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Special Needs Transportation: refer to TAB SO13

Value:

- The Department of Education provides school busing, city transit passes, and transportation subsidies to families to support students travelling safely and effectively to and from school.

Recommended Response

- For the 2024-2025 school year families were required to submit a registration for the school bus, with a deadline for registrations of June 14, 2024.
- Registrations received up to June 19th were processed and seats assigned for the start of the school year.
- Due to an influx of late registrations and special requests, some families received late notifications of seat assignments.
- Additional notices were issued to inform families of the communication delays due to transportation staff working on addressing these late requests.
- In response to bus capacity limitations, several student transportation routes have been revised. Consequently, some high school students who requested school busing have been given city transit passes.
- Transportation staff strive to accommodate all rider requests to the best of their ability. However, when adjustments to routes are necessary, several factors are considered to ensure fair and efficient service. These factors include:
 - Rider Location: The proximity of the rider's location to the available City Transit.
 - Rider Age: Priority is given to elementary-aged students for school bus accommodations to ensure their transportation needs are met effectively.

- Extenuating circumstances: Any specific reasons or conditions that might prevent the rider from using City Transit, such as medical or accessibility needs, are also considered.
- Transportation staff acknowledge the frustration faced by students due to prolonged bus travel times from Mendenhall Subdivision and the importance for students to arrive at school on time.
 - Education staff are actively exploring strategies to reduce driving times; however, due to multiple transfers and required stops, significant reductions in commute duration remain challenging.
 - Current schedules indicate that students traveling to St. Francis of Assisi in Riverdale are expected to arrive on time for the start of school.
 - Transportation staff will continue working closely with Standard Bus to ensure these schedules are upheld and that all children arrive safely and punctually.

Additional Response

- Standard Bus is responsible for notifying schools and families when there are bus route cancellations. We work with Standard to ensure notifications are sent out as early as possible. In some instances, routes may be cancelled for the day due to extreme weather conditions, unsafe road conditions, or driver shortages.
- We ask families to prepare an alternate plan when inclement weather and poor road conditions limit bus service.
- Efforts will be made to limit any service disruptions in Whitehorse, and we will continue to work with Standard Bus to develop contingency plans, which will include bringing in two out-of-territory drivers and combining routes where possible.

Busing

Education

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- Standard Bus has confirmed that as of November 1, 2024, all routes are fully staffed, with a pool of backup drivers in place to help prevent cancellations.
 - We acknowledge the impact cancelled bus routes can have on families and are working with Standard Bus to find solutions whenever possible.
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Context – this may be an issue because:

- Busing is a challenging topic as the department often receives a high volume of late registrations which make it difficult to accommodate. Additionally, routes are sometimes cancelled throughout the school year due to driver shortages, creating challenges for caregivers.
 - Potential concerns may arise with providing students with City Transit passes due to existing capacity and scheduling issues with City Transit.
 - Long commutes for high school students from Mendenhall into Whitehorse area schools.
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Background:

- In the fall 2024 there was an incident when a child fell asleep on a school bus and missed their drop off. The school bus driver demonstrated exceptional care when they discovered the child, promptly returning them to the school office to ensure the child's safety. The parents expressed appreciation for the driver's calm demeanor and the school's effective safety procedures.
- The Department of Education will continue to work with Standard Bus to ensure safety protocols that include monitoring student boarding and debarking are carried out to ensure all students are dropped at the correct locations.
- Recently the Department of Education was made aware of concerns regarding the Standard Bus decision to suspend school bus services beyond route Km 14 on the Annie Lake Road.
 - The Department's operations team is working with Standard Bus on the recent changes.
 - While discussions are underway, Standard Bus is not travelling past the KM 14 point on Annie Lake Road citing dangerous winter conditions.

- Standard Bus assessed the road conditions and determined that travelling beyond KM 14 poses significant safety risks for bus travel, including: unmaintained roadways, snow/ice on roadways, and unstable road surfaces.
 - The focus is on proactive measures to provide safety for the students and their staff.
 - Families that are impacted by the change in schedule and live 3.2 kilometers away can receive the transportation subsidy to cover travel costs to the KM 14 drop off location.
- In 2024 parents voiced concerns regarding bus safety on Range Road. Standard Bus addressed the concerns which included:
 - A route change to avoid traffic congestion, which impacted one bus stop.
 - The change requires passengers to cross the street at a designated crosswalk and this aligns with the crossing practices of other students in the area.
 - The decision made by Standard Bus was to improve service reliability, especially during cold weather.
 - The parents were informed on November 8, 2024 by email and phone.
- To ensure children's safety, parents are advised to bring their children to the school bus stops, to arrive early, to wait in safe zones, and always stop and look both ways before crossing the road, including at crosswalks.
- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee on matters affecting the delivery of shared bus services.
- There are 43 active bus routes in Whitehorse, and 12 in the communities (including Ross River).
- As of the start of the 2024-2025 school year there were approximately 2,200 registered riders for the school bus in Whitehorse.
- Since the start of the school year the department has received an estimate of about 500 late registrations and/or special requests which impacted our ability to respond in a timely manner.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, Standard Bus reported that all rural community routes will be staffed.

Busing

Education

- Families can sign up for “My School Bus Monitor” to receive email updates. They can also sign up for text notification with Standard Bus.

Transportation subsidy:

- If families live more than 3.2 km from the nearest school bus stop and the student goes to the catchment area school, they may apply for a transportation subsidy to offset the cost of driving.
- We are reviewing the student transportation program and subsidy level to ensure it supports the needs of families and those eligible for transportation allowances.
- We recognize that students with exceptional needs may require additional support, and we make every effort to accommodate students' transportation needs.

Act and Regulations

- The Education Act and the Student Transportation Regulations outline the Department of Education's responsibilities for student transportation.
- Transportation subsidies are mandated under s. 47 of the Education Act.
- If a student's home is more than 3.2 km by the nearest passable road from the school the student attends, the Minister must either provide transportation (i.e., busing) or an 'allowance for transportation and accommodation.'
- The Department of Education supports Yukon students by providing busing services (in all Yukon communities) including families that do not meet the eligibility requirements under the Education Act.
- Under the Student Transportation Regulations (O.I.C. 1991/069) the amount of the transportation allowance (limited to one per family) shall equal the Government of Yukon car mileage rate payable to public servants to a maximum amount prescribed by the Minister.
- Under Ministerial Order 2004/10, the maximum transportation allowance payable is \$13 per day.

Special requests

- In keeping with the Education Act and Student Transportation Regulations, student riders are first assigned a seat for transportation from home to school, and back.

Busing

Education

- Transportation to locations other than home is beyond the criteria for school busing and are considered special requests and are considered at the beginning of the school year based on available space and existing bus routes.
- The Student Transportation Ridership Guidelines outline how we consider accommodating students travelling to locations other than their home, for example to after-school activities or daycare.

Discipline and Behavior Management on Buses:

- The rules of the school apply while on the school bus and school Principals determine if an incident warrants suspension or expulsion from the bus.
- Standard Bus has a process to report incidents to schools when they happen on the bus.
- There may be occasions when drivers decide operationally, for health and safety reasons, to remove a student from the bus prior to leaving the school grounds or on route.
- When behavioral issues persist, schools work with Standard Bus and Education staff to come up with a solution. An example would be to develop a seating plan.
- Any suspensions for behavioral issues on the school bus will be handled and issued by the school Principal in alignment with the school disciplinary policies.

Contract

- Standard Bus was awarded the Student Transportation school bus contracts for both Whitehorse public schools and community public schools for 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27.
 - The 3-year contract total is \$12,685,573.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions is to create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions.
- Of the 81 positions beginning in 2023-24 fiscal year, we allocated:
 - 2023/24, 12 FTE allocated.
 - 2024/25, 3 FTE allocated.
 - 2025/26, FTE are to be confirmed.
- These positions will be served by two specific roles:
 - School Wellness Specialist – the minimum requirement is a Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent; and,
 - First Nation government-led wellness support, which we are developing in collaboration with First Nation governments – this could be an Elder, traditional knowledge keeper, or a traditional healer.
- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility in how we approach meeting a range of needs.

- Each school will have access to a school wellness specialist. This position is part of the team that supports students, teachers, families, and school communities.

Additional response – First Nation government-led wellness role:

- We have had conversations to begin the development of the First Nations government-led wellness support role.
- We are moving forward with First Nation governments as they are ready. We anticipate that the first of these roles will be ready to start supporting their community in fall 2024.
- These positions will provide culturally appropriate supports that meet the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs of students. These roles are not replacing other existing roles that are key to supporting students such as education liaison coordinators or education support workers.
- The roles will take time to continue developing as they will be specific to the needs of each individual First Nation and the school community.

Additional response – School Wellness Specialist:

- The role of a School Wellness Specialist is to provide a variety of direct supports to students, families, educators, and the community, which may range from assessments, counselling, consultation, programming, case management, and education, depending on the specific needs of individual schools and communities.
- The job description for the School Wellness Specialist role was developed with our partners at Mental health and Substance Use in 2023 and reviewed by Executive Directors of the School Boards, Superintendents. This position is identified as a Yukon Employees' Union (YEU) bargaining unit position.

- We are working with superintendents and school board executive directors to prioritize the School Wellness Specialist implementation over the next two years. The department is working with the First Nation School Board to set up six of these positions to report directly to the First Nation School Board instead of the department (5 for 204/25 school year and 1 for 2025/26 school year).
 - Five school wellness specialists were hired in the 2023-24 **school year**. They undertook important training and started working in some schools to support specific responses near the end of the school year.
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Context—this may be an issue because:

- The creation of these positions is a CASA commitment and there have been questions about whether there will be a position in every school.
 - Questions have been raised about whether these mental health support positions should be clinical counsellors.
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Background:

- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community, including clinical counselling services (supported through Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use branch).
 - The school counsellor plays a role in supporting the wellbeing of students. The department continues to hear that the duties of this role need to be more flexible to reflect a school community's needs and to address staffing challenges when filling these positions.
 - The department is partnering with Yukon First Nation governments and organizations to ensure that student support is culturally responsive and includes coordinated work with students and families through First Nation advocates, Education Support Workers, Community Education Liaison Coordinators, and the new First Nation government-led wellness support roles.
 - Carcross Tagish First Nation has a job description "Deadly Uncle" position and is ready to move forward. Tr'ondek Hwech'in is looking for support to create the
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framework for a position. In addition, the Gadzoosdaa Residence is looking for an Elder program to support the residence.

- The School Wellness Specialist position is another role in supporting the wellbeing of students. The position is classified as an SS15, the range can be from \$89,704 to \$104,043, which is in-line with other social work positions across Yukon government and is determined by the Public Service Commission's classification process.
 - Classification for other mental wellness related roles across Yukon government include:
 - School counsellors (YAEP): These roles are performed by teachers, meaning that the pay range is informed by years of work and levels of education. The range can be from \$79,142 to \$126,510.
 - Clinical Counsellors (YEU, Health and Social Services): the position is classified as an SS16, the range can be from \$94,501 to \$109,661.
- The job advertisement for the School Wellness Specialist was first posted on Yukon.ca in fall 2023 and recruitment continues.

School Year	Yukon Education		First Nation School Board		Commission Scolaire Francophone Du Yukon	
	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired
2023/24	6	2	5	0	1	1
2024/25	5 (Carried over from 23/24)	2	5 (Carried over from 23/24)	0	0	0
2025/26	To be determined					

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

EA Allocation Next steps and work with partners – refer to SSS01
EA-LAT Allocation in Schools - Chart– refer to HR03.1

Value

- All students deserve the support they need to meet their potential.

Recommended response:

- The allocation of educational assistants (EAs) in schools across the territory is a collaborative process involving Student Support Services, superintendents and school board executive directors, principals and learning assistance teachers.
- All partners play a valuable role in ensuring that students receive support to learn and be included. There is a range of student support available, and an educational assistant is one of the most intensive options.
- Both the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon have requested to manage their own EA allocation process.
- The process for the Yukon Education schools is as follows:
 1. Student Support Services shares material for school staff to request EA support for their students. This material includes an evidence-informed rubric for shared and intensive support that considers areas like the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, medical needs and social-emotional skills.
 2. School staff complete this paperwork and share it back with Student Support Services through their superintendents.
 3. As needed, Student Support Services, school staff and superintendents discuss the requests for EA support.

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

4. Student Support Services assigns educational assistance support for each school based on conversations, needs-informed evaluation and budgeted full-time equivalents.
 5. Schools work with human resources to hire educational assistants.
 6. Principals assign educational assistants within their school based on need.
- There are additional considerations for these educational assistant allocations based on factors such as: managing transitions from the Child Development Centre, transitions between elementary and secondary school, and students moving into and within the territory throughout the year.
 - In the spring of 2024, the allocation process for the 2024-25 school year for Yukon education schools was paused due to ongoing consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and work with broader system partners. To respect this work, we allocated EAs for these schools based on the 2023-24 numbers.
 - For the 2024-2025 school year, as of September 4, 2024, there are a total of 338.86 FTEs for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants.

Additional response:

- Under the updated Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers, starting in the 2023-24 school year.
- For the 2023-24 school year, 40 new positions were added. These positions include educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists. We were pleased to provide

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

additional support with direct benefits to our students and learner outcomes.

- For the 2024-25 school year, 21 new positions are being added:
 - 14 educational assistants
 - 4 learning assistance teachers
 - 3 school wellness specialists
- 20 new positions will be added in the following year, 2025-26.
- These time-limited supports will help address the increasing need across the territory's education system.
- For the 2024-25 school year, as of September 4, 2024, there are just over 330 FTEs for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants and hires have been completed across all schools in the Yukon:
 - approximately 50 FTEs for learning assistance teachers, and 280 FTEs for educational assistants.

Context:

- The Department has seen a significant increase in EA requests from schools.
- There is CASA commitment to increase EAs and learning assistance teachers in schools for the 2023-24, 2024-25 (current) and 2025-26 academic years.

Background:

- The allocation for the 2024-25 school year Yukon Education authority schools was based on the actual EA hires as of March 2024 due to the spring 2024 pause in updates to the allocation process.
- Allocation numbers for schools can vary each year as school and students' needs and school enrolments change.

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

- When appropriate, the department supports students with developing independence and self-advocacy skills. When progress is made, the need for EA support may be reduced after evaluating their successful skill development.
- School administrators continue to be responsible for determining day-to-day EA schedules to maximize meeting both individual and shared needs of students, when appropriate.
- There is an increase in EA allocation requests from schools. Schools are still focused on recovery from the pandemic years and working to better understand the needs of students and how best to support their educational programming.

