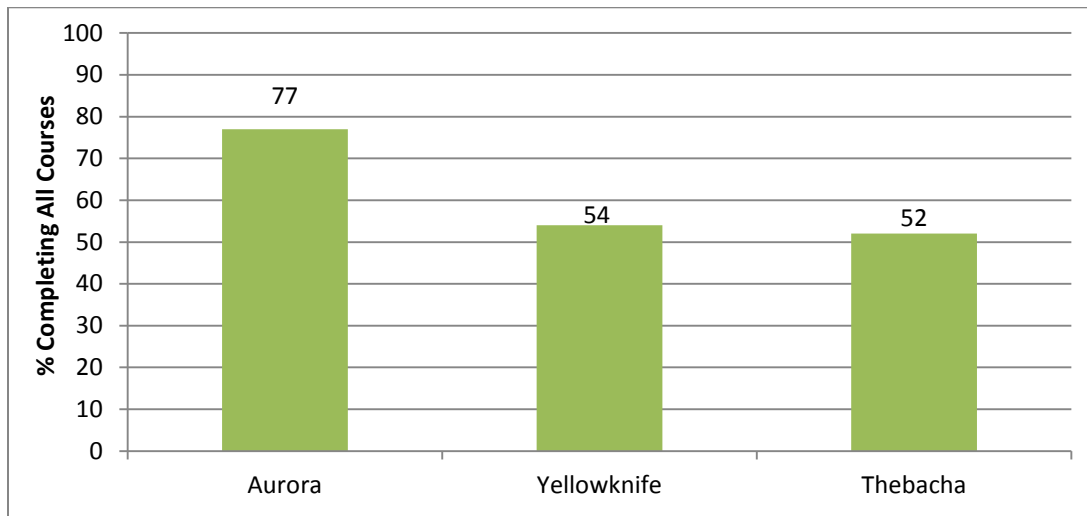


Focus group participants agreed that home community had an impact on student academic success (see Sections 4.2.1 for details).

Differences Across Campuses

The analysis of the SRS data confirmed that the delivery location was related to whether or not students completed all of their courses in programs/courses post-Access ($F = 70.749$; $p = .000$). As Figure 5.4.3 shows, students at Aurora Campus completed all of their courses in higher numbers than students at the Yellowknife and Thebacha campuses.

Figure 5.4.3: Completed All Courses – Programs/Courses Post-Access – by Campus (2002/03 to 2012/13)

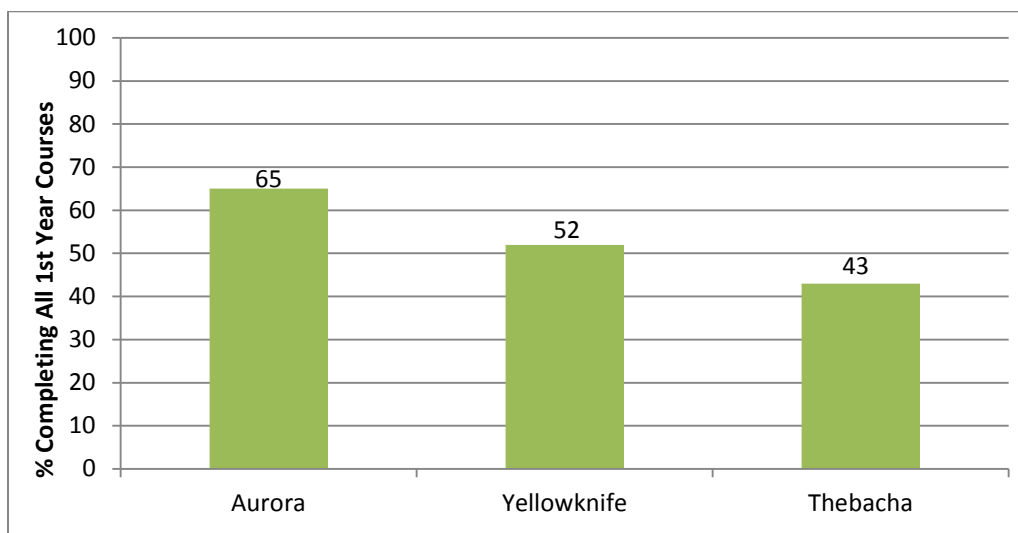


Please note:

- This difference is due to higher enrollments and completions in short courses at Aurora Campus. Enrollments in short courses comprised just under half (47%; n = 275) of all programs/courses taken post-Access at Aurora Campus, compared to 10% (n = 47) and 9% (n = 36) at the Yellowknife and Thebacha Campuses respectively. This analysis is based on 529 students at Aurora Campus, 443 students at Yellowknife Campus, and 365 students at Thebacha campus.

The analysis of the SRS data also confirmed that campus delivery location was related to whether or not students completed all of their first year courses in parent and related programs ($F = 12.498$; $p = .000$). As Figure 5.4.4 shows, students from the Aurora Campus had higher completions rates in their first year courses in parent and related programs compared to students at the Yellowknife and Thebacha campuses.

Figure 5.4.4: Former Access Students – Completing All First Year Courses in Parent and Related Programs – by Campus (2003/04 to 2011/12)



Please note:

- This analysis is based on 97 students at Aurora Campus, 157 students at Yellowknife Campus and 125 students at Thebacha campus.

Continuation Rates of ALBE Students and Access Students

The analysis of the SRS data revealed that whether students had taken ALBE courses prior to Access was related to whether or not students continued on post-Access ($t = 6.170$; $p = .000$). Students who had taken courses in the ALBE program (38%; $n = 333$) were less likely than Access students who had not taken courses in ALBE to progress on to other programs/courses post-Access (62%; $n = 549$).

Additionally, the analysis of the SRS data revealed that students who had been enrolled in ALBE before entering Access (30%; $n = 142$) were less likely to continue on to parent and related programs than were students who had not been enrolled in ALBE (70%; $n = 335$).

Enrollments are Increasing

Enrollments have increased significantly in Access programs, in programs/courses taken post-Access by former Access students, and in parent and related programs by former Access students over the 2002/03 to 2012/13 timeframe.

Specifically,

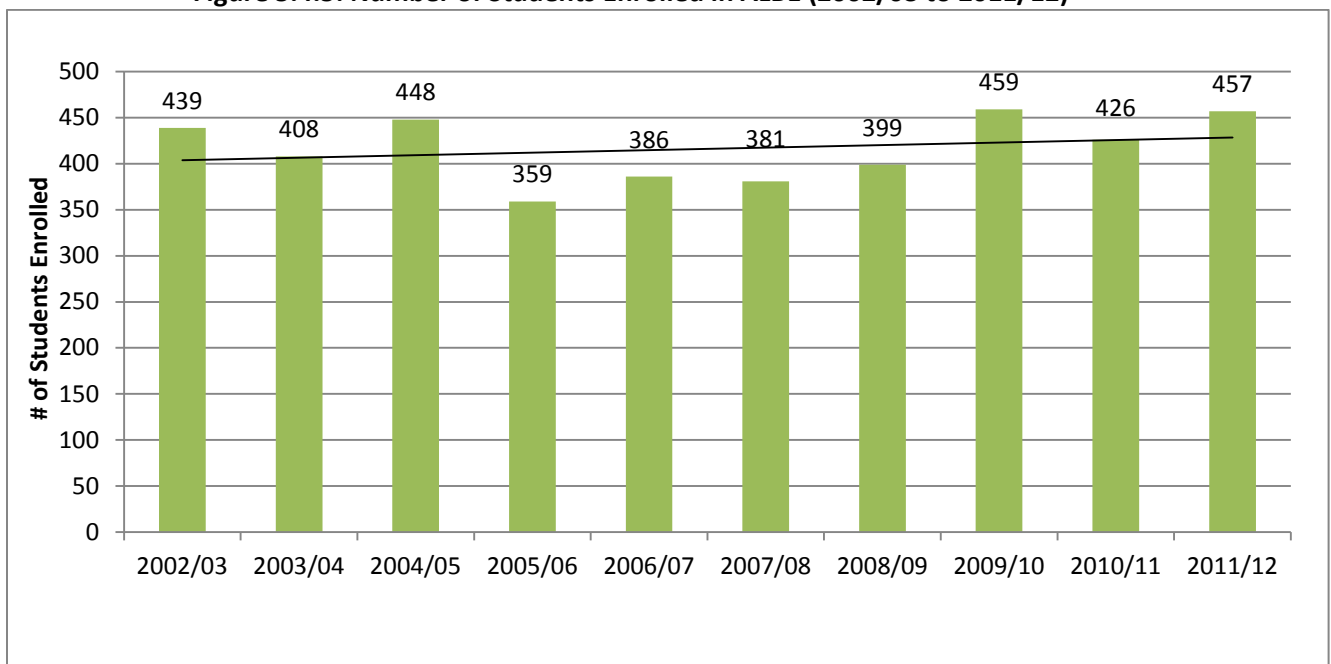
- In Access programs, enrollments increased from an average of 86 students per year in the 2002/03 to 2005/06 period to an average of 144 students per year in the 2006/07 to 2011/12 period ($t = 10.849$; $p = .000$)

- In programs/courses taken post-Access, enrollments of former Access students increased from an average of 94 students per year in the 2002/03 to 2005/06 period to an average of 217 students per year in the 2006/07 to 2012/13 period ($t = 7.608$; $p = .000$)
- In parent and related programs, enrollments of former Access students increased from an average of 28 students per year in the 2003/04 to 2006/07 period to an average of 47 students per year in the 2007/08 to 2012/13 period ($t = 3.761$; $p = .000$)

Focus group participants agreed that enrollments are increasing in Access programs for a variety of reasons. There is increased recognition in communities of the importance and need for post-secondary education; Access is seen by many students as a “bridge” or “vehicle” to get them into post-secondary program; “social passing” in the NWT has meant that many students must upgrade their academic skills after high school; and expanded Access programming at Aurora College has allowed more students to enrol.

