Research Project Proposal

Project title
Investigating graduation rates of remote and northern students in STEM fields

Project Overview
Students in remote and northern areas of Canada face unique challenges when it comes to attaining post-secondary education. Unlike youth from urban areas - who often have the option to stay in their communities while they make the transition from secondary to post-secondary education - students from remote and northern communities rarely have this option. Although it is possible to complete post-secondary courses online, the infrastructure (e.g. high-speed broadband internet) is often inadequate, making this an impracticable option in many remote and northern students. Natural resources are economic drivers in many remote and northern areas, and we would like to understand if students from these areas are enrolled in post-secondary education related to natural resources specifically, and science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) more generally.

For this project, we would like to see a socio-economic analysis conducted to answer questions such as: what are the enrollment, graduation, and attrition rates of students from remote and northern communities?; and what are the demographics of students from rural and northern areas? It would also be valuable to understand these questions in a broader policy context, and to consider: how to support remote and northern students in their transition from remote and northern areas to urban centres for post-secondary education; what may be driving the trends in the socio-economic data; and what some of the unique barriers may be that students from remote and northern areas face.

Students with a particular interest in this topic are encouraged to propose their own questions. The goal of this project will be to understand challenges that are unique to Canada's remote and northern areas, and to identify barriers and solutions that are unique to these areas.

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