Educational assistant allocation

	Budget FTE EA Allocation	Budget \$	Note:
2024-25 Mains	275.4	\$18.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and 10 new for 2024-25 CASA commitments and 13 for 2023-24 CASA commitments that were not included in 2023-24 Mains. Funding for CASA commitments were provided at a subsequent budgeting exercise
2023-24 Supplementary #2	251.4	\$18.6M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA FTE were added in 2023-24 Mains and personnel funding was provided in Supp #2
2023-24 Mains	251.4	\$18.1M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA commitments were added in supplementary 2023-24 budget exercises (13 new for 2023-24)
2022-23 Mains	249.9	\$17.3M	Includes CSFY and FNSB
2021-22 Mains	248.4	\$16.2M	Includes CSFY
2020-21 Mains	245.4	\$15.9M	Includes CSFY
2019-20 Mains	245.4	\$15.1M	Includes CSFY

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

Note: numbers can fluctuate depending on need, hiring timelines and other factors.

Educational assistant allocation process

- In 2015-16, an 'Educational Assistant Allocation Advisory Committee' recommended a needs-based allocation process. Within this process:
 - Each school assesses its needs and submits a request for educational assistants to the Schools and Student Services Branch.
 - The Student Support Services staff review the schools' requests and use a needs-informed formula to initially allocate educational assistants.
 - Adjustments may be made if the assessed request total exceeds the number of EA positions available.
 - Educational assistants are allocated to schools in the spring, and the principal assigns them within the school to best meet student needs.
 - At the beginning of the new school year, adjustments are made to the allocations based on actual student enrolment, needs at each school, the number of applications received, and positions filled.
 - Allocations may be further adjusted during a school year as needs change.
 - We receive more requests for EAs from schools than we have in FTEs, and Student Support Services is looking at different ways we can meet a student's unique needs as part of the work in Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Value:

- All students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Recommended response:

- Allegations were raised about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion at three schools:
 - Jack Hulland Elementary School, in the fall of 2023
 - JV Clark School in Mayo on May 11, 2024
 - St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction on July 22, 2024
- We continue to communicate with families, caregivers and staff that there is a range of free-of-charge supports, as we navigate these complex matters.

Investigations and legal matters—holds and restraints:

- As an employer, we have an obligation and are committed to learning more about the conduct of our employees and what happened.
- We fully cooperated with the RCMP's criminal investigation at Jack Hulland School, which has been completed, pending their final report being shared with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada.
- We are working with the Department of Justice on civil lawsuits. Given these are ongoing matters before the courts, we will not be commenting on the specific allegations outlined in the statements of claim.
- These matters are complex and of a most serious nature and will take time to complete.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Managing student behaviour:

- We have trained all Yukon administrators, teachers and staff on new policies and procedures for preventing harm to students as part of the Student Protection Policy.
- We continue to offer regular training sessions on Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® training sessions, which is the standard for managing student behaviours in a positive manner.
- We have clarified expectations for staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion when managing student behaviour. The use of seclusion is unacceptable. Physical holds or restraints are to be used only by persons trained and certified in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Module 6, and only when there is imminent risk of serious physical harm.
 - The Student Protection Policy has been fully implemented, and the expectation for safe treatment of all schools is now clearly communicated to staff.
- In addition, we have increased oversight on Workplace Risk Assessments (WRAs). A Workplace Risk Assessment must be completed any time a hold occurs.
- We have made a commitment to significantly increase school-level supports to strengthen student learning and wellbeing. This includes the addition of 81 new full-time student support positions over the period of 2023-26, subject to legislative approval.
- The Government of Yukon has also committed to \$1 million investment annually over that same period to improve mental health outcomes for youth, subject to legislative approval.
- We will ensure both students and staff are supported to uphold safe and inclusive learning environments.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Requests for student records:

- The Department of Education fully cooperates with the RCMP during their investigations.
- All student record requests that were on hold due to the RCMP investigations have been completed.
- Any further questions regarding RCMP investigations should be referred to the RCMP.

Administration / supporting staff:

- There is a dedicated team of teachers and staff at Jack Hulland school, J.V. Clarke and St. Elias Community schools. The administrative teams are focused on moving the schools forward in a good way.
- Since November 2021, we've maintained communication with the Jack Hulland school community, providing regular updates and sharing information when we are able.
- We've provided information on support and encouraged families to reach out to the RCMP with information that may have been relevant to their investigation.
- A range of free-of-charge and confidential support continues to be available to school communities.
- We will continue to work with school administration, school council and school boards, on staff support and initiatives as needed.

Communications:

- We will communicate information as we are able to and as it becomes available.
- We continue to remind and encourage families and staff of the resource support available to them, including a dedicated support person that is

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

available to help families navigate the information and support that is available.

Child and Youth Advocate Office:

- We are working with the Child and Youth Advocate on a case-by-case basis to directly support past and present students and families of Jack Hulland School.
 - We will continue to provide updates to the Child and Youth Advocate on the government's ongoing response.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On September 11th, 2023, the RCMP informed the JHES School community they have concluded their investigation, and their final report was forwarded to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada in June 2024.
 - A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, naming the Yukon government and JHES School Council as defendants. The JHES School Council was subsequently dropped from the claim.
 - A decision released September 6, 2023, certified the claim as a class action.
 - A statement of claim for the JV Clark School on July 22, 2024, and a statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 11, 2024
-

Background:

- In November 2021, the Area Superintendent for Jack Hulland Elementary School received information from the acting school principal that there could be school-wide physical abuse of students through inappropriate use of holds and isolation rooms as a means to restrain and address student behaviour.
- Violence at Jack Hulland Elementary School has previously been described as student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher and largely focused on a shared resource program that supports students with behavioural needs (Grove Street program).

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

- RCMP and Family and Children's Services were engaged on November 19, 2021. Production orders for records were completed to RCMP's satisfaction.
- A law group was engaged to conduct the employer's fact-finding investigation using duplicate copies of all the same materials that were disclosed to the RCMP, including Workplace Risk Assessments and other reports involving the use of holds and isolation rooms produced over the last 5 years. A Workplace Risk Assessment must be completed and submitted to the Student Support Services Unit when students demonstrate escalated behavior that may be harmful to others.
- The initial findings from the law group received in April 2022, suggested concerns that holds, restraints and seclusion were not used as a last resort or in situations of imminent danger, but rather for matters of non-compliance or not following the direction of staff.
- As the employer, we have an obligation to address these concerns and prevent future harm and will continue to take this matter seriously.
- Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training – an industry standard training – to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts.
- In May 2022, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter clarifying the employer's expectations of Educators in respect to managing student behavior.
- On May 5, 2022, information was also shared with families, and a meeting was held with participation from Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, to the Yukon Supreme Court by two plaintiffs and their guardians against the Department of Education and Jack Hulland Elementary School Council for holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff.
- Legal counsel for the Department of Education has filed a defense to the class action lawsuit that was submitted in mid-February 2023.
- In May 2023 the Yukon Supreme Court agreed to dismiss the action against the school council.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

- June 26 – 29, 2023 a hearing was held to determine if the lawsuit should be a class action.
- September 6, 2023, the lawsuit was certified as a class action on behalf of all students "who were subject to holds and restraints and who were locked in a room and/or placed in seclusion" at the school between Jan. 1, 2007, and June 30, 2022, except for individual accusations of assault and confinement.
- The RCMP have concluded their investigation and are submitted a final report to with the Public Prosecution Office of Canada in June 2024.
- A statement of claim for the JV Clark School on July 22, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on August 20, 2024.
- A statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 11, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on July 19, 2024.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-09

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- For the start of the school year, our top priority is ensuring that every school has access to at least one potable water source that meets the latest drinking water standards for lead.
- Education has contracted a third-party contractor to complete water sampling and testing. The contract commenced on October 7th, 2024.
- Confirmatory water testing will be carried out on all classroom fixtures, drinking fountains and kitchen fixtures to ensure continued compliance with safe drinking water guidelines, with completion expected by the end of December.
- All Yukon schools have access to clearly identified fixtures with potable water.
- Remediation and testing on all critical fixtures will be an ongoing project.
- Education has been working collaboratively with Environmental Health Services and Chief Medical Officer to develop the plan for routine monitoring of school drinking water.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the spring of 2024, levels of lead in some schools exceeded recommended standards.
-

Background:

- On April 23, 2024, the water testing and remediation action plan was shared with the Department of Highway and Public Works, Environmental Health Director and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- A meeting took place on May 27, 2024, where the departments of Education, HPW, and Environmental Health, and Chief Medical Office of Health discussed how Education and Facilities Management will manage to meet the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- Weekly meetings continue to be scheduled with representatives from the EDU, HPW, EHS and the CMOH to ensure work remains on schedule.
- EHS and EDU have identified water sampling strategy including objective.
 - Investigative – No previous data
 - Confirmation – This type of sampling can be performed on fixtures that have already had sampling/work done to verify efficacy
 - Monitoring – Regular schedule and as needed sampling of potable sources
- HPW contracted a third party to install filters at all Elkay water stations, and the work has been completed.
 - An Elkay water filter is a type of filtration system designed to improve the quality of drinking water. These filters typically work to reduce contaminants such as chlorine, lead, and other impurities, ensuring cleaner and better-tasting water.
 - Education has contracted a third-party contractor to complete compliance and monitoring testing in all schools tested in 2018 -2020. This work commenced October 7th with completion expected by the end of the 2024 calendar year.
 - All schools will be tested by the end of 2024.
- A critical fixture is a fixture used for drinking water and food preparation. These fixtures are most likely to be used for consumption. Examples of critical fixtures are hallway drinking fountains, kitchen faucets in staff rooms, home education rooms, cafeteria, classroom sinks.

- Non-critical fixtures include janitor's sinks and bathroom sinks. These fixtures are less likely to be used for consumption. These faucets are not designated for use for drinking or food preparation.
- The initial project timeline, established in May 2024, did not adequately account for the complexity and scope of tasks. Key factors such as the time required to identify human resources, acquire essential materials, navigate the logistical challenges of various school locations, and determining the optimal timing for water testing were underestimated. This resulted in missed milestones and necessitated a revised schedule to align with more realistic timeframes and resource availability.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum: refer to CU05

Curriculum Resource Material Review – Catholic Curriculum: refer to CU02

School Council Code of Conduct: refer to EP05

Value:

- The Department of Education values diversity in its school communities and wants to provide safe, welcoming, inclusive, and affirming learning environments for all students.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- People of all sexual orientations, gender identities, ancestry, places of origin, ethnicities, citizenships, religions, ages and abilities have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- School authorities work with their entire school community to develop and implement proactive strategies that support the inclusion, respect and dignity of 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their families.
- Parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to contact their child's school for information on how Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity inclusive education is being implemented. This includes details about safe spaces, contacts, activities, and organizations that promote equality and non-discrimination in Yukon schools.

Action plan:

- The Department of Education updated its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, also known as SOGI, policy in August 2023, as outlined in the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- When we released the SOGI policy update, we committed to further work, including clarifying gender identity inclusion in sports.
- As part of our continued SOGI policy review, we are looking at the best ways to support schools to implement the policy in schools.

Yukon Child and Youth Advocate review

- In June of 2024, the Government of Yukon announced that it has referred the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- This referral asks the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's Office to assess the SOGI policy's current impact and make recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe schools and school communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

ARC Foundation:

- In the fall of 2023, the department contracted the ARC Foundation, a charitable foundation, to help educators implement the SOGI policy and foster more inclusive schools. The foundation is providing the tools and resources of the SOGI 1,2,3 program.
- The SOGI policy requires schools to develop school-based procedures and guidelines. Schools, school boards and councils have the support of the Department of Education, and guidance of best practices from the ARC Foundation.
- As Minister of Education and the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, I am fully committed to the ongoing implementation of the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and am encouraging the two departments to collaborate on this priority.

Catholic school parent concerns about textbook:

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- While Catholic schools have the right to provide religious education programs and lessons that teach Catholic values to their students, they do not have the right to provide teachings about sexual orientation or gender identity that are inconsistent with Yukon's laws and Department of Education policies.
- Catholic schools in the Yukon are public schools, and Catholic educators are Yukon public servants. All schools and teachers must adhere to all Government of Yukon legislation and policies.
- There is no place for homophobic or transphobic teachings in our public school system.
- We remain committed to working with the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to jointly review instructional resources and materials that uphold and teach Catholic values and align with Yukon law and Department of Education policies.

Education Act Amendments response:

- In spring 2022, the Government of Yukon was pleased to support amendments to the *Education Act* to promote equity and non-discrimination and to ensure that all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- We continue to encourage and support schools to meet their legal obligations to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is considerable interest in how Yukon schools are offering safe and inclusive environments to 2SLGBTQIA+ students, including the SOGI policy's statement that schools will recognize people's correct pronouns, as declared by the individuals themselves. This requirement applies to students who have not made official changes to their name or gender in school records.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- SOGI 1, 2, 3 implementation in other provinces has been under scrutiny.
-

Background:

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and SOGI Policy

- Our updated SOGI policy notes:
 - “The SOGI policy has always applied to all school-sponsored activities, and trans students continue to be protected and entitled to support.”
 - “The next rounds of evaluation will include deeper discussions around how to better proactively foster inclusion, with consideration for the inclusion of trans students in sports.”
- Some people believe that schools should tell a parent/guardian if their child wants to be called by a name or pronouns other than their official name/pronouns. The policy states that the “Department of Education values diversity in its school communities and wants to provide safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming learning environments for all students.”
- While we understand the importance of involving parents in the lives of their children, the issue is a delicate one that must consider the human rights of students, particularly those who are transgender or nonbinary. We believe that schools should involve parents when there is a specific problem or issue that could impact the child's safety, wellbeing, or education.
- Training and resources are offered to all staff. Further training is required for staff members and counsellors identified as safe contacts to prepare them to respond knowledgeably to 2SLGBTQIA+ students and students with 2SLGBTQIA+ family members.
- Yukon schools have a number of universal, stand-alone washrooms available, and we are working to ensure that all school facilities have stand-alone or gender-neutral washrooms. Building standards have now been updated to ensure new schools will have gender inclusive washrooms.
- In the 2021 LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, the Department of Education made a number of commitments, including to update the SOGI policy.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- The August 2023 updates to the SOGI policy address issues such as use of a student's correct gender pronouns, update terminology to be trans-inclusive, address gender-identity inclusion in sports, and clarify points of contact and responsibilities at the department and school levels.
- On March 23, 2022, the opposition asked the Minister to commit to engaging with the school community to update the SOGI policy before the end of the current school year (June 2022).
- The funding agreement for Catholic schools in the Yukon accommodates religious instruction while emphasizing that they are publicly supported schools with the same responsibilities as other schools, including those identified in the SOGI policy.