The statistically significant increase in enrollments in Access programs was in contrast to enrollments in the ALBE program. On average, there were 415 individual students enrolled in the ALBE program at Aurora College each year between 2002/03 and 2011/12. Although enrollments increased slightly over that timespan—from an average of 432 in the 2002/03 to 2004/05 period to 443 in the 2009/10 to 2011/12 period—this increase was not statistically significant.¹⁰⁹ Figure 5.4.5 presents the actual number of students enrolled each year.

Figure 5.4.5: Number of Students Enrolled in ALBE (2002/03 to 2011/12)



¹⁰⁹ Hogan, B. (2013). *Northern Adult Basic Education (NABE) Project 10.2: 2012/13 Longitudinal Analysis of ALBE Data – Technical Report*. Yellowknife. p. 7.

Former Access Students Comprise an Important Component of Parent and Related Program Enrollments

Former Access students comprised an important component of overall parent and related program enrollments in the 2003/04 to 2012/13 timeframe. This was especially true for several parent and related programs, including the Bachelor of Education Degree (32%; n = 46), Social Work Diploma (29%; n = 22), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (24%; n = 77), ENRT Diploma (24%; n = 25), and Office Administration Diploma (21%; n = 26) programs.

Additionally, there was a statistically significant difference in enrollments in parent and related programs between former Access students and direct entry students ($t = 6.850$; $p = .000$). Former Access student enrollments (as a percentage of overall enrollments in parent and related programs) more than doubled from 9% (n = 76) in the 2003/04 to 2006/07 period to 20% (n = 158) in the 2007/08 to 2012/13 period.

Focus group participants agreed that former Access students comprise an important component of overall enrollments in select parent and related programs for a variety of reasons: low tuition costs, small class sizes, being able to attend college close to home, expanded Aurora College offerings due to transfer agreements with southern-based institutions, and better recruitment practices.

The Profile of Students Entering Access Programs is Changing

The profile of students entering Access program is changing in two major ways:

- 1) Students are younger.
- 2) Students are entering the program having completed higher levels in the K-12 school system.

Students entering Access programs are now younger than they were in previous years. The average age of students entering Access programs in the first three years of the timeframe analysed (2002/03 to 2004/05) was 28.3 years, while the average age of students entering Access programs in the last 3 years of the timeframe analysed (2009/10 to 2011/12) was 26.6. This was a significant drop in average age, as the proportion of students 25 and under taking Access courses rose from 48% in the 2002/03 to 2004/05 period to 59% in the 2009/10 to 2011/12 period ($t = 2.900$; $p = .004$).

Focus group participants agreed that this “youth trend” has implications for Aurora College, especially in terms of the lower maturity levels of younger students.

Students are also now entering Access programs having completed higher levels in the K-12 school system than they had previously. There was a significant rise in the number of students who had completed Grade 12 entering Access programs. The number of students entering Access programs who had completed Grade 12 more than doubled from 22% to 50% between the 2002/03 to 2004/05 and 2009/10 to 2011/12 periods ($F = 22.577$; $p = .000$). This finding should be viewed with caution, however,

as only 63% (n = 756) of students provided that information for the SRS.

5.5 Access Programs Model

Since 1993, Aurora College has offered a variety of access programs at both the campus and community levels. The review has identified key trends in relation to the seven Aurora College Access programs, described in the background section of this report, over the 20-year timeframe:

- Originally, the Access programs had stronger and more direct connections with their parent programs and now these connections are generally weaker and ineffective.
- The first three Access programs had funding allocated for delivery, but now most Access programs rely heavily on Developmental Studies and the Access tuition fees to absorb the costs of operating Access programs. For Trades Access II, this is a serious problem as it operates separately from Developmental Studies and has no base funding.
- Originally, the intended purpose of Access programs was for students to meet entry requirements of the parent programs, and now Access programs offer an array of Grade 12 courses in higher level science, English and mathematics (30-1 and 30-2) to meet general college or university entry requirements. The Access longitudinal data supports this trend as less than one-third of former Access students enter parent programs.
- Originally, Access programs attracted older students with less than Grade 12 education, and now the majority of the Access students are 25 years of age and younger and have completed higher levels in the K-12 school system.
- Within the past six years, enrollments in the seven Access programs have almost doubled.
- While the percentage of female students continues to dominate the makeup of student enrollments in Access programs, male student enrollments remain strong in ENRT Access, Trades Access and Trades Access II Programs

The review results from the surveys, interviews, longitudinal data analysis, document review, and focus group session show the following:

- The majority of respondents (72%) believed Access programs need to be restructured.
- Generally, the entrance and exit requirements listed by Access Program are sufficient to meet the entry requirements of parent programs. However, there are potential issues with the math and science prerequisites, and Aurora College staff should review Access Program completion requirements and parent program entry requirements to ensure correct alignment.

- No statistically significant differences exist among Access programs in terms of students completing their Access programs, completing programs or courses post-Access, or completing their first year courses in parent and related programs compared to direct entry students.
- No statistically significant differences exist between the specialized and general Aurora College Access model delivery types.
- The focus group supported restructuring the current delivery models into two types of Access programs models: a generic Access Program with streaming options in the second semester and the continuation of specialized Trades Access and Trades Access II programming.

The review shows that more emphasis needs to be placed on student preparation for Access programs through improved screening and placement assessments, in-depth interviews, counselling, and community pre-orientation sessions. In addition, students need to have the tools and resources available to help balance their student, personal, and family responsibilities and manage finances, childcare needs, and other needs. In other words, attention needs to be focussed on addressing the barriers students face and providing ongoing appropriate supports for student success.

The review highlights the evolving nature of Aurora College Access programs and the need to restructure the programs. As an example, the Trades Access II is a standalone program, separate from the School of Developmental Studies; whereas Trades Access is linked to the School of Developmental Studies. A suggestion would be to place the Trades Access and Trades Access II under the School of Trades or to strengthen the connections between the School of Trades and these programs.

The following conceptual model is presented for Aurora College's consideration. The model incorporates the findings of the review and presents the two types of Access programs suggested by the focus group participants who are knowledgeable and experienced educators in ALBE and Access programs.

The Generic Access Program offers courses in the first and second terms that should meet the needs of a) students who want to enrol in specific Aurora College certificate, diploma, and degree programs the following year or b) students who want certain prerequisites for entrance into degree and technical post-secondary programs at Aurora College or at other institutions. In the second semester of the program, the students take specialty courses and electives related to their academic needs and areas of interest.

The Specialized Trades Access and Trades Access II Programs, coordinated with the School of Trades, focus on the following options: the trades entrance exam, trades-related programming, apprenticeship, and work opportunities.

This model serves as a **starting point** for further discussion among Aurora College staff related to restructuring Access programs. Aurora College staff will need to carefully consider the implications any restructuring of Access programs will have for students, staff and the college system.

Figure 5.5.1: Conceptual Access Programs Model

	Supports	Generic Access		Specialized Trades Access I and II
Spring/Summer	Community Pre-Orientation Sessions Screening and Placement Assessments Counselling In-depth Interviews	Promotion and Recruitment (School of Developmental Studies with linkages to the Schools of Education, Health and Human Services, Business and Leadership, and Arts and Science)		Promotion and Recruitment (Linkage with School of Trades)
First Term	Orientation Block Sessions: -managing finances, -effective studying, -balancing home and study -College support services -Community supports Ongoing Academic and Career Counselling Tutoring	4 Courses: Math 140, 145, 20-1, 20-2, 30-1,30-2 English 140, 20-1, 20-2, 30-1, 30-2 Science 130/140 Biology 20, 30 Chemistry 20, 30 Physics 20, 30 Social Studies 20 ICT 140 or 150 PLAR		Orientation to the Industrial Workplace Trades Math Trades Science Trades English ICT Applied Modules Electives Work Experience
Second Term	Childcare Support Peer Mentorships Cultural Supports Writing Centre Linkages with Parent Programs/Employers Graduation Ceremony	Continue courses or advance to next level Streamed into specialty courses and electives	Continue courses or advance to next level Streamed into specialty math, science/technology courses and electives	Continue courses/modules/electives Work Experience Higher level math and science (Physics 20, Math 20 and 30 levels)
Exit Exams	Test-taking Practice	Alberta Departmental Examinations	Alberta Departmental Examinations	Trades Entrance Examination

Please Note:

- Courses, program names and supports are conceptual at this point and used for illustrative purposes only.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the Review of Aurora College Access Programs was to determine how well Aurora College Access programs are meeting the needs of students in the NWT and to bring forth concrete recommendations about how the programs can be modified or improved to better meet the needs of students.¹¹⁰

The following section presents the conclusions and recommendations for the review. A series of 14 recommendations are presented, grouped into the following themes: program delivery; student supports; instructor supports; financial; data collection, performance monitoring, and evaluation; and further research.

