



What is the Maine Distance Learning Project?

The Maine Distance Learning Project uses ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode - a broadband fiber-optic networking system) to carry real-time interactive voice, video, and data across a state-wide network linking together geographically diverse sites throughout Maine. The MDLP network of schools is ever-evolving, and currently consists of 91 sites. All of the MDLP sites are geographically spread throughout the state of Maine and allow educators and students an opportunity to share ideas, thoughts and experiences that distance might otherwise prohibit.



What is the mission of the MDLP?

The mission of the Maine Distance Learning Project is "to provide all Maine students equity of access to a high quality learning environment that is unaffected by geographical limitations." In other words, the network and the ATM technology allow students access to educational opportunities that they might not otherwise have.

For example, in one semester students at Ellsworth HS received Japanese from Hall Dale HS, Searsport HS students received AP Calculus from Calais HS, and Hodgdon HS students were able to participate in an Accounting class provided by Katahdin HS.



What can the ATM network be used for?

The primary purpose of the MDLP is to offer credit classes that broadcast from one site and are received by up to three other sites. Currently, there are approximately 190 Maine students participating in about thirty high school academic courses via ATM.

Beyond credit courses, the ATM network can be used for short seminars in a regularly scheduled class, workshops, and virtual field trips. It can also be used for school and community meetings and conferences.



What about scheduling issues between sites?

To work around scheduling conflicts between sites, schools can form alliances with an eye toward allowing for coordination of school bell schedules.

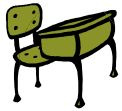
In addition, it is possible to develop working connections between schools with similar schedules, or schools prepared to adjust and tweak individual student schedules to allow them to receive academic offerings that they might not otherwise have had access to.

Why should we use the MDLP?



Forge connections

- Link with other schools in your district or union and across the state
- Demonstrate what your school has to offer



Expand student opportunities

- Give students the ability to take classes not offered at your school or that do not fit their schedule
- Provide a means for students to interact with students and professionals across the state
- Introduce projects, guest speakers, and seminars to the curriculum
- Take virtual trips to expose students to people and places that would otherwise be inaccessible
- Develop students' communication and presentation skills



Expand teacher opportunities

- Give your teachers the ability to enhance the classroom with technology
- Share resources, ideas, and activities with other schools
- Provide a communication device for discussions with other teachers



Bridge the gap

- Offer professional development opportunities
- Save on travel time by holding meetings and conferences via ATM

How can I find out more about the MDLP?



Visit the MDLP web site at www.mainedistancelearningproject.org to discover:

- Updated information on news and happenings in the world of MDLP
- A mechanism for communicating programming needs with other MDLP sites
- A way to make potential offerings available to other MDLP members
- A listing of K-16 ATM programming available to learners in Maine
- A resource for educators involved or interested in teaching over distance in Maine
- A vehicle for sharing the stories of Maine teacher successes in teaching over distance



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