Education Act

- Amendments to the *Education Act* make it a legal requirement for Principals to ensure that initiatives and activities in schools are inclusive of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- School administrators have been provided with information about their legislative responsibilities as well as reference materials and resources.
- Counsellors and administrators have been provided with local and national SOGI and Gender and Sexuality Alliance information.
- At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year the Department of Education provided professional development training to administrators and teachers on the requirements of the Education Act and the SOGI and Safe and Caring Schools policies.
- Several Yukon schools have Gender and Sexuality Alliances and other 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives.

Catholic school parent concerns about textbook

- Following a comprehensive review by Department of Education personnel and St. Francis staff members, a new textbook was selected for use in the Grade 12 Morals and Ethics course at St. Francis for the 2024-25 school year.
- This review was part of Yukon Education's commitment that all educational materials align with both St. Francis' curriculum and the Department of Education's policies.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- The Catholic Episcopal Corporation and the Department of Education are both pleased with this outcome and will continue to review resources and support educators in delivering Catholic education in line with the department's policies.

Catholic school concern about school council meeting comments

- Holy Family School Council held a meeting in June 2024 where a School Council member is noted to have made comments that run counter to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (SOGI) policy ("marriage is between a man and woman" and that "homosexuality and pride are deadly sins").
- After this comment was made by a School Council member, a teacher at Holy Family left the meeting. The teacher feels that the comment violated the Department of Education's SOGI policy.
- The teacher complained to the Department of Education asking for the removal of the School Council Member and was informed that the Department does not have the authority to remove an Elected Council Member.
- The teacher indicated that the Education Act allows for an application to the court to determine a removal. The teacher also said the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification policy does not adequately address what should happen when it is violated and does not feel supported by the Department of Education and is upset that there have been no consequences (removal of School Council Member) and has since indicated that they have filed a human rights complaint.
- The Department of Education will support Holy Family's administration and School Council to extend a code of conduct into the operations.
- The Department will follow up with Holy Family School Council Chair to deal with this matter and to ensure the policy is being respected.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-26

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to DPT11
Student to Student Harm in Schools: refer to HOT13/SSS04

Value:

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students when they are in our care, at any school in our educational system.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- Since the Safer Schools Action Plan's release, we have done significant work to ensure safe learning environments, and we are committed to supporting students, teachers, and families.
- The action items in the Safer Schools Action Plan emphasized creating safe and caring environments, transparency, accountability, victim-centered approaches, collaboration, and reconciliation in education settings.
- Although the Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented, the work to ensure students are safe at school will never end.

Additional response:

- We continue to work on actions to build back trust and repair and restore confidence in our ability to respond to critical incidents and support school communities.
- We continue to take meaningful steps to improve government-wide coordination in response to critical incidents so that we ensure timely and appropriate supports for children, their families, and the school community.

- We continue to work hard to address policy gaps and enhance safety and oversight mechanisms across all departments and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
 - A few highlights of our ongoing work:
 - We have ongoing training for school-based staff in the requirements of safer schools.
 - We are working on updates to policy and procedure documents to reflect recent recommendations by the Ombudsman.
 - We will be forming a Yukon Parent Advisory Committee to support identification of safety and wellness issues in Yukon schools so we can continue to make well-informed decisions to improve safety for all students in Yukon Schools.
 - We are planning engagement with other government departments, partners, Yukon First Nations and other education partners to enhance prevention and responses to student-to-student harm.
 - We are evaluating how to better support schools, students, families and our contracted school bus services to improve safety for all who ride school buses.
 - In 2023, we updated our Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy and are actively progressing work through our Reimaging Inclusive and Special Education initiative to ensure the creation of inclusive and welcoming learning environments for everyone.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Ombudsman's office released the second of its two reports on the Safer Schools Action Plan on February 27, 2024, and the Government of Yukon provided the Ombudsman's office with a progress update on August 27, 2024.
-

Background:

- The Government of Yukon announced in a news release on June 20, 2023, full implementation of Safer Schools Action Plan.
-

- Key advancements include:
 - Implementation of new policies and procedures for preventing and responding to harm by adults, including guidance for information sharing and reporting allegations to the RCMP (actions 1 and 6).
 - Completion of actions 2, 3, 11, 18 and 20, focused on enhancing corporate guidance and leadership capacity across the organization to improve coordination and response management of critical incidents.
 - The development of comprehensive victim support plans (action 4).
 - A new joint agreement between the departments of Education and Health and Social Services regarding interdepartmental operations and communication when a child's safety is, or is likely to be, at risk (action 7).
 - New corporate procedures and guidance for responding to situations where employees are charged, convicted, or under investigation for criminal conduct, including improved information sharing with the RCMP within the bounds of appropriate legislation (action 8).
 - Completion of training and new requirements for all school-based staff on preventing and responding to harm by adults (action 10, 13 and 14).
 - Implementation of new onboarding practices for all school-based and administrative staff (action 12).
 - Development of processes to strengthen the collection, maintenance and archiving of the assignment of adults who work with students in school-related activities (action 15).
 - Development of a process for ongoing review of policies, procedures and best practices for higher risk educational settings (action 17).
 - Finalization of a Values and Ethics Code for Government of Yukon public servants (action 21).
 - Finalization of a new government-wide communications policy that outlines roles and responsibilities of the public service for leading internal and external communications related to critical incidents and emergencies (action 22); and,
 - An updated temporary assignment directive to provide employees with development opportunities and encourage sharing and networking between departments (action 23).

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT07/DPT14

Fall 2024

Safer Schools

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

For School Capacity: refer to SP04

For Building Schools - 5 year Capital Plan: refer to SO02

For Modular Classrooms: refer to SO07

For School Growth Planning: refer to SP10

Value:

- School facilities are important spaces that host a variety of activities and support vibrant communities.

Recommended response:

- As Whitehorse continues to see steady population growth, our school facilities need to grow and adapt to meet the needs of the student population.
- The Department of Education routinely gathers data and input from school communities to plan their short, medium and long-term needs.
- The secondary school buildings in Whitehorse are more than large enough to accommodate the number of Grade 8-to-12 students enrolled across the system.
- We recognize that enrolment levels are approaching operational capacity in some schools.

Additional response:

- Our schools are built for operational flexibility in terms of a school's grade structures, programs and scheduling, and specialized courses.
- We continue to look at the many factors that impact enrolment pressure across the school system, including out-of-catchment-area enrolment, and how space at schools can be used most efficiently.
- We will continue to have conversations with Yukon school communities and school boards about facility needs as we plan for future school projects.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised in the House, in the media, and from school councils on how the department will deal with schools that are nearing or exceeding their operational capacity.
-

Background:

- Capital planning decisions are made based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs and emerging enrolment trends and pressures.
- Students wishing to attend a secondary school outside their catchment area must complete an out-of-area request.
 - For the 2024-25 school year, these requests are being more carefully considered if the student wants to attend a school experiencing enrolment pressures.
- We are undertaking a holistic catchment analysis of Whitehorse high schools, including out-of-area enrolment at F.H. Collins Secondary School.
- F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed as a high school with the possibility to accommodate a school expansion in the future.
- Currently, this school is at 99 per cent capacity and long-term capital planning will include options for expansion.
- For the 2024-25 school year 12 students from the FH Collins catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at FH Collins when those students attempted to register.
- Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify the need for additional space.
- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan.
- We are working with Highways and Public Works on a multi-year procurement and placement program to place new and replace aging modulars at Yukon schools.
- Schools make daily decisions about how to manage their operational capacity. For

School Capacity

Education

example, schools that are above operational capacity may repurpose spaces in facilities or alter class schedules to optimize use.

School	Enrolment Oct 2024	Operational capacity	Capacity (%)
Christ the King Elementary	354	294	120%
École Whitehorse Elementary School	451	459	99%
Elijah Smith Elementary School	278	330	83%
Golden Horn Elementary School	247	216	114%
Grey Mountain Primary School	86	67	128%
Hidden Valley Elementary School	184	142	130%
Holy Family Elementary School	184	147	125%
Jack Hulland Elementary School	313	351	89%
Selkirk Elementary School	372	302	122%
Takhini Elementary School	156	222	71%
Whistle Bend Elementary School	220	306	71%
École Émilie-Tremblay (K-6)	219	358	61%
CSSC Mercier	159	150	107%
F.H. Collins Secondary School	740	744	99%
Porter Creek Secondary School	570	765	75%
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	464	518	88%

- Operational Capacity of a school is based on the number of classrooms and teaching spaces and the school's grade structure. Class size maximums are part of the YAEP collective agreement.
- The City of Whitehorse's building inspection team has determined that the occupancy capacity of F.H. Collins is 1,630 persons. This contrasts with the school's operational capacity of 744 students. Occupancy capacity is determined by the building and fire codes.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-14

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- School Councils play a critical role as key partners in the Yukon education system.

Recommended response

- School Councils support two-way communication between a school and the school community by supporting decision making and contributing to the success of students.
- Every School Council may make rules for its internal procedures and meetings. This can include a values and ethics code or code of conduct.
- The department will support a School Council with the creation and implementation of a code of conduct if requested.
- The Catholic Education Association of Yukon and Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees have code of conducts available to view on their respective websites

Additional response:

- The Minister of Education has no authority to revoke any individual publicly elected members from a School Council.
- School Councils participate in the development of school-based policies, rules and procedures and shall consider any advice provided to it by the school administration and staff.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been stories in the media and a human rights complaint made, calling for the removal of a Holy Family School Council member.
-

Background:

- According to the Education Act, the chair of a School Council may exclude someone from a meeting who, in the opinion of the chair, is guilty of improper conduct at that meeting. This decision by the chair can be overruled by the School Council via resolution.
- The authority to determine whether an elected School Council member is qualified to remain a member rests with a judge. The criteria for the disqualification of a School Council member is specific and is listed in the Education Act.
- Holy Family School Council held a meeting in June 2024 where a School Council member is noted to have made comments that run counter to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (SOGI) policy ("marriage is between a man and woman" and that "homosexuality and pride are deadly sins").
- After this comment was made by a School Council member, a teacher at Holy Family left the meeting. The teacher feels that the comment violated the Department of Education's SOGI policy.
- The teacher complained to the Department of Education asking for the removal of the School Council Member and was informed that the Department does not have the authority to remove an Elected Council Member.
- The teacher indicated that the Education Act allows for an application to the court to determine a removal. The teacher also said the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification policy does not adequately address what should happen when it is violated and does not feel supported by the Department of Education and is upset that there have been no consequences (removal of School Council Member) and has since indicated that they have filed a human rights complaint.
- The Department of Education will support Holy Family's administration and School Council to extend a code of conduct into the operations.
- The Department will follow up with Holy Family School Council Chair to deal with this matter and to ensure the policy is being respected.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT09/EP05

Fall 2024

School Council Code of Conduct

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

Value:

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school and it is a priority to attract and retain the best educators.

Recommended response:

- The ongoing national labour shortage and limited housing options, particularly in rural communities, continue to impact our overall school staffing recruitment efforts.
- For the 2024-25 school year, we are taking many strategic recruitment actions:
 - We posted positions earlier to be more competitive with other jurisdictions.
 - We visited three universities, and placed advertising on Yuwin, Employment Central, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
 - As of September 9, 2024, human resource consultants have attended six in-person education career fairs in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta.
 - On May 9 and 10, 2024, Human Resources, the First Nation School Board, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals attended an Outdoor Education Job Fair and Conference in Alberta.
 - On September 9, 2024, Human Resources attended a job fair hosted by Simon Fraser University.
 - On November 8, 2024, Human Resources attended a career fair hosted by Lakehead Orillia Faculty of Education.
 - These steps support our recruitment efforts.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- We work to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- On November 13, 2024 we launched a recruitment video which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
 - This video will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- & Post-Intensive French, and la Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- We began posting for the Whistle Bend Elementary School in January 2024. All other school educator postings began in April 2024.
- The new CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million in the next budget to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- As per the CASA, we will also provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.
- We have an updated training plan timeline to move this work forward, which has recently been shared with our partners. We have been consulting and collaborating with our partners and education stakeholders, and we will continue to do so.
- We are dedicated to working collaboratively and in the best interests of both Yukon learners and Yukon educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. We are committed to getting this work done.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- This is important work to ensure that educators and learners alike are supported in a good way. We are happy to be hearing from our partners and education stakeholders that they, too, want to continue to collaborate and consult.

Additional response:

Temporary vacancy management

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by administrators, and I commend our administration teams for their ability to effectively adjust where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:
 - temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments,
 - adjustments to student learning groups; and
 - the use of teachers on call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of superintendents to schools under the authority of Yukon Education, or regrouping students, will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.
- If the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* is invoked, employees could be redeployed to other tasks and responsibilities. Classroom operations in the school system do not constitute an emergency under CEMA.
- The Public Service Commission and the Department of Education are working together to identify and implement new initiatives to address teacher shortages. This ensures our students will have the necessary

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

in-classroom support that enables Yukon students to succeed in their educational journey.

Rural recruitment

- Recruitment for education staff and office administration is often a challenge in rural communities.
- This is especially true when recruiting for less than full-time positions, which is often the case as per the staffing allocation.
- Staffing allocations are based on the number of students, with special provisions made for small, rural schools.

Psychological wellbeing

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
 - Health, safety and wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace,
 - Our Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
 - Conflict Management Services, formerly known as the Respectful Workplace Office, as another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

Teachers on call (TOCs)

- As of November 19, 2024, there are 227 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon School Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 30 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- Note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs have accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of October 23, 2023, there were 181 registered TOCs hired across all three school authorities, with 44 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers from last year DO include the First Nation School Board.
- We continue to recruit teachers on call and recognize that demand for coverage continues to be a challenge.
- We continue to evolve our recruitment efforts to attract candidates for teacher on call roles and to support staff in accepting assignments as they are available. For example, we have enhanced our promotion of teacher on call opportunities specific to each community and are continuing to take steps to improve the experience that teacher on call candidates have throughout each step of our recruitment process.
- We have increased advertising on Facebook, in universities, on Yuwin, Employment Central, and other recruitment sites.
- We sent targeted communications to former teachers on call, retirees, candidates from the Apply to Education registry, and applicants from educational assistant competitions.
- We are working with leaders in community schools to schedule in-person recruitment days, to promote teacher on call opportunities and provide information to community members who may be interested in applying.
- During the 2023-2024 school year, human resources partnered with three schools to host school open houses, at Robert Service School in

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

Dawson City, École Selkirk Elementary School and Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse.