Each recommendation is prefaced by a conclusion which summarizes the findings and analyses from previous sections of the review. The key recommendations are presented here. These recommendations echo the more extensive suggestions made by stakeholders, a summary of which can be found in Appendix V.

6.1 Program Delivery

Aurora College Access programs are critical to the NWT because these programs address academic prerequisite barriers and increase the number of students eligible to enter post-secondary programs. This review shows that Access programs are relevant, needed, somewhat successful, and cost-effective. The key recommendations are presented here.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Continue to offer Access programs at Aurora College, and initiate promotional and recruitment strategies specifically for Access programs. The Access programs primarily serve Aboriginal students from smaller communities who need to gain entry to and to be successful in post-secondary programs. The review demonstrates that Access programs serve as an important post-secondary entry point and a critical stepping stone for students who wish to pursue further post-secondary education and training opportunities but who would not otherwise have the opportunity to do so.

Many students prefer to go to school closer to home and feel more comfortable in the small Northern college environment that is available at one of the three Aurora College campuses. Aurora College should develop promotional and recruitment strategies that bring attention to Access programs and the options available for students. Student testimonials, social networking, face-to-face information sessions, and community outreach are effective ways to reach potential students.

¹¹⁰ Aurora College. (2012). Request for Proposals: Review of Aurora College Access Programs. pp.7-8.

During the review of Aurora College documents, it became apparent that there was no overview of Access programming as a whole and the relationship of the seven Access programs with ALBE and parent programs was unclear. The lack of clarity surrounding the administration of Access programs is, in part, the result the evolving nature of Access programming and the lack of documentation about Access programming over the past 20 years.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Raise the profile of Access programs. Aurora College should develop a rationale and an overview of Access programming that clearly delineates a) the intended purposes of Access programs, b) the relationships of Access programs with ALBE, the School of Developmental Studies, parent and related programs, the School of Trades, and the college system as a whole, and c) the roles and responsibilities of Aurora College staff and instructors involved with Access programming.

The majority of respondents felt that the Access programs should be restructured. However, the findings for the review indicate that no one delivery model is better than any other model in terms of effectiveness. Based on the changing profile of students (younger and have completed or nearly completed high school) and the need to offer options for students depending on their academic needs and interests, Access programs should be redesigned.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Restructure the Nursing, Teacher Education, Business Administration, Environment and Natural Resources Technology, and Social Work Access programs into a generic program that offers streaming options for students in the second semester. The first streaming option links students' interests to specific Aurora College certificate, diploma, and degree programs. The second streaming option links students' interests to higher level math, science, and technology post-secondary studies.

The current Trades Access and Trades Access II programs target specific types of students and generally offer specialty trades-related courses. The place of these programs within the School of Developmental Studies is unclear, particularly for the Trades Access II Program, which operates as a standalone program. In addition, Trades Access and Trades Access II experience similar issues related to insufficient funding and ineffective linkages with the parent programs as do the other five Access programs.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Establish a coordinated approach to Trades Access and Trades Access II with the School of Trades, and allocate appropriate ongoing resources for the delivery of these programs. These programs are important in the North and should be adequately resourced and coordinated with other trades-related training.

Another key theme to emerge from this review is the need to improve screening and placement in-take processes. Respondents raised concerns about appropriate placement of students and the unrealistic

expectations on students who were not adequately prepared to achieve certain levels within two semesters.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Improve screening and placement in-take processes for Access students, and utilize appropriate placement tools. Students need to be working at the prescribed academic levels upon entrance. Students also need to be fully aware of and prepared for the demands of full-time studies, and they need to be committed to the program or other viable options identified during the screening and in-depth personal or one on one interview process. In addition, Aurora College needs to have the infrastructure in place to provide appropriate screening and placement such as trained personnel to administer and evaluate the placement assessments and to do career counselling.

There is a need to improve the linkages between Access programs and other Aurora College programs to ensure smooth and successful transitions for students. Stakeholders felt that the current linkages are ineffective; primarily in the areas of resource allocation, commitment, communication, and student tracking. These ineffective linkages lead to misconceptions about the need for and the effectiveness of Access programs. In addition, some of the funding available for Access programs is tied to specific parent programming, and those particular program linkages need to be strengthened.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Improve academic, administrative, and operational linkages between Access programs and certificate, diploma, and degree programs within the Aurora College system. This recommendation encompasses the following types of actions: improving communications across programs and establishing formal interactions including annual meetings to discuss successes, concerns and challenges, reviewing and updating program and course outlines, reviewing curriculum and resources, reviewing policies, developing strategies to address attendance and retention issues across programs, establishing clear and consistent academic expectations for students across programs, having instructors in other programs teach in Access programs, having Access students take part in other Aurora college program workshops and special events, developing stronger and more relevant specialty courses, and initiating on-the-job training sessions and placements.

6.2 Student Supports

Although this review has shown that the majority of students are having academic success within and beyond Access programs, there are still areas for improvement. Stakeholders strongly advised that addressing certain underlying issues would greatly improve student academic success.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Target and address the underlying causes of student attrition

such as lack of childcare, lack of consistent tutoring supports across all three campuses, lack of financial resources, lack of pre-emptive and ongoing counselling, lack of academic preparedness, and lack of support and encouragement from family members regarding the value of a post-secondary education. As an example, Aurora College could work in partnership with community groups and the Department of ECE to find ways to offer or to support childcare services at or near the three campuses.

Another key theme related to student supports that was identified in this review was the issue of culture shock, the phenomenon in which students from smaller communities must learn to adapt to the more standardized, and often higher, academic standards of campus programs as well as learn to live in a larger, more mainstream urban centre.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Develop and implement strategies to better prepare and support students for academic life at the campuses in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife. The pre-orientation sessions in the communities, the promotional and recruitment strategies, the fall and winter orientation sessions, cultural inclusionary practices and perspectives, and student advisor systems will go a long way to supporting students as they transition to larger communities.

6.3 Instructor Supports

Access students bring with them a variety of positive and negative life and educational experiences, and instructors are expected to be able to recognize, understand, and handle any challenges that come their way.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Offer instructors appropriate and relevant in-service and training opportunities and supports to address the challenges they face in the classroom. Some of these supports would include professional development in the areas of adult education theory, living and working in a northern environment, recognizing learning disabilities and teaching people with learning challenges, the linkages between western and Aboriginal knowledge, teaching younger students, working with people with mental health issues and addictions, and motivating students with a history of low academic success. Other supports would include ongoing curriculum revisions, appropriate resource development, and resource sharing mechanisms.

6.4 Financial

This review has also shown that Access programs need sufficient, stable funding in order to be successful.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Allocate sufficient human and financial resources for the delivery of Access programs at each campus. Currently, many Access programs are under-resourced and reliant on the School of Developmental Studies for operation. In some cases, such as Trades Access II, there are no assurances of funding from one year to the next, which makes planning and staffing difficult. In order to be successful, programs need stable funding and adequate human resource allocations. In addition, long-standing staffing vacancies in critical positions such as librarians, student success centre staff, and counsellors need to be addressed.

Financial barriers are an impediment to student academic success within and beyond Access programs. Additionally, SFA has played an important role in the success of Access programs as shown by the statistically significant rise in enrollments over the last ten years when there was no such corresponding statistically significant rise in enrollments in ALBE programming.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Continue to provide Student Financial Assistance to Access students. Research from the document review shows that the lack of access to financial assistance is a significant barrier for Aboriginal people. Both the *NWT Student Financial Assistance Program Review* (2012) and the *Adult Literacy and Basic Education Review* (2011) recommended that ALBE students receive financial assistance. Many Canadian jurisdictions now offer financial support for both ALBE and Access programs.

6.5 Data Collection, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation

This review is the first large-scale review of Access programs at Aurora College despite the fact that some Access programs have been delivered for almost 20 years. One of the key themes to emerge from the review is the need for improved data collection and student tracking.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Develop better data collection systems, and link those systems to other databases such as the Student Financial Assistance and Apprenticeship databases housed in the Department of ECE. Undertaking comprehensive dataset analysis would better inform Aurora College of students' progress beyond Access programs.

Another key theme to emerge from this review is the need for better data analysis, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION 13: Design a logic model, performance monitoring framework, and an evaluation framework so that Access programs can be monitored on a 3-year cycle. Monitoring Access programs on a three-year cycle should include the following processes: in Year 1, survey students and instructors on program success; in Year 2, summarize the qualitative data from the Developmental Studies Annual Reports (Access programs sections); in Year 3 – analyse the SRS Access data, and at the end of Year 3 – combine all 3 data sources into a performance report based on the logic model and the performance monitoring framework. The evaluation framework would be used to ensure data is collected for regular in-depth program evaluations at 5 - 7 year intervals.

6.6 Further Research

Undertaking further research on specific areas within Access programs would lead to the development of specific interventions that the Aurora College could implement to further improve student academic success.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Conduct research on the low rates of Access students progressing into parent and related programs and the differences in academic success between sub-groups of Access students (gender, ethnicity, and community of origin).

This would include further qualitative research into the areas identified within the quantitative data presented in this review.

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APPENDIX I: Detailed Methodology

The methodology used for this review has been outlined above in section 3.0. Further details on two of the data sources – the stakeholder surveys and the analysis of the SRS data – are presented below.

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

The Consultants undertook the following steps in order to report on the original data collected by the survey:

1. data capture
2. data cleaning
3. data conversion, coding and labelling;
4. variable transformations
5. development of a qualitative coding scheme

1. Data Capture

Data capture is the process of transcribing survey responses into an analyzable format. All survey data was typed directly into a database by the Consultants from the paper versions of the survey they collected. Those databases were then compiled into a Master Database by the database expert subcontracted for this project. The quantitative data – yes/no questions, likert scale questions, and forced ranking scale questions – was exported into SPSS. The qualitative data (all of the open ended text questions) was exported to an MS Word file.

2. Cleaning

Data cleaning is the process of ensuring that the data collected is as correct as possible. For example, respondents were asked if there were any other “needs” that Access Programs were meeting. Often, these “other” responses were identical to the existing choices provided (just using different wording/terminology). Those “other” responses were then recoded and included as part of those existing choices. This process of cleaning-up some answers resulted in approximately 5% - 10% of the “other” questions being recoded.

3. Data Conversion, Coding and Labeling

Data was converted from the original format it was compiled in (MS Access database) to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) prior to analysis. SPSS is the same software that the GNWT Bureau of Statistics uses to analyze their survey data. Once the raw data was imported into SPSS, it was coded and labelled so that it could be analyzed.

4. Variable Transformations

Five new variables were created through the transformation process. Due to low response numbers for certain questions, some variables had to be collapsed before being reported. The ones that were collapsed include:

- age – which was collapsed from 28 different ages down into the two categories of “Under 30” and “30 and Over”
- ethnicity – which collapsed the different “Aboriginal” categories of students (Dene, Metis, Inuit) so that overall category could be compared with “Non-Aboriginal” students
- location of respondent – which was collapsed from the original 23 communities into the categories of “Yellowknife”, the “Regional Centres” (Inuvik, Fort Smith and Hay River), the “Smaller NWT Communities”, the “Community Adult Educators”, and the “Office of the President of Aurora College”
- highest level of K-12 schooling completed – which was collapsed from six different categories into “Less Than Grade 12” and “Grade 12 and GED”
- years in position – which was collapsed from 27 different categories into “2 Years or Less”, “Between 2 and 5 Years”, “Between 5 and 10 Years”, and “More Than 10 Years”

5. Development of a Qualitative Coding Scheme

A Qualitative Coding Scheme is a framework that allows a mass of raw qualitative data to be analyzed in a more formal fashion. For this survey, such a framework was used for the open-ended questions (i.e., those asking respondents what the “top positive aspects” of Access Programs were or what the “top areas for improving” Access Programs were). The responses received were grouped into themes, which became the categories that were finally presented in sections 4.2 to 4.4.

SRS DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis process included four distinct steps:

- 1) data conversion, coding and labelling
- 2) cleaning the data and transforming it into longitudinal format
- 3) creating new variables prior to analysis
- 4) analysing the data

1. Data Conversion, Coding and Labelling

Data was converted from the original format it was received in (MS Excel spreadsheet) to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) prior to analysis. SPSS is the same software that the GNWT Bureau of Statistics uses to analyse their data. Once the raw data was imported into SPSS, it was coded and labelled so that it could be analysed.

2. Data Cleaning and Transforming

“Cleaning” was necessary because of the way some of the data was coded within the SRS. This was primarily required for the “Class Status” field of the database, where certain records had to be re-coded from their existing status of “In-progress” or “Ongoing” into “Not Completed”.¹¹¹ Additionally, 211 records had to be re-coded to the current name of the location where the course was delivered (Behchoko from Edzo) in the Programs/Courses Post-Access Dataset. Finally, duplicate records were discovered and removed from all three files: 10 duplicate records were removed from the Access Programs Dataset; 4 duplicate records were removed from the Programs/Courses Post-Access Dataset; and 41 duplicate records were removed from the Parent and Related Programs Dataset.

Transforming was necessary because of the way SRS records data. Each student within the system could have multiple records – in various programs (Nursing Access, Social Work Access, etc.), and across multiple years (2002/03, 2003/04, etc.). These individual records had to be collapsed into longitudinal format before proper analysis could be undertaken to see how individual students were progressing through and beyond Access Programs over time.

Four spreadsheets were exported from the SRS:

¹¹¹ For the Access Programs dataset, records were only considered as “Ongoing” if they were from the 2011/12 Academic year, or considered as “In-progress” if they were from the Winter semester of 2012. For the Programs/Courses Post-Access and Parent and Related Programs Datasets, students were only considered “Ongoing” if they were from the 2012/13 Academic year, and “In-progress” if they were in the Winter semester of 2013. Records which did not meet those criteria were re-coded as “Not Completed Requirements”.

- Access student demographic information (SR6962A_NABE_Access_Demographics)
- Access Programs information (SR6962B_NABE_Access_Programs)
- Information on programs/courses post Access (SR6962C_NABE_Access_Followup_Programs)
- Parent program information (SR6962D_NABE_Access_Parent_Programs)

From the original four spreadsheets exported from the SRS, six longitudinal SRS datasets were created for analysis for this project:

- Access Programs course-level data
- Access Programs student-level data
- Programs/courses taken post-Access – course-level data
- Programs/courses taken post-Access – student-level data
- Parent and related programs course-level data
- Parent and related programs student-level data

Access Programs Course-Level Data

The 9,526 course-level records were exported from the SRS, covering students in the seven Access Programs. Primarily, the course-level data was used to calculate whether each student completed all of their Access courses. Completing a course included “Completed Requirements”, “Credit”, “Transfer Credit” and “Equivalency”. Not completing a course included “Not Completed Requirements”, “No Credit”, and “Fail”. The only exceptions were:

- 1) if a student did not complete all of their Access courses, but were accepted into a parent or related program, then that student was deemed to have “conditionally completed” all of their courses in their Access program.
- 2) because the Trades Access II Program has a different goal than the other six Access Programs (i.e. successfully writing the Trades Entrance Exam [TEE], rather than just successfully completing courses), students in that program who may have failed some of their courses but who still passed the TEE were deemed to have “conditionally completed” all of their courses.

Course records were not included in the calculation of completing a course if they were classified as “Ongoing” or “In-Progress”. Additionally, records where a student “Deregistered” or “Withdrew” from courses were also not considered in the calculation of completing that course. The *Aurora College Policy on the Grading of Courses (C.25)* and the *Aurora College Policy on Student Withdrawal (C.30)* were used to define all of these terms.

However, the course level data was used for some limited statistical analysis: 1) to determine whether there were any statistically significant differences in completion rates among some of the Access courses (primarily specific ALBE courses both pre-and-post major course revisions); and 2) whether

there were any statistically significant differences in completion rates among Access courses based on semester of delivery.

Access Programs Student-Level Data

The 9,526 course-level records from the course-level data file were collapsed down into records for 1,205 students who were registered in the seven main Access Programs during the analysis timeframe.

The intent of the student level data was to see how each individual student progressed through their Access program (or in some cases, multiple Access Programs). This was done through the development of a “Completed All Access Courses” variable – which calculated whether each student completed all of their courses from the course level dataset.

Specifically, the student level dataset was used to analyse:

- relationships between demographic variables (age, gender, ethnicity, home community, highest level of K-12 schooling completed, time spent out of the K-12 system before returning to the College) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their Access courses)
- relationships between program-related variables (Access program, delivery location, full-time and part-time status) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their Access courses)
- how long a student spent in an Access program
- whether students switched locations (i.e. from a Community Learning Centre to one of the three regional campuses) to take an Access program
- whether a student progressed on from an Access program into another College program

Programs/Courses Taken After Enrolling in Access – Course-Level Data

The 12,600 course-level records were exported from the SRS. This full export also included records for students enrolled in Access Programs other than the seven main programs. In the end, 10,865 records for students from the seven main Access Programs were considered for analysis.

As with the Access Programs dataset, the course-level data was used to calculate whether each student completed all of their courses in programs/courses taken post-Access. The same methodology as used for the previous longitudinal datasets was used to determine completion of courses for programs/courses post-Access – although there were no “Conditional Completions” for these students.

Finally, as with the Access Programs longitudinal datasets, the course level data was used to analyse completion rates among some of the Access courses (i.e. specific ALBE courses both pre-and-post major course revisions) and completion rates of courses in programs/courses post-Access based on semester of delivery.