- For the 2024 - 2025 school year, human resources is scheduled to host school open houses at Robert Service School in Dawson City and Golden Horn Elementary School in Whitehorse.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Teacher and principal vacancies are an ongoing topic in media coverage with concerns expressed by both opposition and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
-

Background:

- Teachers on call fill in as needed when staff are absent from work for short periods of time. Teachers on call come from a range of educational backgrounds. They became part of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals in 2018, and their rate of pay is subject to negotiation in collective bargaining.
- Similar to other jurisdictions across Canada, we have experienced challenges in hiring qualified teachers.
- We do not have rules preventing staff with jobs in one school from applying for other vacancies in the summer, which can result in a “domino effect” of postings. This also affects teachers on call availability, as some teachers on call are successful in competing for vacant positions and are subsequently removed from the teachers on call list.
- Teachers on call were sent from Whitehorse to our communities throughout the 2023-24 year to support school needs and will continue to be sent for the 2024-25 school year, as needed.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Graduation rates are an important metric to assess the performance of the school system and support effective decision-making.

Recommended response:

- The department is committed to providing every opportunity for students to graduate and we recognize students follow diverse paths through their educational journey.
- As much as possible, the department follows current British Columbia methodology for calculating graduation rates as we share both curriculum and our student information with British Columbia.
- British Columbia is adding additional graduation rate analyses, and the Yukon is looking how these changes can be applied in the Yukon context.

Additional response:

- Every jurisdiction, including the Yukon, faces challenges with tracking students who stop regularly attending school, complicating the accurate calculation of withdrawal, outmigration, and drop-out rates. We are working to improve our processes and systems to improve our tracking.
- The department is in the process of building a data warehouse to improve the reliability of our data. A data warehouse provides a single, unified repository for the department's data which will significantly improve data reliability and support advanced reporting and analytics.
- Education has engaged the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to validate its student data and graduation rate calculation methodologies. Education intends to continue this collaboration to ensure the most accurate data and analysis possible.

- The department has begun exploring potential attendance policy and procedure changes to improve tracking of withdrawals and outmigration from the Yukon education system.
 - Additionally, the department is developing strategies to improve student outcomes which will guide future changes to how graduation and other metrics are calculated and reported, including Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education, the planned Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, and supporting the development of the Joint Education Action Plan.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since December 2023, there have been numerous inquiries in the House regarding graduation rates.
-

Background

- British Columbia is moving to the “First-time in Grade 12 Graduation Rate” and has added “5-year” and “7-year Graduation Rate” analyses to the current “6-year Graduation Rate” calculation.
 - Analyzing complex student data is challenging and graduation rate calculations are tied to understanding the entire student population. Larger jurisdictions rely on estimating this data, which is not a statistically viable option for the Yukon.
 - On June 4, 2024, a news release from the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate alleged the department is intentionally inflating graduation numbers to make rates look better.
 - Yukon First Nations Education Directorate takes a different approach to calculating graduation rates than the Department of Education. YFNED calculations treat all students who did not graduate within five years as drop-outs and simply divides the number of Dogwood graduates in a cohort by the number of students who originally enrolled in Grade 8.
 - There are many reasons why students may not graduate from a Yukon secondary school within five years. For example, students may have moved to a different
-

jurisdiction, graduated with an Adult Dogwood Diploma or an Evergreen School Completion Certificate, or may have enrolled in an online program based outside of the Yukon without notifying their school.

Mary Cameron	2024-10-24
Deputy Minister, Department of Education	Date approved

Value:

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff in Yukon Schools is our priority.

Recommended response:

- We know that many jurisdictions, including British Columbia have recently announced personal device use restrictions in schools for the 2024-25 school year. The restrictions aim to reduce classroom distractions, promote wellbeing, foster online safety, and ensure consistency.
- You may be interested in the fact that 13 schools across the Yukon have implemented similar policies, each tailored to their community needs. The policies were implemented in collaboration with their school councils and communities, where they established personal device use rules or codes of conduct.
- I'm excited to share that our department plans to develop formal guidance to help schools manage personal device usage. This initiative will foster student well-being, enhance online safety, and reduce classroom distractions while acknowledging technology's potential educational benefits when used appropriately.

Additional response:

- Schools determine the unique requirements to support staff and student wellbeing.
- Rules, guidelines, and lessons about online safety are used to keep students safe in Yukon schools. This includes teaching students about digital citizenship and ethical online behaviour.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Student personal device usage in the Yukon has become a topic of discussion due to concerns about classroom distractions and privacy issues related to technology use, particularly considering similar policies in other provinces.

Background:

- The Department of Education works with external programs and organizations to support students' well-being and teaches about online safety. These include the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board, to talk to students about topics such as online safety, cyberbullying, and bullying in general.
- Teachers get special training to reduce the risk of problems and create a safe physical and virtual environment for students.
- As of August 2024, eight jurisdictions have put policy instruments in place to restrict or limit personal device use in schools. These include Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-10

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to DPT11

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP03

Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: Refer to DPT03

Ready to Learn Schools: Refer to RI03

Value:

- It is a top priority to support healthy, active, safe and caring learning environments in all Yukon schools.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- Our ongoing work on the Safer Schools Action Plan has identified additional work that we need to complete to ensure our schools are safe and inclusive.
- Proactively addressing student-to-student harm is crucial. This includes serious consideration of all incidents and reviewing our policies, protocols, and procedures to better support victims and plan for school safety.
- In case of serious incidents, we adhere to emergency plans and response protocols, collaborating with the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), RCMP and other agencies, and offering support to affected students and families with their consent.
- We have developed communication guidance to assist school administrators in providing clear and consistent information to families.

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

- We've worked with Victim Services to create guidelines and support plans, helping victims of harm feel secure at school. Implementation and training for school staff is being developed.

Additional response:

- School staff, with consent of students who are victims of harm, work collaboratively with families and community supports to develop safety plans and provide on-going support.
- School staff promote respectful and positive behaviours by providing welcoming and positive spaces for teaching and learning.
- Except in the rarest of cases, students do not come to school intending to be disruptive or harmful to others.
- It is up to the adults in the school to be sensitive to the signs that a student may become dysregulated and demonstrate escalated behaviours.
- The Ready-to-Learn Schools initiative is an approach that supports positive social change and wellbeing for all students and staff.
- Staff use Violence Threat Risk Assessment training to recognize signs and respond appropriately.

Resources and Supports:

- We are focusing on training and onboarding to:
 - support staff in building connection with students.
 - identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours; and

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

- respond with effective supports and redirecting behaviours.
- We share resources with staff and students and families about restorative practices to strengthen school communities.
- The wellbeing and safety of our children in the digital age is a priority for the Yukon government; we recognize the challenges posed by online threats such as cyberbullying and sextortion and are committed to equipping our students with the necessary skills to navigate these challenges.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Dysregulated behaviour, violence and threats occurring in schools is an issue of concern.
- This matter has been brought up in the Legislative Assembly with the example of students who are sexually assaulted outside of school settings having to face the person who harmed them when they come to school.

Background:

- The Department of Education promotes respectful and safe school environments in the following ways:
 - Working closely with government and non-government partners to promote safe schools and response to concerns of safety.
 - Safe and Caring Schools Policy (effective September 1, 2018).
 - Student Protection Policy (effective September 29, 2022).
 - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy (updated August 15, 2023).
 - Annual and ongoing training and supports for school staff to uphold the policies and procedures for student safety and inclusion.
 - Non-violent Crisis Intervention training and Violence Threat Risk Assessment Training; and
 - Prescribed curricular content that teaches students internet and social media safety and cyberbullying resources and presentations with guest speakers.

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Training and supports for staff

- The department supports school staff after incidents through consultation with School Community Consultant; Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP, or short-term counseling); and support and collaboration from the RCMP and other medical and other government and non-government agencies.
- The department has a Safe and Caring Schools Support Plan that outlines the training offered to school staff to support them.
- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training is an example of effective industry-standard training that is widely available to school-based staff to prevent and respond to students who are demonstrating escalated behaviours.
- Training in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) is offered by the Department of Education every two years. Two level-one VTRA training sessions were held in early April 2024, with space for up to 60 people in each session. The Department of Education extended invitations to school staff, First Nation partners; other government departments including Justice and Health and Social Services; and the RCMP.
- Training for school VTRA teams was held at the end of March 2021 via virtual means from the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NATCAR).
- Through the collective agreement, we work with YAEP at the *Positive Behaviour Intervention Support and Classroom Diversity Committee* to develop these supports for Yukon schools.

Process for dealing with incidents of concern

- The department has a Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure in place for dealing with incidents that occur which indicate that a student's actions may be a risk to staff or other students.
- Under the procedure, such incidents are first reported to the school principal, who investigates the incident using the Workplace Risk Assessment.
- If it is determined that the incident involved a serious threat such as a threat to harm or kill, the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol is used to coordinate the response and supports to address the incident. This activates the involvement

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

of community partners to deal with the issue, including the RCMP, the Departments of Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Yukon University.

- Resources and supports within the legislation and mandates of these community partners and can include but are not limited to SART, Victim Services, restorative supports and programming from the Youth Achievement Centre.
- If the principal determines that there is otherwise a risk of injury to staff or other students then the Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure is followed, and the appropriate plans and resources are put in place to support the school, staff, and students to address and deal with the issue.

Cyberbullying

- In Yukon schools, there are rules, guidelines and lessons about online safety to keep students safe.
 - From kindergarten to grade 9, teachers talk to students about online safety as part of the Applied Design, Skills and Technologies curriculum.
 - For older students in grades 10 to 12, there are special classes that teach students about digital citizenship, being responsible and ethical online.
 - Students and parents sign Technology Use Guidelines about the rules and appropriate use of technology in schools each year.
 - The Department of Education works with external programs and organizations to support students' wellbeing and teach about online safety.
 - Experts, such as the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board are invited to talk to students about topics including online safety, cyberbullying, and bullying in general.
 - Teachers get special training to reduce the risk of problems and create a safe physical and virtual environment for students.
 - We encourage families to get involved in conversations with kids about online safety. Schools' efforts are most effective when complemented by family involvement.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT13/SSS04

Fall 2024

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school. Equitable staffing is a priority to ensure that each school community is staffed appropriately.

Recommended response:

- Student enrolment has increased in recent years and the department is working to ensure consistent service levels in schools, as well as effective, targeted support for students with diverse learning needs.
- While overall enrolment is increasing, some individual schools have decreasing enrolment, which may have impacted their school's staffing allocation.
- Yukon school staffing levels are reviewed each fall to align with actual student enrolment and the needs of the students at each school, and any needed adjustments are made.

Additional response:

- As of November 8, 2024, Yukon Education and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools were 98% staffed.
- The First Nation School Board is responsible for their own human resource services, which includes recruitment.
- Schools received their enrollment projections and staffing allocations in January 2024, and based on these projections, administrators worked with their Superintendent to complete their school's 2024/25 staffing plans.
- Some FTEs are held "in contingency" to allow for fluctuations in enrolment that appear in the fall and throughout the school year. This year we have provided contingency to each school authority to support nimble decision making for school needs.

- The department has made a significant investment of 81 new full-time positions over the next three years, starting with the 2023-24 school year.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Allocating staff to Yukon schools is an issue of interest for school communities and often comes up in the legislature.

Background:

- To provide consistent service levels in all schools, maximum class sizes are set out in the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals; staffing allocation is primarily based on student enrolment and class sizes.
- An increase in students sometimes requires an increase in staff to maintain consistent service levels across schools. School staffing plans are made after the allocation is received and may result in jobs needing to be posted or for employees to be redeployed.
- CASA committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers and creating new wellness counsellor positions in the 2023-24 school years, with further increases in the following two years.
 - The staffing allocations do not include the approved Learning Assistant Teacher positions through the Confidence and Supply Agreement.
- There were no layoffs in any Yukon schools, inclusive of First Nation School Board, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and Yukon Public Schools during the 23/24 school year and prior to the start of the 24/25 school year.
- The School Staffing Allocation Handbook was developed to allocate teacher and other school staff positions consistently and transparently. Enrolment, school size, grades taught, rural location and programs of choice (French immersion) are factors.
 - To ensure equitable and standard service levels in all Yukon schools, each school receives a base number of FTEs through the allocation formula, regardless of how many students are enrolled at the school.

- Other resources may be allocated to support specific initiatives, such as Yukon First Nation language teachers, religious education, French programming (Intensive French) and English language learners. These differentiated resource allocations have their own allocation formulas or models.
- Additional FTEs may be provided to schools to support specific initiatives like literacy, numeracy, and early Kindergarten.
- Principals receive a staffing allocation each year, and then they assign the FTEs within their school, with input from their school council.
- The following are prioritized through the staffing allocation handbook:
 - For the 2024-25 school year, Reconciliation Staffing will continue as recommended by a Community of Inquiry stemming from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
 - Reconciliation Staffing is a small step to recognize the systemic inequities and colonialist practices that have negatively impacted Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous students. It reallocates the 10.0 FTE of Achievement Equity staffing to recognize schools based on two factors:
 - Those that have significantly above average populations of Yukon First Nations or other Indigenous students; and
 - Those schools where multiple Yukon First Nations are represented.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: See HOT16/SO17

Value:

- School facilities are important spaces that host valuable community activities and support vibrant communities.

Recommended response:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location, age and condition presents challenges and limitations that make it the top candidate for Whitehorse school replacement.
- Due to capital project timelines and considerations, it is not possible to locate the replacement school downtown, we recognize that many people feel an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse is essential and we will continue to work with residents, stakeholders and the City of Whitehorse so that future planning for a new downtown school can occur.

Additional response:

- Our government is committed to ongoing consultation and long-term planning to ensure the educational needs of Yukoner's are met.
- With prospective development and densification in the downtown core, the future of downtown Whitehorse may include an elementary school, and we have begun initial planning to this end.
- Our government is exploring options to build a new school in a downtown Whitehorse area, and we are engaging with partners, stakeholders, and community to understand future needs and working to identify potential school locations.

- As part of the due diligence of this work, all existing parcels of land will be explored to determine their feasibility.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since the announcement that École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated from the downtown core to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve there has been increasing public pressure on the government, including in a motion passed by Whitehorse City Council, to ensure that there continues to be an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse.

Background:

- In April 2024, the Minister of Community Services asked Whitehorse mayor and council to work with the Government of Yukon to identify land within the downtown core larger than École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location, for an educational reserve, and that the City of Whitehorse make the appropriate changes to the Official Community Plan.
- Current downtown schools include École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School.
- While École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated to a new school on the Takhini Educational Reserve Land, the other learning centres will currently remain in the downtown core.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO18

Value:

- Our government is proud to be investing in school infrastructure to meet the needs of our growing community and École Whitehorse Elementary School has been identified as a priority for replacement with a new, modern facility.

Recommended response:

- In August 2023, through a public tender, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd. was awarded the prime consultant contract for the École Whitehorse Elementary School replacement project.
 - A site analysis and test fit assessment to determine suitable locations has been completed.
 - A news conference was recently held to announce the new school's chosen location and provide a progress update.
 - The consultant is in pre-design, phase two of seven. This includes a traffic study to analyze the major intersections around Takhini that the new school may impact. The draft traffic study is expected in December 2024.
 - The analysis will consider the impact of a new school on traffic during the first five years.
 - It will provide recommendations for site parking, access, and the general site layout, focusing on pedestrian safety and efficient traffic flow for entering and exiting the site.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- The project will require a YESAA assessment to evaluate potential impacts and provide recommendations. It is too early in the project to engage with YESAB.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude having another downtown school in future.

Additional response:

- Government of Yukon representatives met with the Takhini Neighborhood Association on October 18, 2024. The meeting allowed us to better understand the communities' key concerns. It was highlighted that there is a need for a traffic study and ongoing community engagement.
- Education and Highways and Public Works are working together on the traffic study to ensure alignment of objectives. Further updates will be provided moving forward.
- The *Choosing the future site for École Whitehorse Elementary School* report was updated at Yukon.ca as of October 28, 2024.
- The Department of Education will continue to engage with Takhini Neighborhood Association as planning proceeds.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large, serviced parcel of land that provides a central location that has better access to green space desired for modern learning.
- Of the three options identified for the new school's location, Option 1 is the only option that would require rezoning. As we work towards the conceptual design phase, we will begin discussions with the necessary officials at the City of Whitehorse to discuss the rezoning.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- This is a tremendous opportunity to enhance French immersion programming with a new, modern learning environment.
- We will also provide future opportunities for partners and stakeholders to have conversations about the project.

Additional response - Site options:

- Some trees on the site are unhealthy or unsafe due to damage from annual spring flooding. In Option 1, the option that was ultimately chosen, these trees will be removed to make room for the new multi-sport field. The design team worked closely with a landscape architect to identify which trees are healthy and which pose risks.
- The trees that will be removed make up a small portion of the existing trees on the land reserve. The majority of the existing forested area will remain, ensuring that the impact on the natural environment is minimized.
- The First Nation School Board has been a part of these conversations and has committed to providing input on the final decision.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- MLAs have been vocal about the need to keep a school in the downtown core. The Minister met with concerned downtown residents on October 21, 2022.
- Softball Yukon is concerned about the impact to ball diamonds located on the Takhini education reserve.
- Department officials have met with Softball and Sport Yukon and a commitment was made to ensure they remain informed as the project progresses.
- Takhini residents have been vocal on social media about their concerns over the removal of trees in the location of the future multi-sport field.
- The École Whitehorse Elementary School Council wrote to the Minister of Education on October 29, 2024, emphasizing the importance of building a modern and safe educational facility.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- There have been requests for costing for this project, including expenditures to date and whether this project would be eligible for any federal funding, such as Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).
 - The School Council expressed support for the Government of Yukon's commitment to building a new École Whitehorse Elementary School and willingness to continue working with stakeholders and the Project Advisory Committee.
-

Background:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The current facility is not able to meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders, and the Government of Yukon. Meetings were held on:
 1. October 3, 2022
 2. November 10, 2022
 3. May 15, 2023
 4. August 28, 2023
 5. November 23, 2023
 6. January 11, 2024
 7. April 18, 2024
 8. October 17, 2024
 9. November 14, 2024
- On November 23, 2023, a representative of the Takhini Neighborhood Association joined the Project Advisory Committee.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
 - Whitehorse Elementary School Council
 - Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
 - City of Whitehorse

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- Government of Yukon
 - Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
 - Kwanlin Dün First Nation
 - Takhini Neighbourhood Association
- The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- There are currently other schools located downtown – the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.
- There have been issues raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed build code upgrades and overall accessibility.
- Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate build.
- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations and the general public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key milestones in the project's design.
- In March 2024, various partners and stakeholders were invited to a meeting to review the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit report, subsequent meetings were with the EWES school council (April 15, 2024).
- As requested by the Takhini Neighborhood Association, Department of Education Operations staff met with Takhini residents on April 24, 2024, to share the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit Report.
- The meeting with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association was attended by a number of residents, including MLA Kate White.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- On October 2, 2024, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd., the consulting firm responsible for designing the new EWES, organized site visits to five modern schools in Vancouver. These visits provided the project team with valuable insights. Participants included representatives from Highway and Public Works, Education, and two members of the Project Advisory Committee. The tours highlighted contemporary educational environments that emphasize innovative design, revealing effective strategies for enhancing student learning and support, which will inform the development of the new EWES school.
- On October 17, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee convened for a meeting where the Kobayashi + Zedda Architects team presented insights on 21st Century schools. They also provided an update on the recent Vancouver school tour, sharing key takeaways that could inform the planning of the new school.
- On November 14, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee held a meeting during which the EWES school principal and her staff shared their insights and suggestions for the new EWES school. They provided several recommendations regarding the design of the new school.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve:
 - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
 - There are not a lot of other sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school; there is not a lot of vacant land in general that is centrally located.
 - To look at a different site would entail having to go through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.
 - Work to identify suitable land for educational purposes for future school builds is in the preliminary stages.
- The consultant is currently in phase two of seven. These phases include:
 1. Site analysis and test fit
 2. Pre-design
 3. Conceptual design options
 4. Schematic design

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

5. Detailed Design and Specifications
6. Contractor procurement
7. Construction administration and warranty

Takhini Neighborhood Association, survey between Oct. 13 – 17, 2024

- The Takhini Neighborhood association ran an online survey between October 13 and 17, 2024 and received 144 unique responses.
- The survey asked three questions, focused on 1. key messages for the Minister for the relocation project, 2. Support of the relocation of WES to the Takhini Educational Reserve and 3. Reasons for support or lack thereof.
- Question 1 - What's the most important message that the Minister of Education needs to hear regarding the WES relocation project?
 - Traffic concerns
 - The need for consultation
 - The lack of transparency in the decision-making process
- Question 2/3 - Do you support the relocation of WES to Takhini?
 - Maybe: 21% - Traffic concerns, green space, softball fields, downtown needs school.
 - Yes: 19% - respondents were excited for a French immersion school in the neighbourhood, believed that it would be good to have a new school in the neighbourhood that is walkable, looked at the school situation in Whitehorse as a whole.
 - No: 60% - Traffic concerns, loss of green space, lack of consultation, question why two schools would be next to each other.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

- Under ICIP schools were not eligible unless they fell under one of the two exceptions:
 - The Covid-19 stream
 - Truth and Reconciliation - Calls to Action
- **Under current ICIP guidelines, schools in Whitehorse are not eligible**
- Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing) received ICIP funding under the Calls to Action.
- ICIP funding has been fully subscribed since 2021

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT16/SO17

Fall 2024

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

Project Expenditures to Date

- As of November 18, 2024 the actuals spent to date is \$461,917 and can be broken out are as follows:
 - 2022-23 \$28,118
 - 2023-24 \$290,505
 - 2024-25 \$143,294 as of November 18, 2024 in Education's actuals

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- Effective teachers, teachers on call and educational assistants are important factors in a student's success at school.

Recommended response:

- The Public Service Commission leads the collective bargaining process for the Yukon government.
- Representatives from the Department of Education, the First Nation School Board, and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon participate on the employer's bargaining team.
- With the expiration of the current collective agreement on June 30, 2024, we remain committed to securing a new agreement that is fair, balanced and fiscally responsible, while supporting ongoing efforts to attract and retain highly qualified educators in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon's representatives have been meeting with representatives of YAEP in September and early October 2024 to establish a renewed collective agreement.
- On October 4, 2024 the Yukon Association of Education Professionals informed the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board that negotiations have broken down and requested a declaration that a deadlock exists.
- On October 7, 2024 the Department of Education shared with the school community, including parents, guardians and staff, the statement from Minister Silver regarding collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- This information was shared with the school community after receiving questions from parents and guardians regarding a teacher strike.

- This information was shared by school messenger to provide information to parents and guardians that job action was not imminent, as job action would have impacts on parents and Yukon students.
- Messages sent by school messenger often include staff so they are aware of the communication, as they are typically the first point of contact for parents and guardians of Yukon students.
- On October 17, 2024 the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board communicated to the Public Service Commission that they intend to recommend the establishment of a conciliation board.
- The Public Service Commission is required to nominate a person to be a member of the conciliation board by October 25, 2024, this was completed within the timeframe.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and the Government of Yukon have jointly requested that the board appoint an agreed upon chairperson.
- As of November 18, 2024, the Yukon Teacher Labour Relations Board have not appointed the chairperson for the conciliation process.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals professional development fund is established under the terms of their Collective Agreement. The annual employer contribution increased from \$460,000 to \$475,000 on September 1, 2015, and this rate remains in effect.
- As collective bargaining is underway between the Government of Yukon and the YAEP, it is appropriate that any discussions involving professional development funding occur between the parties to the collective agreement at the bargaining table.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns regarding terms and conditions of employment for bargaining members represented by the Yukon Association of Education Professionals have been expressed by the opposition.

Background:

- The Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals expired on June 30, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement was previously in force for a three-year period, July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2024.
- On March 5, 2024, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals issued a notice of intent to commence bargaining.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

The health and safety of students and staff is our first priority. Timely communication with student's families and school staff is critical.

Recommended response

- The School Messenger platform is our most effective and timely communication tool to reach families of students and school staff.
- School Messenger is used for many different forms of communication including safety, reporting absenteeism, communicating upcoming events, and providing families with general education-related information.
- Messages sent by school messenger often include staff so they are aware of the communication, as they are typically the first point of contact for parents and guardians of Yukon students.

Additional response

- On October 7, 2024 the Department of Education shared with the school community, including parents, guardians and staff, the statement from Minister Silver regarding collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- This information was shared by school messenger to provide information to parents and guardians that job action was not imminent, as job action would have impacts on parents and Yukon students.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The use of School Messenger was questioned in the Legislative Assembly for delivering a bargaining update with YEAP to all school staff and families on Oct. 7, 2024.

- The opposition member stated that they believed the purpose of the School Messenger platform was for communicating emergencies only.

Background:

- The Department of Education has used the School Messenger platform for many years for timely communication with parents and staff.
- School Messenger is used daily by most schools to communicate student absenteeism for safe arrival practices.
- School Messenger was particularly helpful during the pandemic when notifying families of COVID exposures.
- Messages sent through School Messenger require an associated email address and messages sent to school communities come from an account called publicschools@yukon.ca, which allows people to respond to a message with any questions.

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Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - 2021 - Careers in Health and Social Services

Education

Value:

- The 2021 and 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreements set out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- Specifically, we continue to work with Yukon University to implement the 2023 CASA commitment to support members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in health and social services programs.
- As we continue to work through many details in the implementation of these commitments, I am happy to bring forward information as I can.

Additional response:

- Department of Education continues engaging with Yukon University to explore partnership opportunities to advance the commitment of supporting members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in health and social services programs.
- In addition, we provide the university with \$740,780 in ongoing funding for the Practical Nursing program.
- This program now provides annual opportunities for up to 18 new students to pursue healthcare careers. The graduates of this program

CASA - 2021 - Careers in Health and Social Services

Education

provide much needed talent to fill vacancies in this important healthcare role in the Yukon.

- On November 3, 2024, Government of Yukon made changes to the *Registered Nurses Profession Regulation* making it possible for registered nurses and nurse practitioners to apply directly in the Yukon for their licenses without having to first register in another Canadian jurisdiction.
- This work represents yet another avenue the Yukon government has pursued to increase the number of nurses and nurse practitioners that work in the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.

Background:

- Prior to the 2023 CASA Agreement, the 2021 CASA Agreement outlined the following commitments:
 - The government immediately began developing a plan to support members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in health and social services. Program delivery was developed in partnership with First Nations, Yukon University, and the Government of Canada. Project development funds were allocated in the 2021-22 budget and implementation received dedicated funding in the 2022-23 budget.
 - Under the first CASA agreement the Department of Education earmarked \$255,000 to support members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in Health and Social Services:
 - Education provided \$170,000 in planning dollars for this initiative to the University in 2022-23 fiscal.
 - The remaining \$85,000 supported a proposal between Yukon Hospital Corporation and the First Nations Youth Internships program to promote health careers and engage 32 participants over 3 years to be mentored

CASA - 2021 - Careers in Health and Social Services

Education

while working in areas of medical and acute care environments. Education and Economic Development worked together to support this program.

- We continue to provide funding to Yukon University to support the Licensed Practical Nurse program and Yukon University has long-term plans to develop a northern nursing degree program.
- Beginning in 2024 Yukon government has partnered with the University of New Brunswick to allow licensed practical nurses in the Yukon to further their education by attending the “live where you work program” remotely and to ultimately become registered nurses.

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-11-07](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - Educational Assistants, Learning Assistance Teachers

Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to
HOT10/HR04**

CASA – Wellness Specialists: refer to HOT02/CAS09

Value:

- All children have a right to education and deserve access to educational supports needed to optimize their learning. These supports must be tailored to each student's specific needs and may include Learning Assistance Teachers as well as Educational Assistants.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions is to increase the number of positions of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers.
- The Yukon government committed to 81 new positions over three fiscal years starting last school year, including educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, we have continued to build on the allocations of the previous year, adding 4 extra Learning Assistance Teachers to the 15 added last year, and 14 new Educational Assistant positions to the 13 added last year.

Additional response:

- These positions are one piece of the puzzle in supporting students and ensuring that they can meet their potential across all Yukon schools.
- Other pieces of the puzzle include:

CASA - Educational Assistants, Learning Assistance Teachers

Education

- Ongoing work to ensure Learning Assistant Teachers are trained and ready to meet the evolving needs of Yukon students
- Rolling out the Ready to Learn approach at Yukon schools so that all students are supported to be ready to learn each and every day
- When needed, basing learning plans on psychological assessments completed within 6 months of referral, under the Re-imagining Inclusive and Special Education workplan
- We look forward to continued engagement with all of our partners in our journey to ensure all students are supported in their educational achievement and inclusion.
- For the 2023-24 school year we allocated:
 - 13 Educational Assistants
 - 15 Learning Assistance Teachers;
- We are hiring 18 FTEs for the 2024-25 school year.
 - 14 Educational Assistants
 - 4 Learning Assistance Teachers
- We are working with superintendents and school board executive directors to prioritize the implementation of these important positions in schools.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of having sufficient and appropriate supports available for students has been raised numerous times publicly over the past months, particularly around the allocation of educational assistants.
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Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS02

Fall 2024

CASA - Educational Assistants, Learning Assistance Teachers

Education

Background:

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
 - Increase the allocation of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers starting in the fall of 2023.
- Over three fiscal years, the department is allocating 81 FTEs to meet the government's commitment to increase the allocation of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers starting in the fall of 2023 as follows:

Position	School Year	# Increase FTE Allocation	# Hired	Total
Educational Assistant	2023-24	13	13	27
	2024-25	14	14	
Learning Assistance Teacher	2023-24	15	15	19
	2024-25	4	4	

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs): refer to TAB SSS02

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions includes providing all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan, or IEP.
- I am pleased to say that we have met this commitment and continue to support educators, Yukon learners and families with Individualized Education Plans as needed.
- We are continuing to communicate with parents, school staff, partners, stakeholders and families about the process for Individualized Education Plans and learning plans.
- At any time, parents and guardians can bring forward concerns to their school to ensure a student is being effectively supported.
- Individualized Education Plans are outlined in the Education Act to provide support for students in need of a special education program.
- We are strengthening the implementation of Individualized Education Plans to foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance proposals during the term of the agreement, some of which pertain to the Department of Education.