Programs/Courses Taken After Enrolling in Access – Student-Level Data

The 10,865 course-level records from the course-level data file were collapsed down into records for 1,892 former Access students who were registered in programs/courses post-Access during the analysis timeframe.

The intent of the student level data was to see how each individual student progressed through those programs/courses. This was done through the development of a “Completed All Courses” variable – which calculated whether each student completed all of their courses from the course level dataset.

Specifically, the student level dataset was used to analyse:

- relationships between demographic variables (age, gender, ethnicity, home community, highest level of K-12 schooling completed, time spent out of the K-12 system before returning to the College) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their courses in programs/courses post-Access)
- relationships between program-related variables (programs/courses post-Access, delivery location, full-time and part-time status) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their courses in programs/courses post-Access)
- how long a student spent in a program/course post-Access
- whether students switched locations (i.e. from a Community Learning Centre to one of the three regional campuses) to take programs/courses post-Access

Parent and Related Programs Course-Level Data

The 33,117 course-level records were exported from the SRS. This full export also included records for students enrolled in Access Programs other than the seven main Access Programs, as well as records for all students in all years between 2003/04 and 2012/13. Since the analysis for this dataset was to focus on the first year courses for former Access and direct entry students only, 16,079 records were considered for analysis.

As with the first four longitudinal datasets, the course-level data was used to calculate whether each student completed all of their courses in the first year of the parent and related programs. The same methodology as used for the previous longitudinal datasets was used to determine completion of all first year courses for parent and related programs.

Finally, as with the Access Programs longitudinal datasets, the course level data was used to analyse completion rates of first year courses in parent and related programs based on semester of delivery.

Parent and Related Program Student-Level Data

The 16,079 course-level records from the course-level data file were collapsed down into records for 2,821 former Access and direct entry students who were registered in parent and related programs during the analysis timeframe. The intent of the student level data was to see how each individual student did in their first year of the parent and related program. This was done through the development of a “Completed All First Year Courses” variable – which calculated whether each student completed all of their first year courses from the course level dataset.

Specifically, the student level dataset was used to analyse:

- relationships between demographic variables (age, gender, ethnicity, home community, highest level of K-12 schooling completed, time spent out of the K-12 system before returning to the College) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their first year courses in the parent and related programs)
- relationships between program-related variables (parent or related program, delivery location, full-time and part-time status) and student outcomes (whether the student completed all of their first year courses in the parent and related programs)
- whether students switched locations (i.e. from one Campus to another) to take a parent or related program

3. Creating New Variables Prior to Analysis

New variables were created prior to analysis by collapsing categories within some existing variables. For example, it was not possible to separately analyse results from 26 communities and the three campuses where programs/courses taken post-Access courses were delivered. Instead, those locations were collapsed into the two categories of “Communities” and “Campuses” – so that results of programs delivered at the community level could be compared with results of program delivered at the campus level. The “Campuses” category was subsequently broken down into the three regional campuses “Aurora”, “Thebacha” and “Yellowknife/North Slave” – so that results could also be compared across campuses.

Additionally, some variables were created by linking data from the different longitudinal datasets. For example, it was possible to track individual student progress from Access Programs to programs/courses taken post-Access and to parent and related programs.

For the Access Programs Dataset, additional new variables created included:

- “Under/Over 25”
- “Highest Grade Completed”
- “Length of Time Spent Out of School Before Returning to Aurora College”
- “Length of Time Spent In Access Programs”
- “Progress Beyond Access”
- whether students took “One or More Than One Access Program”
- whether students had “Continued on from ALBE”
- the impact of “Pre-and Post-Revisions on Select ALBE Courses”

For the Programs/Courses Taken Post-Access Dataset, many of the same variables were created, including: Under/Over 25, Highest Grade Completed, Length of Time Spent Out of School Before Returning to Aurora College, One or More Than One Access Program, and Continued on from ALBE.

Additional new variables created included:

- “Length of Time Spent In Programs/Courses Post-Access”
- “Length of Time After Finishing Access and Starting Next Program”

For the Parent and Related Programs Dataset, many of the same variables were created, including: Under/Over 25, One or More Than One Access Program, and Continued on from ALBE.

Additional new variables created included:

- “Length of Time After Finishing Access and Starting Parent and Related Program”
- “Parent and Related Program Groupings”
- “Parent and Related Program Type”
- “Direct Entry and Access Entry”
- whether the student received a “Conditional Completion” from their Access program

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis included multiple steps:

- first, raw frequencies and percentages were calculated and reported to give a better understanding of the overall data
- second, means were calculated as an additional level of analysis
- third, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVAs) or Independent Samples T-Tests were used to test whether statistically significant differences existed between groups of students (for example, between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students)

All data analysis for this project was undertaken with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) – the same statistical package used by the GNWT Bureau of Statistics.

APPENDIX II: Additional Statistical Tables from the SRS Access Longitudinal Analysis

Table 2.2.1.10: Conditional Course Completions in Access Programs – by Access Program (2002/03 to 2011/12)

		Did Not Complete All Access Courses	Completed All Access Courses	Conditional Completion of All Access Courses	Totals
Nursing Access	Count	198	109	44	351
	% within Access Program	56.4%	31.1%	12.5%	100.0%
Social Work Access	Count	46	31	2	79
	% within Access Program	58.2%	39.2%	2.5%	100.0%
TEP Access	Count	88	61	55	204
	% within Access Program	43.1%	29.9%	27.0%	100.0%
ENRT Access	Count	25	20	7	52
	% within Access Program	48.1%	38.5%	13.5%	100.0%
Business Administration Access	Count	26	20	18	64
	% within Access Program	40.6%	31.2%	28.1%	100.0%
Trades Access	Count	46	82	7	135
	% within Access Program	34.1%	60.7%	5.2%	100.0%
Trades Access II	Count	47	18	43	108
	% within Access Program	43.5%	16.7%	39.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	476	341	176	993
	% within Access Program	47.9%	34.3%	17.7%	100.0%

Table 2.2.2.5: Program Grouping Type – Programs/Courses Taken Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13)

Program	Program Grouping
ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE&CULTURAL INSTRUCTOR	Diploma
ACADEMIC - NON CREDIT	Further Academic Upgrading
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION	Further Academic Upgrading
AIRPORTS OBSERVER/COMMUNICATOR	Employment Training
ALBERTA DISTANCE LEARNING CENTRE	Further Academic Upgrading
APPRENTICESHIP CARPENTRY	Apprenticeship
APPRENTICESHIP ELECTRICAL	Apprenticeship
APPRENTICESHIP HEAVY EQUIPMENT TECH	Apprenticeship
APPRENTICESHIP HOUSING MAINTAINER	Apprenticeship
APPRENTICESHIP PLUMBER/GASFITTER	Apprenticeship
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION	Degree
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING	Degree
BEAUFORT DELTA COMMUNITY EDUCATION PREP	Certificate
BUILDING TRADES HELPER PROGRAM	Employment Training
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	Diploma
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ACCESS	Access
CAMP COOK	Employment Training
CERT. IN COMPUTING & INFORMATION SYSTEMS	Certificate
CERTIFICATE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Certificate
CHINOOK COLLEGE	Further Academic Upgrading
COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE	Certificate
COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER	Certificate
DIAMOND CUTTING & POLISHING	Employment Training
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	Certificate
EMPLOYMENT - NON CREDIT	Employment Training (Non-Credit)
ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES TECH	Diploma
ENVIRONMENT NATURAL RESOURCES ACCESS	Access
ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR TRAINING	Certificate
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	Apprenticeship

Please note:

- table is continued on next page

Table 2.2.2.5: Program Grouping Type – Programs/Courses Taken Post-Access (2002/03 to 2012/13) - Continued

Program	Program Grouping
INDIGENOUS WELLNESS & ADDICTIONS PREVENT	Diploma
INTRODUCTION TO UNDERGROUND MINING	Employment Training
INTRODUCTORY CARPENTRY	Pre-Apprenticeship
KITCHEN HELPER	Employment Training
LONG TERM CARE AIDE	Diploma
MANAGEMENT STUDIES	Diploma
MINERAL PROCESSING OPERATOR PRE EMPL.	Employment Training
MOBILE INTRODUCTORY WELDING	Pre-Apprenticeship
NATURAL RESOURCES TECHNOLOGY	Diploma
NORTHERN LAKES COLLEGE COURSES	Further Academic Upgrading
NURSING ACCESS	Access
OFFICE ADMINISTRATION	Diploma
PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER	Certificate
PRACTICAL NURSE	Diploma
PRE APPRENTICESHIP CARPENTRY	Pre-Apprenticeship
PRE EMPLOYMENT WELDING	Employment Training
PRE-EMPLOYMENT CARPENTRY	Employment Training
PRE-EMPLOYMENT MECHANICS	Employment Training
RECREATION LEADERS	Diploma
SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	Employment Training
SOCIAL WORK	Diploma
SOCIAL WORK ACCESS	Access
SURFACE DIAMOND DRILLER HELPER	Employment Training
TEACHER EDUCATION	Diploma
TEACHER EDUCATION ACCESS	Access
TLICHO COMMUNITY EDUCATION PREPARATION	Certificate
TRADES ACCESS	Access
TRADITIONAL ARTS	Certificate
UNDERGROUND MINER TRAINING	Employment Training
UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE ACCESS (UCEP)	Further Academic Upgrading