Background:

- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are defined in the Education Act as “a document which outlines the educational program for a student as determined by a school based team, containing a description of the student's present level of functioning; long term or annual goals; short term goals or specific behavioural objectives; special resources required; suggested instructional materials, methods and strategies; IEP review dates; persons responsible for the implementation of the IEP, including parents; and parents' written, informed consent for implementation.
- IEPs are typically used for students who have been determined to have special educational needs, and therefore require an individualized curriculum with modified or adapted learning outcomes to support those special educational needs.
- The department is offering training on an ongoing basis (twice a week) to Learning Assistance Teachers to support schools with the management and implementation of IEPs, as well as to ensure that procedures are aligned with best practices.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

Education

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Ready to Learn Schools: refer to RI03

Mental Health supports for school staff and students: refer to SSS03

CASA - Wellness Specialists: refer to HOT02/CAS09

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- Under the Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government has committed \$500,000 annually to the Department of Education to improve mental health outcomes for youth.
- For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the department has allocated this additional funding to various initiatives including Ready to Learn implementation, development of the Comprehensive Mental Health Approach, and support for the Territorial Youth Summit.
- The Ready to Learn approach is an important way that we are incorporating a mental wellness focus across all Yukon schools.
- Ready to Learn trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive and to recognize that a child’s chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive, or social age. It also helps educators to

CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

Education

understand brain development, functioning, and learning.

- Also, as part of this investment, the Department of Education is developing a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach. This is an important part of the overall work we are doing to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- We will be collaborating with our education partners to gather their important input, with a draft to share more broadly in fall 2024.
- Implementing the wellness counsellor or similar positions will also help to support and improve student mental health outcomes in schools and classrooms. These roles will include First Nation government led wellness roles and school wellness specialists.

Additional response:

- Our Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach will include prevention and promotion of positive mental health, as well as intervention supports and responses in and out of school. The approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- It will align with Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy and be informed by the Territorial Youth Strategy, which brings forward important perspectives from youth on supports that work for them.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance several proposals during the term of the agreement.
-

CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

Education

Background:

- In the 2023-24 fiscal year, the Department of Education's \$500,000 was allocated as follows:
 - Ready to Learn rolled out in additional schools,
 - Mental Health and Wellness kits (developed by Youth for Youth),
 - Supported the Territorial Youth Summit,
 - Training for schools on Suicide Prevention, and
 - Teegatha Oh Zeh: Our Suitcases, Our Stories Art Installation.
- In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Department of Education's \$500,000 is allocated as follows:
 - Ready to Learn,
 - Support for Territorial Youth Summit,
 - Training on Mental Health and Wellness, and
 - Development of the Mental Health and Wellness Approach document.
- The Youth Directorate (Executive Council Office) received the other \$500,000 out of the \$1,000,000 commitment to advance its youth mental health initiatives.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - Psychoeducational Assessments

Education

School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT10/HR04

Formal Assessments: refer to RI02

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Value:

- All students should have access to the supports they require, including psychoeducational assessments as necessary, to ensure they can achieve their potential.

Recommended response:

- The Confidence and Supply Agreement reflects the values of the Yukon government to support students in their learning goals.
- This agreement to work together towards these goals contains several specific actions for the Department of Education and identifies funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- Between January 2023 and June 2024, 182 psychoeducational assessments were completed. Student Support Services team at the Department of Education are hard at work this year ensuring that students have access to the psychological services (consultation and assessment) they need to develop a successful and targeted learning plan.
- A learning plan can be created for a student whenever parents and schools identify the need for support.
- We are communicating with parents and school-based staff; clarifying the processes for assessments, school-based team meetings and referrals. We are also updating Individualized Education Plans and ensuring strategies from assessments are implemented.

CASA - Psychoeducational Assessments

Education

- We have set a service standard to complete assessments within six months of a school sending the signed assessment consent form to Student Support Services.
- If this work cannot be done within the department, we contract this work out or we reimburse parents to have the assessment done privately.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.

Background:

- The department has a Standing Offer Agreement with two local vendors and two out of territory vendors to ensure that the service standard can be met for referrals received by Student Support Services.
- The department is working to ensure that all referrals from schools are submitted to the branch to create a centralized waiting list.
- We have heard from some parents that they'd like to know when their child's assessment is scheduled or that they thought they had an assessment referred to Student Support Services when the Department of Education had received no such referral from the school.
- Although there have been numerous communications from Student Support Services with school staff, some gaps with the consistent referral of assessments from schools to Student Support Services continue to exist.
- We are collaborating with Superintendents and Executive Directors of school boards to ensure referrals are submitted as soon as possible and to end the practice of schools creating separate lists.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

Education

School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT10/HR04

Formal Assessments: refer to RI02

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- These commitments include support for recruitment and retention of rural education professionals.
- Education has \$1.0 million dedicated to this CASA initiative.
- This is a three-year commitment, 2023 to 2026, and we are dedicated to doing this right, for both Yukon learners and for Yukon educators, with an approach that is developmentally and culturally responsive.

Additional response:

- We have undertaken several activities to improve recruitment and retention for 2023-24 and future years.
- Actions implemented to date include:
 - enhanced marketing for recruitment;
 - posting jobs earlier;

CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

Education

- participating more widely at job fairs;
- enhanced onboarding and training for staff; and
- examining the potential for a bursary incentive for Yukon students to pursue post-secondary programs in the professional education field.
- On November 13, 2024 we launched a recruitment video, which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon. This video will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts, to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- & Post-Intensive French, Core French and La Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon (CSFY).

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.

Background:

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
 - Allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon. This may include a program aimed at supporting Yukon students pursuing studies in educational fields who commit to working in the Yukon after graduation.
 - Last school year (2023-24), human resource consultants have attended seven in-person education career fairs in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta. The dates of those are as follows:

University	Virtual/In Person	Date
Education Expo	In person	December 20, 2023
University of British Columbia	In Person	January 19, 2024

Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS06

Fall 2024

Education

CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

University	Virtual/In Person	Date
University of Alberta Campus Saint Jean	In Person	January 22, 2024
Laurentian University/Université Laurentian	In Person	January 29, 2024
University of Moncton	In Person	February 7, 2024
Université d'Ottawa	In Person	March 7, 2024
Outlearning Fair – Banff	In Person	May 9 to 11, 2024

- We are preparing to attend a number of in-person career fairs in the 2024-25 school year. We plan to visit approximately 6 universities across the country who have programs that are relevant to the Yukon Education context, and to attend Yukon community career fairs where appropriate too. As of November 8, we have attended two in-person career fairs at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, and Lakehead University in Ontario this school year, and received excellent feedback.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

Education

School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT10/HR04

Formal Assessments: refer to RI02

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- These actions include providing the development of a 1-year training plan for educational assistants and teachers on call.
- This is important work to ensure that educators and learners alike are supported in a good way. The role of educational assistants is very important in supporting learners in their educational journey.
- Conversations are ongoing with Autism Yukon, the Learning Disability Association of Yukon, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to gather expert feedback and input in the development of the educational assistant and training plan. These conversations will continue in fall/winter 2024.
- We are on track to have an updated EA training framework completed by the end of 2024.
- A draft framework will be shared with education partners by the end of November 2024 for input.

CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

Education

Additional response:

- We are dedicated to doing this right, for both Yukon learners and for Yukon educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. We are committed to getting this work done.
- Although the formal training plan is being developed with stakeholders, we are continuing to provide training to educational assistants.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised about the timing of the completion of the 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement commitment to establish an EA training plan.

Background:

- An updated proposed timeline for the CASA commitment on EA and TOC training plans were developed shared with involved partners in Spring of 2024:

Action	Estimated Timeline
Continue to offer specific training for EAs (SSS has several ongoing trainings online and in person)	Ongoing
Defining the EA role	Post collective bargaining
Survey to EAs and administrators	Post collective bargaining
Draft framework for training plan with education partners	Winter 2024
YGLearn online course (previously offered via Moodle)	Complete
Inservice training offerings, for department led professional development days	Ongoing
One year training plan pilot (this pilot training plan draws from Yukon University Continuing Studies Courses relevant to Education Assistants)	Will communicate with partners when we meet about the training plan framework
MOU with Health and Social Services	Complete

Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS07

Fall 2024

CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

Education

(Disability Services branch and Community and Primary Care division)

- The Department of Education provides \$475,000 in annual funding to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to provide training and professional development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.
- Meetings were held with each stakeholder to gather input in the spring of 2023.
- No meetings were held over the summer of 2023 to respect YAEP's regular seasonal operational pause.
- In the Fall of 2023, meetings resumed by bringing together Autism Yukon, LDAY Centre for Learning and YAEP as well as inviting the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate to include their valuable perspective.
- A meeting with all stakeholders was held in May 2024.
- No meetings were held over the summer of 2024 to, again, respect YAEP's regular seasonal operational pause. Work is resuming for fall 2024.
- In July 2024, the Department of Education was asked not to consult directly with Union membership on issues pertaining to the role and training of Education Assistants until bargaining has concluded.
 - The department of Education accepted this request.
 - The Education Assistant (EA) training plan will be developed based on the current defined role of the EA.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT10/HR04

Formal Assessments: refer to RI02

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement contains several specific actions for the Department of Education and supports funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- These commitments include providing a 1-year training plan for educational assistants and teachers on call.
- We have engaged with our education partners, including the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Autism Yukon, the Learning Disability Association of Yukon, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on this action.
- We have an updated training plan timeline to move this work forward, which has recently been shared with our partners.
- We continue to work through many details in the implementation of this commitment, and I will be happy to bring forward more information as I am able to.
- We are on track to have an updated TOC training place completed by the end of 2024.

CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

Education

Additional response:

- Staff have met with Autism Yukon, the Learning Disability Association of Yukon, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to discuss this commitment multiple times in the 2023-24 school year.
- Although the formal training plan is being developed with stakeholders, we are continuing to provide training access to teachers on call through YGLearn, a Yukon government online learning platform.
- We have been consulting and collaborating with our partners and education stakeholders, and we will continue to do so, to ensure our approach is developmentally and culturally responsive.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.

Background:

- No meetings were held over the summer 2024 to respect the Yukon Association of Education Professionals regular seasonal operational pause.
- The Department of Education provides \$475,000 in annual funding to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to provide training and professional development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.
- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
 - Provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS08

Fall 2024

CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

Education

- An updated proposed timeline for the CASA commitment on educational assistants and teachers on call training plans has been developed and shared with the involved partners.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Estimated Timeline</u>
Continue to offer teacher on call attendance at school educator professional development (PD) days	Ongoing
Survey administrators, completed during the School Administrator meeting on October 9, 2024	Complete
Draft training plan with education partners	November 2024
YGLearn online course deliver	December 2024
Continue to improve the training plan (TOC and partner feedback)	Ongoing

- This timeline will be amended as needed and as the work and steps are completed.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions is to create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions.
- Of the 81 positions beginning in 2023-24 fiscal year, we allocated:
 - 2023/24, 12 FTE allocated.
 - 2024/25, 3 FTE allocated.
 - 2025/26, FTE are to be confirmed.
- These positions will be served by two specific roles:
 - School Wellness Specialist – the minimum requirement is a Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent; and,
 - First Nation government-led wellness support, which we are developing in collaboration with First Nation governments – this could be an Elder, traditional knowledge keeper, or a traditional healer.
- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility in how we approach meeting a range of needs.

- Each school will have access to a school wellness specialist. This position is part of the team that supports students, teachers, families, and school communities.

Additional response – First Nation government-led wellness role:

- We have had conversations to begin the development of the First Nations government-led wellness support role.
- We are moving forward with First Nation governments as they are ready. We anticipate that the first of these roles will be ready to start supporting their community in fall 2024.
- These positions will provide culturally appropriate supports that meet the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs of students. These roles are not replacing other existing roles that are key to supporting students such as education liaison coordinators or education support workers.
- The roles will take time to continue developing as they will be specific to the needs of each individual First Nation and the school community.

Additional response – School Wellness Specialist:

- The role of a School Wellness Specialist is to provide a variety of direct supports to students, families, educators, and the community, which may range from assessments, counselling, consultation, programming, case management, and education, depending on the specific needs of individual schools and communities.
- The job description for the School Wellness Specialist role was developed with our partners at Mental health and Substance Use in 2023 and reviewed by Executive Directors of the School Boards, Superintendents. This position is identified as a Yukon Employees' Union (YEU) bargaining unit position.

- We are working with superintendents and school board executive directors to prioritize the School Wellness Specialist implementation over the next two years. The department is working with the First Nation School Board to set up six of these positions to report directly to the First Nation School Board instead of the department (5 for 204/25 school year and 1 for 2025/26 school year).
 - Five school wellness specialists were hired in the 2023-24 **school year**. They undertook important training and started working in some schools to support specific responses near the end of the school year.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The creation of these positions is a CASA commitment and there have been questions about whether there will be a position in every school.
 - Questions have been raised about whether these mental health support positions should be clinical counsellors.
-

Background:

- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community, including clinical counselling services (supported through Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use branch).
 - The school counsellor plays a role in supporting the wellbeing of students. The department continues to hear that the duties of this role need to be more flexible to reflect a school community's needs and to address staffing challenges when filling these positions.
 - The department is partnering with Yukon First Nation governments and organizations to ensure that student support is culturally responsive and includes coordinated work with students and families through First Nation advocates, Education Support Workers, Community Education Liaison Coordinators, and the new First Nation government-led wellness support roles.
 - Carcross Tagish First Nation has a job description "Deadly Uncle" position and is ready to move forward. Tr'ondek Hwech'in is looking for support to create the
-

framework for a position. In addition, the Gadzoosdaa Residence is looking for an Elder program to support the residence.

- The School Wellness Specialist position is another role in supporting the wellbeing of students. The position is classified as an SS15, the range can be from \$89,704 to \$104,043, which is in-line with other social work positions across Yukon government and is determined by the Public Service Commission's classification process.
 - Classification for other mental wellness related roles across Yukon government include:
 - School counsellors (YAEP): These roles are performed by teachers, meaning that the pay range is informed by years of work and levels of education. The range can be from \$79,142 to \$126,510.
 - Clinical Counsellors (YEU, Health and Social Services): the position is classified as an SS16, the range can be from \$94,501 to \$109,661.
- The job advertisement for the School Wellness Specialist was first posted on Yukon.ca in fall 2023 and recruitment continues.

School Year	Yukon Education		First Nation School Board		Commission Scolaire Francophone Du Yukon	
	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired
2023/24	6	2	5	0	1	1
2024/25	5 (Carried over from 23/24)	2	5 (Carried over from 23/24)	0	0	0
2025/26	To be determined					

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises” to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement commits the government to specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- These commitments aligned with the path that we were on and that we will continue to work toward in reshaping our education system.
- The government has already completed many of the CASA commitments and I am proud of all the work the Department of Education has accomplished in turning those CASA commitments into reality.

Additional response:

- We have hired 7 School Wellness Specialists to provide ongoing mental wellness and systems navigation support in Yukon schools, and we are in the final stages of signing an MOU with First Nation School Board so they may choose the staff that best meet the needs for their school communities.
- We have met the commitment to provide all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan.
- We have set a service standard to complete any necessary psychoeducational assessments within six months of a school sending the signed assessment consent form to Student Support Services.

- If this work cannot be done within the department, we contract the provision of psychoeducational assessments to meet student needs.
- If neither of the above options are available, we would reimburse parents to have the assessment done privately.
- We have met the commitment to allocate an additional \$1 million in the last two budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- We are meeting the commitment to increase the number of positions of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers.
 - For the 2023-24 school year we allocated 13 Educational Assistants and 15 Learning Assistance Teachers; and for the 2024-25 school year we are hiring 14 Educational Assistants and 4 Learning Assistance Teachers.
- We are meeting the commitment to make an additional annual investment of \$1 million for mental health outcomes for youth; \$500,000 for the department of education and \$500,000 for the Executive Council office, Youth Directorate branch.
- We are on track to have updated educational assistant and teacher on call training plans completed by the end of 2024.
- We are working with superintendents and school board executive directors to prioritize the school wellness specialist implementation over the next two years.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance proposals during the term of the agreement, some of which pertain to the Department of Education.

Background:

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
 - Allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon. This may include a program aimed at supporting Yukon students pursuing studies in educational fields who commit to working in the Yukon after graduation.
 - Increase the allocation of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers starting in the fall of 2023.
 - Provide a one-year training plan program for Educational Assistants and Teachers on Call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.
 - Provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators or physicians. If the Government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally.
 - Provide all students in need of special education with the option of an IEP.
 - Create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions in all schools specifically dedicated to addressing the need for comprehensive mental health and wellness.
 - Commit to an additional annual investment of \$1 million for mental health outcomes for youth.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Early Learning and Child Care

- In October 2024, ELCC partnered with the Child Development Centre to present information on the Supported Child Care Program.
- In October 2024, ELCC participated in the Education, Career and Volunteer Expo at Yukon University supporting our strategy to recruit and recognize early childhood educators.
- In October 2024, ELCC licensed two new after school programs increasing access to licensed affordable child care for Yukon families by 74 spaces - 44 spaces at Takhini Elementary School and 30 spaces at École Whitehorse Elementary School.
- In September and October 2024, specialists from the Early Learning and Child Care Branch presented to six career classes at local high schools.
- In September and October 2024, ELCC invited local early child educators to participate in professional development: Learning Through Play and Social and Emotional Learning. Professional development sessions are offered monthly.
- In September 2024, we released a What We Heard Report based on engagement on the modernization of the Child Care Act.
- In September 2024, we hosted a conference for more than 350 early childhood educators from across the Yukon to come together and learn from each other.
- In August 2024, ELCC met with rural not for profit early learning and child care owner/operators, including representatives from 6 First Nations governments, to discuss the challenges of operating centres in rural communities.

- Announced in spring 2024, our three-year agreement with Canada will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- Public engagement for the review of the Child Care Act, which ran from November 27, 2023, through February 29, 2024, received several hundred responses from parents, early childhood educators, operators of family day homes and early learning and child care centres, First Nations governments, education partners and interested stakeholders.
- The first “Understanding the Early Years” course rolled out in Dawson City on September 11, 2023, with 14 early child educators participating from the three local child care programs. A second course was offered in Watson Lake from November 6-8, 2023, to five people. The course was offered in Old Crow in April 2024 with 6 participants, Haines Junction in May/June 2024 with 16 participants, and Whitehorse in May 2024 with 7 participants.
- April 2023 - signed three-year transfer payment agreement with Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to design, develop and deliver a culturally rich “Understanding the Early Years” course.
- August 9, 2022 – Online resource and a professional development hub is released for Early Childhood Educators.
- Spring 2022 – signed agreement with Yukon University to implement the Professional Diploma Pathway program so that early childhood educators holding a level three equivalent certificate could work towards a full level three certificate through flexible course offerings and practicum placements in their existing workplaces.

- As of January 2024, 51 educators have benefitted from the PDP program.
- December 2021 - launched funding for licensed early learning and child care programs to provide access to extended health benefits.
- Fall 2021 – Launched enhanced early kindergarten and full-day kindergarten in most rural communities.
- April 1, 2021 – Universal Child Care Program is launched.
 - This program reduced parent fees to less than \$10 per day on average.
 - 367 new licensed child care spaces were created between April 2021 and September 2023, including 93 spaces in rural Yukon.
 - Implemented a wage scale for early childhood educators.
 - Funding is provided to all licensed programs for wage enhancements and operational and administrative expenses.
- April 1, 2021 – the responsibility for early learning and child care transferred from the Department of Health and Social Services to the Department of Education in response to recommendations in the Putting People First Report.

K-12 and Schools

- The Department of Education hosted Welcome Week for Yukon Education staff. This week was a comprehensive four-day orientation, training and development event designed to support and connect new and returning educators from across the territory. This was first time of hosting an orientation event for educator since 2019.
- Yukon Education's Welcome Week brought together 200 new educators for two-days of orientation. The new educators joined their colleagues from various Yukon communities for the final two

days. About 850 educators heard a keynote from Leona Prince, were introduced to 2025-2035 Learner Outcomes statements for Yukon students and participate in a range of interactive sessions.

- Topics covered current educational practices in supporting student learning, an overview of departmental policies, the kindergarten to grade 7 Literacy Strategy and numeracy supports, artificial intelligence in the K-12 classroom and role-specific learning for educators including teachers, learning assistance teachers, educational assistants and Yukon First Nation Language teachers.
- August 30, 2024 – We shared an update to the public on progress to ensure safe and inclusive schools through implementing initiatives such as Student Protection Policy training, the Ready-to-Learn Schools program, and support for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and staff. A six-month progress report on work to make schools safer was provided to the Yukon Ombudsman, demonstrating a commitment to creating supportive learning environments for all students.
- June 27, 2024 – The department has referred the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review. The Advocate will prepare a report for the Department of Education with recommendations about further SOGI Policy amendments.
- May 29, 2024 – Students, parents, and community members were invited to celebrate the opening of the new Whistle Bend Elementary School.
- May 27, 2024 – The department continues to foster First Nations reconciliation, multiculturalism and educational inclusivity by ensuring that student participation in cultural and religious events is recognized positively in attendance records. When Yukon students participate in any Indigenous cultural or harvesting

activity, these activities will be positively recognized in our school records and students will not be recorded as absent.

- May 14, 2024 - The Department of Education is advancing the Ready-to-Learn initiative, which empowers educators with evidence-based strategies to create inclusive and supportive learning environments. In May 2024, a Ready-to-Learn Symposium was held that saw over 100 Yukon educators come together to share knowledge and celebrate their commitment to fostering students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development.
- January 25, 2024 - In partnership with the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, we celebrated the successful completion of the third cohort of Dáshāw k'e, a culturally-centered, land-based program at F.H. Collins Secondary School that enriches student learning through Yukon First Nations knowledge and traditions. This accomplishment highlights the department's commitment to education-based reconciliation and providing diverse, experiential learning opportunities for Yukon high school students.
- November 2, 2023 – We released a "What We Heard" report, summarizing feedback from nearly 1,000 Yukoners on Whitehorse school capital planning. The input gathered will guide future decisions on building, upgrading, and renovating schools to reflect the values and priorities of Yukon's diverse families, learners, and communities.
- September 2023 – Working groups on literacy and numeracy put forth recommendations for culturally responsive teaching methods that are based on the latest research. These recommendations have shaped the creation of two guiding documents: A Culturally Responsive Yukon Literacy Strategy; and A Culturally Responsive Yukon Numeracy Strategy. Implementation of the literacy strategy is underway.

- August 17, 2023 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) policy is updated and training for school staff and school administrators starts. A three-year partnership with ARC Foundation was made to support the implementation of SOGI inclusive education and practices in all of Yukon's K-12 schools.
- August 17, 2023 – Ready-to-Learn Schools program launched in additional Yukon Schools
 - This program supports schools to affect positive social change and well-being for all students and staff. It is based on the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- August 2023 – FNSB is managing and operating 11 schools throughout the Yukon.
- July 2023 - Collaborated with CSFY and TH to offer a French First Language program of instruction in Dawson City starting August 2023 that recognizes the TH Self Government Agreement.
- July 2023 - In collaboration with Highways and Public Works, we continued to invest in education infrastructure and proactively maintain and upgrade school facilities across the territory over the summer. This work ensured safe and modern learning environments for all students and staff. Some projects in 2023 included roof replacements, fire alarm upgrades, and gymnasium lighting improvements.
- June 27, 2023 - Families began to be able to confirm enrolment interest for the new Whistle Bend Elementary School.
 - Whistle Bend Elementary School will welcome students in August 2024 for the 2024-25 school year.
- June 20, 2023 - The 23 action items in the Safer Schools Action Plan were announced as fully implemented.

- May 31, 2023 - Celebrated Kêts'ádañ Kù site clearing with the school community.
 - Kêts'ádañ Kù meaning "House of Learning" was selected by KFN citizens as the name for the new school.
- July 2023 - the first phase of the N'tsaÜw Chu' Kedts'edán Kù Traditional Camp, at Porter Creek Secondary, the fire pit, was completed and is ready for use for the 2023-2024 school year.
- April 3, 2023 - \$35M funding agreement to support the First Nation School Board is approved.
- Spring 2023 – Shared access to a new data dashboard with Yukon First Nations and YFNED that provides better access to some types of student data.
- March 1, 2023 – Released progress report to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.
- February 14, 2023 – First Nation School Board is officially established.
- September 2022 - Student Protection Policy v.1 and related procedures is finalized and implemented.
- Ongoing - Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources, and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.
- February 2020 – Created a student data sharing Memorandum of Understanding and data working group with Yukon First Nations.

First Nations Initiatives

- In October 2024, we launched two Social Studies curriculum units – one new and one updated – for Grades 5 and 10, focusing on the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools in the Yukon and Canada. These resources, designed to provide students with a

deeper understanding of the impacts of residential schools, represent a significant step toward truth and reconciliation in the Yukon's education system.

- In September 2024, we introduced the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy, enabling Yukon First Nations to deliver and assess credit programs for high school students. The new policy allows students to earn elective credits toward their graduation requirements through participating in cultural, language and traditional knowledge learning activities led by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other community members.
- On October 25, 2024, I hosted a leadership meeting with Yukon First Nation Chiefs invited to discuss the progress of the development of the draft JEAP Implementation Plan for 2025 – 2035, including each governments priorities for education with respect to inclusion in the Implementation Plan.
- First Nations governments and Government of Yukon approval processes, timelines and next steps were topics of discussion at the leadership meeting.
- Each year the department provides \$735,000 to the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to implement the Joint Education Action Plan and related collective education priorities.
- Each year the department provides \$1.19 million in support of language First Nations Language revitalization through the Yukon Native Language Centre. We are proud to see students of Youth Today, Language Leaders Tomorrow program complete placements to support community language initiatives.
- August 30, 2024 - the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon signed a historic Letter of Agreement on

Education Co-governance. This marked a significant milestone in our commitment to building a more inclusive and representative education system within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory. This agreement strengthens the partnership between the two governments and aims to create an education system that reflects the unique values, culture, and language of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people.

- May 6, 2024 – We facilitated an immersive educational experience for students by hosting the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. This initiative, aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about Indigenous language groups, traditional place names, and significant historical events through a giant floor map guided by First Nation Elders.
- August 2023 – signed an Education Agreement with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council that identifies joint education priorities and supports implementing the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- May 2023 – the First Nations Education Commission and the department established next steps for implementation of the Collaboration Framework and will report back to the Commission at each quarterly meeting to track progress of implementing education initiatives and the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- April 2022 signed three-year Transfer Payment Agreements with each Yukon First Nation to support education initiatives and implementing the priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan
- February 2022 – the First Nations Education Commission approved the Collaboration Framework with Yukon First Nations.

Human Resources

- Under the Confidence and Supply Agreement the Yukon government has committed to increasing the number of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers. The department has made a significant investment of 81 new full-time positions over the next three years along with an additional \$1 million in funding for student supports.
- Streamlining how educators are hired while improving the recruitment experience for applicants, the department has transitioned to e-recruitment for hiring all education professionals. We're now using the same system as all other Yukon government departments.

Adult Learners

- On September 12, 2024, we hosted the Apprenticeships Awards ceremony and celebrated 50 individuals that achieved excellence in their trades and 44 apprentices that are now journeypeople.
- In May of 2023, a new Territorial Trades and Technology Committee was formed to identify and address gaps in the support system for apprentices. This group is a partnership between Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Skills Canada, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, Yukon University, and the Apprenticeship Unit at the Department of Education.
- On November 23, 2023, Apprenticeship Unit resumed holding the Apprenticeship Excellence Awards to celebrate the outstanding achievements of apprentices and graduates.
- August 1, 2023 - Introduction of a new online student financial assistance application portal.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT01

Fall 2024

Accomplishments

Education

- Post-secondary students from the Yukon can apply for grants and loans, check the status of their applications and view funding decision letters online.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

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Education

Value:

- Together with our partners in education, we are reimagining the Yukon school system. We cannot undertake this transformative work without the trust of our partners – educators, students, and families who are at the heart of our work.

Recommended response:

- We are working with our partners and stakeholders to reimagine education and create school environments that are safe, inclusive, and build on student strengths. We are working to ensure that every child feels connected and supported to thrive.
- We remain focused on the important work of responding to the Auditor General of Canada's Review of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in the Yukon, and the 2021 Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
- Over the past several years, we maintained student learning even during a global pandemic, and we continue to make progress on various initiatives to address system inequities, including:
 - Launching the Universal Child Care model,
 - Launching enhanced early kindergarten and full-day kindergarten in rural communities,
 - Working with the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish the First Nation School Board,
 - Finalizing a collaboration framework with Yukon First Nations,
 - Completing the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and advancing the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

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workplan developed with Yukon First Nations and education partners,

- Launching a Ready-to-Learn initiative,
- Creating a data sharing Memorandum of Understanding with Yukon First Nations and annually releasing publicly available student data reports, and
- Engaging on the development of a 10-year Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners.