Table 2.2.3.1: Student Pathways Between Access Programs and Parent and Related Programs

Access Program	Parent and Related Program Group	Parent and Related Program Names
Nursing Access	Nursing and Health Related	Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree Practical Nurse Diploma Indigenous Wellness & Addictions Prevention Diploma Long Term Care Aide Diploma Personal Support Worker Certificate Community Health Representative Certificate Home & Community Support Worker Certificate
Social Work Access	Social Work and Related	Social Work Diploma Certificate in Criminal Justice
TEP Access	Education Related	Bachelor of Education Degree Teacher Education Program Diploma Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Diploma Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Certificate Early Childhood Development Certificate
ENRT Access	Environment & Natural Resources Related	Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma Environmental Monitor Training Certificate
Business Administration Access	Business Related	Business Administration Diploma Business Administration Certificate Office Administration Diploma Office Administration Certificate Certificate in Computing & Information Systems Small Business Development Certificate Introduction to Tourism & Hospitality Industry Certificate
Trades Access	Apprenticeship Related	Apprenticeship Carpentry
Trades Access II		Apprenticeship Electrical Apprenticeship Heavy Equipment Technician Apprenticeship Housing Maintainer Apprenticeship Plumber/Gasfitter

Please note:

- Access programs were originally designed to feed into parent programs: i.e. a Nursing Access student would normally move on to the Nursing program; a Business Administration Access student would normally move on to the Business Administration Certificate or Diploma program. Those pathways were the norm. However, these pathways have changed over time. Instead of only going from Nursing Access into the Nursing program, students are now going into other health related programs such as the Community Health Representative Certificate or the Long-Term Care Aide Diploma; Business Administration Access students are now going into the Office Administration Diploma or Certificate programs, as well as the Business Administration programs. The term “parent and related” programs is used throughout this report to reflect those current student pathways.
- the Certificate in Criminal Justice is no longer offered at the College (and hasn’t been offered since 2005/06).

Table 2.2.3.5: Access Student Enrollments in Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)

	Number	Percent
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree	77	19.7
Bachelor of Education Degree	46	11.8
Office Administration Certificate	37	9.5
Business Administration Certificate	33	8.4
Personal Support Worker Certificate	28	7.2
Office Administration Diploma	26	6.6
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma	25	6.4
Social Work Diploma	22	5.6
Business Administration Diploma	21	5.4
Environmental Monitor Training Certificate	14	3.6
Early Childhood Development Certificate	10	2.6
Practical Nurse Diploma	8	2.0
Apprenticeship Carpentry	7	1.8
Teacher Education Diploma	5	1.3
Indigenous Wellness & Addictions Prevention Diploma	4	1.0
Community Health Representative Certificate	4	1.0
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Diploma	4	1.0
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Certificate	3	.8
Apprenticeship Electrical	3	.8
Apprenticeship Housing Maintainer	3	.8
Recreation Leaders Program	3	.8
Certificate in Criminal Justice	2	.5
Certificate in Computing & Information Systems	2	.5
Apprenticeship Heavy Equipment Technician	2	.5
Small Business Development Certificate	1	.3
Apprenticeship Plumber/Gasfitter	1	.3
Total	391	100.0

Please note:

- Enrollment rates for the five Apprenticeship programs may be under-reported because not all apprentices in the NWT Apprenticeship Program take their technical training at Aurora College (i.e. up to 70% of apprentices attend in southern Canada). In other words, if they went south for their technical training, records for that training would not be included in the College SRS.
- some Access students went from the TEP and Social Work Access Programs into the Recreation Leaders Program (which is not really a “parent or related program” in the same sense as those outlined in Table 2.2.3.1).

Table 2.2.3.6: Direct Entry and Former Access Student Enrollments in Parent and Related Programs (2003/04 to 2012/13)

		Direct Entry Student	Access Student	
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree	Number	244	77	321
	Percent	76.0%	24.0%	100.0%
Practical Nurse Diploma	Number	23	8	31
	Percent	74.2%	25.8%	100.0%
Indigenous Wellness & Addictions Prevention Diploma	Number	1	4	5
	Percent	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Personal Support Worker Certificate	Number	138	28	166
	Percent	83.1%	16.9%	100.0%
Community Health Representative Certificate	Number	21	4	25
	Percent	84.0%	16.0%	100.0%
Social Work Diploma	Number	53	22	75
	Percent	70.7%	29.3%	100.0%
Certificate in Criminal Justice	Number	14	2	16
	Percent	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Bachelor of Education Degree	Number	98	46	144
	Percent	68.1%	31.9%	100.0%
Teacher Education Diploma	Number	56	5	61
	Percent	91.8%	8.2%	100.0%
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Diploma	Number	28	4	32
	Percent	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Aboriginal Language & Cultural Instructor Certificate	Number	55	3	58
	Percent	94.8%	5.2%	100.0%
Early Childhood Development Certificate	Number	129	10	139
	Percent	92.8%	7.2%	100.0%
Environment & Natural Resources Technology Diploma	Number	79	25	104
	Percent	76.0%	24.0%	100.0%
Environmental Monitor Training Certificate	Number	219	14	233
	Percent	94.0%	6.0%	100.0%
Business Administration Diploma	Number	156	21	177
	Percent	88.1%	11.9%	100.0%
Business Administration Certificate	Number	666	33	699
	Percent	95.3%	4.7%	100.0%
Office Administration Diploma	Number	98	26	124
	Percent	79.0%	21.0%	100.0%
Office Administration Certificate	Number	341	37	378
	Percent	90.2%	9.8%	100.0%
Certificate in Computing & Information Systems	Number	20	2	22
	Percent	90.9%	9.1%	100.0%
Small Business Development Certificate	Number	15	1	16
	Percent	93.8%	6.2%	100.0%
Introduction to Tourism & Hospitality Industry Certificate	Number	7	0	7
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Apprenticeship Carpentry	Number	63	7	70
	Percent	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Apprenticeship Electrical	Number	82	3	85
	Percent	96.5%	3.5%	100.0%
Apprenticeship Heavy Equipment Technician	Number	32	2	34
	Percent	94.1%	5.9%	100.0%
Apprenticeship Housing Maintainer	Number	9	3	12
	Percent	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Apprenticeship Plumber/Gasfitter	Number	13	1	14
	Percent	92.9%	7.1%	100.0%
Recreation Leaders Program	Number	15	3	18
	Percent	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	Number	2675	391	3066
	Percent	87.2%	12.8%	100.0%

Please Note:

- Table 2.2.3.6 shows enrollments in all years (and all programs) for all parent and related programs. Since the purpose of section 2.2.3 was to show the differences between direct entry students and former Access students, the N of direct entry students in all other tables in that section only includes those years and programs where Access students were enrolled. That's why the N of direct entry students is 2,675 (rather than 2,430), and that's why the overall N of students is 3,066 (rather than 2,821) for Table 2.2.3.7.

APPENDIX III: Access Programs Review – Review Framework

Aurora College Access Program –Review Framework				
SUCCESS: What has happened as a result of the Access Programs? And have the Access Programs achieved what was expected?				
Review Questions	Question Source	Indicators	Data Sources/ Methodologies	Responsibility for Data Collection
1) Is each of the Access Programs meeting the needs of students? If not, why not?	1. Terms of Reference	1. Views of key stakeholders: students, instructors, program managers and senior managers, Community Adult Educators, partner organizations and funders	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys	Evaluators
2) To what extent are Access Programs meeting their intended purposes with respect to: a) the number (%) of students going on to enter other Aurora College Programs? b) the level of academic readiness of students going on to enter other Aurora College Programs?	1. Terms of Reference	1. Views of key stakeholders: students, instructors, program managers and senior managers, Community Adult Educators, partner organizations and funders 2. Enrollment and completion statistics	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys 3. SRS Data Analysis/ *CMAS Data Analysis	Evaluators Aurora College/ ECE
3) Are the academic admission requirements for each of the Access Programs at the appropriate level for student success?	1. Terms of Reference			
4) Are the academic exit requirements for each of the Access Programs at the appropriate level for student success in the parent programs?	1. Terms of Reference			
5) What are some of the best practices in Access Programming?	1. Steering Committee	1. Themes emerging from the background documents 2. Views of key stakeholders in other Canadian jurisdictions	1. Aurora College Strategic Plan, Annual Reports, etc. 2. Expert Panel	Evaluators

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Review Questions	Question Source	Indicators	Data Sources/ Methodologies	Responsibility for Data Collection
6) How effective are the academic, administrative and operational linkages between each Access program and its parent program?	1. Terms of Reference	1. Views of key stakeholders: students, instructors, program managers and senior managers, Community Adult Educators, partner organizations and funders 2. Enrollment and completion statistics	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys 3. SRS Data Analysis/ CMAS Data Analysis	Evaluators
7) For each access program, how effective is the ratio of academic upgrading (ALBE) courses to subject matter specific courses?	1 Terms of Reference			Aurora College
8a) For each access program, is the program delivery model the best approach to achieve the current objectives of the program? 8b) How successful is the specialized Access Program Delivery Model? How successful is the general Access Program Delivery Model?	1. Terms of Reference			
9) How satisfied are current and former students with the overall quality of the program (including instruction, instructor qualifications and experience, program facilities, program equipment and other resources, and program support services)	1. Terms of Reference			
10) How satisfied are senior managers, program managers, and instructors with the quality of Access graduates?	1. Terms of Reference			
11a) What are the program attrition rates and causes? 11b) What can be done to improve program retention?	1. Terms of Reference			
12) Why are some students successful and other students unsuccessful in Access Programs?	1. Consultants			

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Review Questions	Question Source	Indicators	Data Sources/ Methodologies	Responsibility for Data Collection
13) In the first year of each parent program, how do completion rates of Access entry students compare with completion rates of direct entry students?	1. Terms of Reference	1. Views of key stakeholders: students, instructors, program managers and senior managers, Community Adult Educators, partner organizations and funders 2. Enrollment and completion statistics	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys 3. SRS Data Analysis/ CMAS Data Analysis	Evaluators
14a) How effectively are Access Programs being delivered across the three campuses? 14b) How consistently are Access Programs being delivered across the three campuses?	1. Terms of Reference			Aurora College
15) How successful overall have the Access Programs been in achieving their stated goals and objectives?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
16) Have there been any unexpected positive or negative impacts to the Access Programs?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
17) Do some programs need to be re-structured or eliminated?	1. Terms of Reference			
COST EFFECTIVENESS: Given alternatives, are the Access Programs a cost-effective way to achieve the goals and objectives?				
Review Questions	Question Source	Indicators	Data Sources/ Methodologies	Responsibility for Data Collection
1. Where do the program funding sources come from?	1. Steering Committee	1. Views of key stakeholders: program managers and senior managers, partner organizations and funders 2. Content of background documentation (i.e. budget details)	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys 3. Document review	Evaluators
2. Are current resources being used effectively?	1. Steering Committee			
3. Did each of the Access Programs remain within budget?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
4. Were the proper accounting and reporting procedures followed in the administration of the Access Programs?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
5. Do the Access Programs duplicate other Aurora College, ECE or GNWT initiatives? If so, explain the duplication.	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			

Please note:

- Review Question 13 had to be changed to examine the first year of parent programs only (rather than all years of parent programs) due to SRS data limitations.

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RELEVANCE: Do the Access Programs continue to be consistent with Aurora College, ECE and GNWT priorities? And do they realistically address needs?				
Review Questions	Question Source	Indicators	Data Sources/ Methodologies	Responsibility for Data Collection
1. Are the Access Programs needed? Why?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines	1. Views of key stakeholders: students, instructors, program managers and senior managers, Community Adult Educators, partner organizations and funders 2. Content of background documentation	1. Focus Groups/interviews 2. Surveys 3. Annual Reports by Campus, the ALBE and SFA Reviews, etc.	Evaluators
2. Have the needs changed that the Access Programs were originally intended to meet? If so, do the Access Programs meet the new needs? And what are those needs?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
3. Are the goals of the Access Programs clearly stated and understood by stakeholders?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			
4. Are the goals and objectives of the Access Programs consistent with current Aurora College, ECE and GNWT priorities?	1. Treasury Board Guidelines			

APPENDIX IV: Access Programs Financial Information

Table 4.4.1.1: Campus Based ALBE Program – by Campus

Campus Based ALBE – Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	201,034	212,779	199,288	264,977	295,605	286,249	327,936	241,951	208,538	633,725
Revenue (tuition)	-25	-1,065	-4,160	0	-950	-42	-10,602	0	0 + -59	-21,600
	recoveries								recoveries	
Cost	201,009	211,714	195,128	264,977	294,655	286,207	317,334	241,951	208,479	612,125

Campus Based ALBE – Yellowknife	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	254,644	216,399	322,425	362,382	315,103	321,842	399,198	392,516	425,563	357,865
Revenue (tuition)	-19,030	-6,920	-9,360	-17,680	-14,636	-11,990	-1,090 tuition & - 1,853	-8,400	-6000 + -1391	-6000 + -664
							recoveries		recoveries	recoveries
Cost	235,614	209,479	313,065	344,702	300,467	309,852	396,255	384,116	418,172	351,201

Campus Based ALBE – Thebacha	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	519,837	483,858	323,904	467,964	454,065	400,142	483,361	447,375	531,843	483,870
Revenue (tuition)	-9,823	-9,515	-2,080	-2,815	-39,404	-39,694	-28,340 and -15,143	-43,200	-81,000	-59,045
							recoveries			
Cost	510,014	474,343	321,824	465,149	414,661	360,448	439,878	404,175	450,843	424,825

Table 4.4.1.2: Nursing Access Program – by Campus

Nursing Access – Yellowknife	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	131,518	128,001	90,337	108,705	138,682	165,954	193,106	146,065	146,199	150,035
Revenue (tuition)	-23,355	-24,761	-34,320	-42,598	-3768	-34,355	-27,250	-36,845	-40,200 + -284 recoveries	-18,000
Cost	108,163	103,240	56,017	66,107	134,914	131,599	165,856	109,220	105,715	132,035

Nursing Access – Fort Smith	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	127,564	81,645	34,825	11,141	11,741	10,408	15,759	75,404	67,439	132,753
Funded through ABE campus allocation										
Revenue (tuition)	-10,380 + -738 recoveries	-8,823	-6,240	-15,600	-7,800	-13,080	-9,810	-22,800	-18,000	-25,200
Cost	116,446	72,822	28,585	(4,459)	3,941	(2,672)	5,949	52,604	49,439	107,553

Nursing Access – Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	0									
Revenue (tuition)	0									
Cost	0									

Table 4.4.1.3: Teacher Education Access Program – by Campus

Teacher Education Access - Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures (base)	0	0	567	31,908	20,652	14,981	96,651	74,954	61,531	Included in Campus based ALBE for Aurora due to reorganization.
Expenditures (3 rd party ECE)*	112,398	96,069	47,134	45,000	36,785	30,000	30,000	0	240,000	
Revenue (tuition)	-7,785	-14,015	-9,360	-23,920	-6,760	-15,260	-17,985	-15,600	-26,400	
Cost	104,613	82,054	38,341	52,988	50,677	29,721	108,666	59,354	275,131	

*Funding is from GNWT – TEP Strategy

Teacher Education Access- Yellowknife	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures (base)	0	0	0	5,141	29,515	54,020	28,956	41,609	17,763	65,140
Expenditures (3 rd party ECE)*	108,891	120,736	47,134		56,558	30,000	30,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
Revenue (tuition)	-7,785	-1,730	-14,040	-1,040	-5,720	-5,450	-1,090	-13,200	-7,200	-2,400
Cost	101,106	119,006	33,094	4101	80,353	78,570	57,866	73,409	55,563	107,740

*Funding is from GNWT – TEP Strategy

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Teacher Education Access - Thebacha	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures (base)	See note	See note	See note	See note	See note	32,452	See note	See note	See note	See note
Expenditures (3 rd party ECE)*	0					30,000	30,000	61,000	45,000	45,000
Revenue (tuition)	-2,595	-4,325	-16,120	-18,720	-10,400	0	tuition shown in ALBE budget	tuition shown in ALBE budget	tuition shown in ALBE budget	-7,200
Cost	-2,595	(4,325)	(16,120)	(18,720)	(10,400)	62,452				37,800

*Funding is from GNWT – TEP Strategy

NOTE: From 2002/03 to 2006/07, Teacher Education Access at Thebacha was funded though the Thebacha Campus overall ALBE budget.

Table 4.4.1.4: Social Work Access Program – by Campus

Social Work Access – Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	207,938	182,275	212,405	242,568	176,051	330,071	355,870	257,132	252,116	Included in Campus based ALBE for Aurora due to reorganization.
Revenue (tuition)	-15,138 + -926 recoveries	-18,515	-28,080	-26,922	-19,760	-34,357	20,710	-31,200	-51,600 + -861 recoveries	
Cost	191,874	163,760	184,325	215,646	156,291	295,714	335,160	225,932	199,655	

Social Work Access – Yellowknife	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures						Supported through YK Campus overall ALBE funding	Supported through YK Campus overall ALBE funding	Supported through YK Campus overall ALBE funding	Supported through YK Campus overall ALBE funding	Supported through YK Campus overall ALBE funding
Revenue (tuition)						0	-17,440	-6,000	-24,000	-21,600
Cost										

Table 4.4.1.5: Business Administration Access Program – by Campus

Business Administration Access – Fort Smith	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue (tuition)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cost	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Thebacha Campus delivers the Business Administration Access Program with ALBE base funding and PYs.

Business Administration Access – Yellowknife	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue (tuition)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cost	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Yellowknife Campus delivers the Business Administration Access Program with ALBE base funding and PYs.

Table 4.4.1.6: ENRT Access Program – by Campus

ENRT Access – Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	0	79,159	0	0	129,866	0	0	162,829	0	0
Revenue (tuition)	0	-14,498			-15,600			-30,000	0	0
Cost	0	64,661	0	0	114,266	0	0	132,829	0	0

Note: This program only runs every three years and is designed to help feed 1st year of ENRTP. The program is expected to run in 2009/10, in advance of 1st year ENRTP in Inuvik in 2010/11. ENRT Access Program is not base funded – third party funded.

ENRT Access – Thebacha	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	n/a							Thebacha Campus ALBE base funding	Thebacha Campus ALBE base funding	Thebacha Campus ALBE base funding
Revenue (tuition)										
Cost										

Table 4.4.1.7: Trades Access Program – Thebacha Campus

Trades Access – Thebacha	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures	0						ABE Base funding	ABE Base Funding		
Expenditures (LMIT)	0						23,289	26,259	49,410	53,981
Revenue (tuition)	0								-15,600	-10,200
Cost	0						23,289	26,259	33,810	43,781

Table 4.4.1.8: Trades Access II Program – Aurora Campus

Trades Access II – Aurora	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Expenditures (LMIT)	0				85,532	109,737	181,656	102,252	98,047	104,382
Expenditures (Inuvialuit Regional Corp)	0			78,303	109,225	171,000	0 – no contribution	78,650	198,000	114,000
Expenditures (Gwich'in Tribal Council)	0			44,999	45,000	51,000	40,000	78,650		
Other				-	-	-	-	40,000		
Revenue (tuition)	0				-35,815	-32,155	-31,065 + -2,000 recoveries	-31,200 + -3,500 recoveries	-21,600	-24,000 + -2792 recoveries
Cost	0			123,302	203,942	299,582	188,591	264,852	274,447	191,590

Note: Program funded via third party funding. No base funding for Trades Access II.

APPENDIX V: Detailed Suggestions

This appendix is a summary of detailed suggestions from the respondents, focus group participants, students, instructors, program managers, community adult educators, senior management, and expert panelists who participated in this review. Equally important, the appendix reflects the suggestions found in the *Developmental Studies: Adult Literacy and Basic Education and Access Programs Final Reports* from Aurora Campus, Thebacha Campus and Yellowknife Campus (2004-05 to 2011-12) written by Access and ALBE instructors.

Program Delivery

- Improve screening and placement processes
 - Raise entry level science prerequisites to help students prepare for science levels in Nursing Access and ENRT Access
 - Institute placement testing for all students
 - Review and revise as necessary entry and exit level requirements for Access Programs
 - Hire or contract a reading specialist for adult reading assessment improvement and instructor training
 - Find a standardized reading placement tool that is faster and easier to administer than the Canadian Adult Reading Assessment
 - Hold orientation sessions to address expectations, help students build study skills and support systems, and identify at-risk students so that actions can be taken to provide the supports students need at the beginning of terms.
 - Hire a wellness coordinator; provide additional and proactive counselling services; provide ongoing assistance for students in setting educational goals, exploring educational and employment options, and making realistic program and career choices to increase student motivation and to help students maintain focus
 - Ensure instructors are involved in the screening and placement processes
 - Consider a two-year access program for those needing more time to upgrade math and science levels to be ready to enter parent programs
- Develop promotional and recruitment strategies specifically for Access Programs
- Improve linkages with Parent Programs
 - Develop closer ties between access students and parent programs to give students a sense of belonging and to increase motivation.
 - Work with contractors to continue to open up positions for on-the-job training and apprenticeships
- Review and update Program and Course Outlines
 - Articulate the rationale and goals for Aurora College access programming and its place within the Aurora College system
 - Create program rationales and implement timely reviews of those rationales
 - Institute timely and comprehensive program and course outline reviews
 - Institute timely updates to program and course outlines when curriculum revisions occur

- Ensure all Aurora College communications are consistent and reflect accurate information about programs and courses
 - Change and revise access program outlines when the parent program changes their requirements.
 - List attendance requirements and standards within the program outlines and/or revise attendance policy which reflects program attendance issues, not just course attendance issues.
- Review Curriculum and Resources
 - Institute timely and comprehensive curriculum revisions, sequencing, and updates
 - Institute curriculum, course, and resource development and updating for specialty courses
 - Help with course and resource development and modifications that address the reality of multilevel, blended classes: low literacy level resources for math and science courses; a specialty course for blended nursing and social work access classes
 - Use updated, culturally relevant resources that are academically and age appropriate
 - Make Alberta education curriculum and exams requisite for all 150 level subjects as they are for 160 levels (with some suggestions to include 140 level subjects).
 - Modularize lower level math and English courses to facilitate individualization, or develop shorter courses to give students a sense of accomplishment.
 - Have consistent and standardized math text books across campuses to facilitate transfers.
 - Update specialty courses used in nursing access and social work access, and standardize specialty course curriculum across campuses
 - Create resource banks and lists of northern, culturally relevant materials; online resources; and theme units to be shared across campuses
 - Work towards more open communication with senior management and instructors across the three campuses
- Review Policies
 - Meet with staff to develop strategies to address attendance and retention issues
 - Review policies and ensure the policies incorporate the changes needed to address attendance and retention issues
 - Ensure policies are incorporated into program outlines where necessary to avoid misinterpretation or confusion especially related to attendance practices

Student Supports

- Support student academic success
 - Carefully screen and interview students for Access Programs
 - Students need to be working at the prescribed academic levels upon entrance and in order to ensure these levels, students will write Aurora College placement tests
 - Students need to be fully aware of and prepared for the demands of full-time studies
 - Students need to be committed to the program or other viable options identified during the screening and in-depth interview process

- Track students and provide services for at-risk students
- Extend the length of time to complete Access Programs for students at-risk
- Provide appropriate program supports such as tutors, specialists, study skills and time management sessions, computer access, high performance coaching techniques
- Inform students of the supports offered through the student success center
- Have advisors assigned to students upon entering the Access Programs
- Provide a writing centre at each campus
- Provide Aurora College orientation sessions on campus at the beginning of each semester (the sessions should focus on the soft skills students need to be successful)
- Provide childcare programs on campus or close to the campus for students with families
- Provide more social and cultural events for students and their families
- Create an atmosphere that supports students or have a place for students to gather together that creates a family-like unit – particularly for community students moving to larger centres
- Recognize ALBE and Access students at Aurora College graduation ceremonies
- Provide counselling and wellness supports on campus
- Provide Aurora College pre-orientation sessions in the communities
- Provide peer counselling and mentoring opportunities
- Build networks with local employers
- Identify and/or provide better housing options for students

Instructor Supports

- Offer In-services and training related to a broad range of needs such as
 - recognizing learning disabilities and teaching people with learning disabilities
 - linkages between western and Aboriginal knowledge, particularly in science
 - strategies for teaching younger students; strategies for teaching older students
 - working with people with mental health issues and addictions
 - help with personal, career, and educational counselling
 - strategies to improve student retention
 - strategies to motivate students with a history of low success
 - differentiated and individualized instruction
 - applying the attendance policy in educative rather than punitive ways
 - computer software and programs to create online learning materials and learning environments and to facilitate administrative work
 - implementation of new resources, the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition course and the Intake Package Placement Tests, in particular
 - regular, higher level curriculum in-services
 - barriers to learning
 - research on post-secondary transitions

- Offer in-service and training related to subject-specific educational needs such as
 - teaching ALBE Math and English
 - teaching English as a second language
 - Certificate in Adult Education courses
 - attending teacher and adult educator conferences in the south
 - courses on how to teach online

Financial Supports

- Target funding for Access Programs
 - Identify a budget for Access Programs that reflects true costs
 - Transfer the funds to each Campus
- Support Financial Success
 - Provide more visible and consistent student financial assistance information on campus
 - Work with the Department of Education Culture and Employment to support student financial assistance for upper level ALBE and Access students
 - Provide financial management workshops and seminars
 - Offer budgeting workshops
 - Provide contacts for students in need of income services
 - Provide information on careers, salaries and education levels
 - Post part-time work opportunities

Data Collection, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

- Track Students
 - Develop and implement a new SRS program
 - Improve tracking mechanisms of students throughout their academic experiences at Aurora College, during their apprenticeships and into their professional careers
 - Continue to track longitudinal data of Aurora College Access students
- Evaluation
 - Design a logic model, performance monitoring framework and an evaluation framework
 - Monitor Access Programs on a 3-year cycle:
 - Year 1 - survey students and instructors on program success
 - Year 2- summarize qualitative data from the Developmental Studies Annual Reports (Access Programs sections)
 - Year 3 - analyse the SRS Access data
 - At the end of Year 3 - combine all 3 data sources into a performance report based on the logic model and performance monitoring framework
 - Conduct a program evaluation every 5 to 7 years
- Improve Communication and Feedback Loops
 - Annually review and analyze the Developmental Studies reports and prepare summaries of program successes, challenges, curriculum needs and program needs
 - Meet with Access Program instructors on an annual basis to find ways to address key

challenges and needs

- Establish a yearly meeting between Access Program and Parent Program instructors to develop strategies to improve the transitions for Access students entering into parent programs
- Establish yearly meetings between campus and community Aurora College staff to develop strategies to improve the transitions for students leaving the communities to enter into Access Programs