Additional response:

- We are unwavering in our commitment to implementing all the recommendations contained in the 2019 Auditor General's report.
- In February 2023, we welcomed the opportunity to provide the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and the Office of the Auditor General, with an update on our work.
- We are working with education partners and taking informed actions that come from our diverse perspectives rather than making unilateral decisions on changes to education.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Department continues to implement programs and services in response to the Auditor General's 2019 report on K-12 education in the Yukon.
-

Background:

- Some of our actions since the release of the audit report include:
 - Education agreements with all Yukon First Nations,
 - A student data sharing Memorandum of Understanding and data working group with Yukon First Nations,

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- We provide \$735,000 in 2024-25 in funding to implement the Joint Education Action Plan and related collective education priorities.
- In 2024-25, we are committed to providing funding as follows:
 - \$1.83 million to support community-level education agreements with the 14 Yukon First Nations,
 - \$1.4 million to Yukon First Nation organizations to support other education initiatives, including language learning, cultural activities, and Elder programming in schools,
 - \$2.6 million to specifically support language initiatives within the schools,
 - \$1.2 million to the First Nation School Board (FNSB) for language teachers in the schools; and
 - \$6.8 million in additional funding to support the First Nation School Board initiatives around student support, culture/language/heritage, indigenization of the curriculum and community committees.
- The Department is in tripartite discussions for the renewal of JEAP priorities and the development of an implementation plan. At a later stage funding discussions will begin.
- The funding agreement with the FNSB expired on June 30, 2024, and the Department is working with the FNSB on a funding formula for the 2024-25 school year.
- Working with Yukon First Nations on a new teacher resource and professional learning tool for Yukon First Nations languages, cultures, histories, and ways of knowing, doing and being in all grade levels and subject areas.
- Implementing a collaboration framework with Yukon First Nations.
- The launch of the Ready-to-Learn Schools initiative in schools across the Yukon beginning in 2022. This program supports schools to affect positive social change and well-being for students and staff. It is based on the

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Education

understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.

- Working with First Nation governments and other partners to deliver and enhance early learning child care program in the Yukon.
- Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources, and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.
- Completing engagement on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners.
- Providing all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

2019 Office of the Auditor General (OAG) recommendations:

- 42: The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to improve student outcomes, particularly for Yukon First Nations and rural students, including:
 - analyzing the root causes of poor student outcomes,
 - defining performance targets,
 - actions to reach these targets, and
 - evaluating the effectiveness of these actions.
- 47: The Department should implement its required oversight mechanisms to provide summary reports to the Minister and complete teacher evaluations.
- 70: The Department should conduct a full review of its services and supports for inclusive education, including how best to:
 - evaluate its approach to inclusive education,
 - determine effectiveness of services and supports,
 - determine whether sufficient resources are in place to support inclusive education,
 - prioritize students for specialized assessments,

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Education

- assess and track specialist recommendations, and
- assess and track teachers' use of recommended strategies.
- 89: The Department should complete and implement its policy to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to meet the Education Act's requirements, and a strategic action plan with specific, measurable actions and timelines.
- 93: The Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the status of the Joint Education Action Plan's initiatives and determine how and when to complete them.
- 99: With Yukon First Nations, School Boards, and School Councils, the Department of Education should develop policies and guidelines to support First Nations language learning, including:
 - determining the language goals for individual schools,
 - considering a range of approaches for the specific language, student population density, and community interests, and
 - identifying options to support Yukon First Nations languages both during regular school hours and outside of school.
- 109: The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

CYAO referenced in Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion note – refer to HOT04/SI05

Value:

- The Department of Education recognizes the Child and Youth Advocate's valuable role of advocacy and support on behalf of Yukon children and youth.

Recommended response:

- We appreciate the 2023-24 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office, which outlines work undertaken by the Child and Youth Advocate in the areas of systematic racism in education, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy in Yukon schools, student attendance, safety in schools including responding to sexualized abuse in Yukon schools and use of restraints and confinements at Jack Hulland Elementary School, and education and behavioural supports for students with special needs.
- We understand that the Child and Youth Advocate Office is working with Government of Yukon to undertake a review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act and while Department of Education is not leading this work, we will provide input into this review as appropriate.
- We are pleased to be working with the Child and Youth Advocate and acting on many fronts to address these important issues.
- As outlined in the Advocacy Protocol Agreement between our two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperative information sharing is a priority.

Systemic Advocacy- Children with Complex Needs

- On April 16, 2024, Department of Health and Social Services and Education received notice that the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate

Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)

Education

office is actively working on a systemic review regarding how Yukon children with complex needs are supported by the departments

- Staff from both departments along with external partners participated in a workshop: Community Collaboration to Support Children with exceptional needs.
- We will continue to work with Health and Social Services, external partners and the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate to continue how we support students with complex needs.

Systemic Racism Review:

- The Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate recently announced a collaboration on the review systemic of discrimination and racism in education. We acknowledge that barriers exist in the Yukon's education system and we have started the work to remove these barriers.
- Education's Deputy Minister has met with the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate and the Yukon First Nation Education Director's Executive Director to learn more about this review.
- We continue to have regular meetings with the Child and Youth Advocate to discuss matters of shared interest and to find solutions to individual and systemic advocacy matters.
- Regular meetings offer an opportunity to collaborate with the Child and Youth Advocate on individual advocacy matters along with broader initiatives, including student safety, attendance and reducing barriers to student success.
- The Department of Education recognizes the Child and Youth Advocate's valuable role in advocacy and support on behalf of Yukon children and youth.

- We acknowledge that barriers exist in our education system – these have been highlighted in many reviews and reports, including Dr. Nikki Yee's *Review of Inclusive and Special Education Report*, the 2019 Auditor General's *Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon* report and the Child and Youth Advocate's *Review on School Attendance in the Yukon*.
- For over three years, the Department of Education has been actively collaborating with our educational partners to implement the recommendations in these reports.
- We have numerous initiatives underway aimed at building inclusive, holistic education and reducing barriers, which is the essence of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).
- I do want to emphasize that we value all our educators and their tireless work to support all Yukon students and overcoming these challenges requires collective effort and systemic reform.
- As we move forward, we will work with the Child and Youth Advocate on this review. Our commitment to ongoing improvement, collaboration, inclusivity and fostering belonging for all our learners remains unwavering.
- We acknowledge the need to work nation-to-nation with our First Nations governments to learn more from them on the approach and outcomes for this review.

Hidden Valley Report:

- We value the work of the Child and Youth Advocate to review and report on sexualized abuse in Yukon schools.
- We accepted the report recommendations in principle, and a detailed formal response from the Department was provided directly to the Child and Youth Advocate in 2022.

- Many of the recommendations in the report closely align with the work currently underway as a part of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE) and the Safer Schools Action Plan. We committed to providing a progress report within one year on the government's actions to date.
- We provided a progress report on October 12, 2023, detailing the progress that the Government of Yukon has made in implementing the recommendations put forth by the Child and Youth Advocate's Office.
- Our progress reflects that the work of the Safer Schools Action Plan has been fully implemented and integrated into the department and across the Yukon government. We will continue our efforts to make schools safer and more inclusive environments for all students.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address the issues that have been identified in the reports we have received.

Student Attendance Report:

- We received the report on student attendance from the Child and Youth Advocate in May 2021, and acknowledged it in ceremony alongside the Review of Inclusive and Special Education report in June 2021.
- We accepted the report recommendations in principle, and a detailed formal response from the Department has been provided directly to the Child and Youth Advocate.
- Many recommendations in the attendance report overlap with those from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education. We worked in partnership with the First Nation Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education to develop and finalize a work plan to guide our joint response to the Review of School Attendance and the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)

Education

- Through regular online reports to partners and the public, we will share progress on this work.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Child and Youth Advocate has undertaken two Education-related, systemic reviews (Attendance and Hidden Valley Elementary School) and is undertaking a systemic review of Discrimination and Racism in the Yukon Education System, as well as ongoing advocacy casework.
-

Background:

2024 Review of Systemic Discrimination and Racism

- On December 15, 2023, the office of the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate (YCYA) indicated in writing their intention to conduct a review of systemic racism in the Yukon education system, which the Executive Director of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) announced at an event on March 20, 2024.
- On March 27, 2023, the Deputy Minister and a number of Department of Education officials met with officials from the YCYA and YFNED to have an initial discussion on the terms of reference and next steps regarding the review.
- The Department of Education has provided information requested to the YCYA.

2022-23 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office

- The annual report of the CYAO includes activities of its office for the 12 months ending March 31, 2023. The report is provided to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
- The report references Education numerous times and cites Education as highest for advocacy issues (103 new issues, compared to 83 for HSS Family and Children Services).
- It also references that the Child and Youth Advocate has dealt with the following number of Access to Education issues: Attendance (39), Safety in School (29), Educational Supports (21), and Behavioural Supports (11).

The CYAO

Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)

Education

- The Child and Youth Advocate operates under the authority of the Child and Youth Advocate Act (2009).
- As an independent office of the Legislative Assembly, the Advocate is accountable to children and youth in Yukon. Their role is to ensure children and youth's views, rights and interests are upheld. The Advocate serves children and youth who are eligible, or currently receiving government services and programs.
- Work of the CYAO is guided by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Act, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2S+ Calls to Justice.

Hidden Valley Elementary School Systemic Review

- The CYAO has completed its review of policies, protocols, and actions to ensure student safety and supports. The final report was released in October 2022. Education provided a formal response on November 23, 2022.
- The CYAO made 8 recommendations to the Department of Education, which were all accepted in principle.
- On October 12, 2023, we provided the Child and Youth Advocate's Office with our promised one-year response report detailing the progress that the Government of Yukon had made in implementing their recommendations.
- On January 25, 2024, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate provided the Minister of Education with a document titled *YCAO Progress Tracker re. Yukon Government's 2023 update on Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Procedures*.
 - This "progress tracker" is a newly developed tool that the YCAO is using to monitor implementation of its recommendations for systematic and policy reviews.
 - Of the 8 recommendations in the 2022 report:
 - 6 have a rating of "some progress". Work has started but is not complete.
 - 1 has a rating of "significant progress". Extensive progress has been made, but the work is not complete.

Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)

Education

- 1 has a rating of "fully implemented".

Jack Hulland Elementary School Systemic Review

- On November 21, 2021, the CYAO notified the department of a systemic review regarding the Yukon government's response to reports of restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- It was clarified between CYAO and ADM of Schools and Student Services at the time that ongoing updates and meetings were satisfactory and a review of services and supports to families may come after the RCMP completes their investigation.
- On July 14, 2022, the CYAO requested disclosure of a summary and select records provided to the RCMP as per their criminal investigation. The RCMP confirmed that the information requested is evidence in a law enforcement matter and/or criminal proceeding and release will obstruct the matter proceeding. The request may be reviewed at a future date.
- In December 2022, the CYAO met with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to provide a one-year update.
- In July 2023, the CYAO met again with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to discuss updates.
- The Advocate reported promising practices such as interdepartmental meetings with CYAO, RCMP interview process and a parent therapeutic support group, as well as areas for further improvement such as communication with students and families at other Yukon schools, those no longer in school and also between the CYAO.

Meetings

- The ADM of Schools and the ADM of Corporate Services and Programs holds regularly scheduled meetings with the CYAO and her team to address student and systemic advocacy issues.
- Members of the CYAO staff meet frequently with branch staff and, in particular the Director of Student Support Services to work on individual advocacy issues.

Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)

Education

Child and Youth Advocate Attendance Review

- The Government of Yukon requested the Advocate's independent review be conducted under Section 15 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* to ensure the Child and Youth Advocate can work with partner groups that have perspectives as well as roles and responsibilities to support student attendance, including Yukon First Nations.
- Terms of Reference for the review were established. They incorporated the department's requests that the review have broad engagement, examine root causes, and provide a report tabled by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
 - The review focused on children 16 years and under; and included discussions with a number of partners. The CYAO made 14 recommendations to the Department of Education.

Child and Youth Advocate Systemic Advocacy- Community Safety

- On December 4, 2023, the CYAO requested information from the Departments of Justice, Health and Social Services and Education on:
 1. Which YG departments address community safety within their mandate and/or are leading the interagency response to community safety? What are the roles of the relevant departments in addressing safety and protection issues for children and youth throughout the Yukon?
 2. What collective measures are being taken to assess risk and increase safety in schools and the broader community? What is YG doing to coordinate a response to the issue of community safety, particularly as it pertains to children and youth?
 3. What communication and interagency protocols are in place for sharing information between agencies and with children, youth and families?
 4. How is YG assessing and tracking information regarding trends in youth violence?
 5. What is YG doing to assess and reallocate resources for youth impacted by community violence? How are facilities, programs and services being evaluated?

Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT03

Fall 2024

Child and Youth Advocate Office
(CYAO)

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

Education

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP03

Safer Schools: refer to HOT07/DPT14

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education continues to support schools in developing their Joint Health and Safety Committees by ensuring that appropriate training is provided and that schools have access to all the tools required.
- We are pleased to note that we are in compliance with the health and safety committee requirements for departmental workplaces.
- We worked closely with the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board to determine how our program was performing and how it could be more effective.

Additional response:

- The Department of Education met the 2022 Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board inspection report timelines for submitting information about Joint Health and Safety Committees at Yukon schools.
- We continue to work with schools to ensure that their Joint Health and Safety Committees have the proper training and resources to function and conduct their important work
- Throughout the school year, the department submits all worksite Joint Health and Safety Committee documentation to the Health, Safety, and Wellness Division with the Public Service Commission.

Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In August 2022, the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board published an inspection report that outlined gaps and inconsistencies in the department's health and safety program.
-

Background:

- The health and safety requirements for individual workplaces are based on staff size and outlined in *Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.
 - Where required, all Department of Education worksites have functioning Joint Health and Safety Committees; this includes the central administration building.
 - We will continue to provide training and orientation for health and safety representatives in workplaces with under twenty staff.
- In January 2022, Education received notification that the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board was conducting an investigation to determine the current state of Joint Health and Safety Committees in schools.
 - Education provided all available documents within the requested timeframe.
- Education has developed a framework to ensure all the necessary training and resources are available, and that all worksites are adhering to the *Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.
 - The framework consists of continuous monthly communication with the schools on upcoming training opportunities.
 - Education is working with the Public Service Commission to create a new format to deliver training so that training will be more accessible.
 - Schools continue to update their processes for providing documentation such as meeting minutes and worksite inspections.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-22

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We work closely with Yukon First Nation governments and our partners to collaborate on educational priorities and support the success of Yukon learners.

Recommended response:

- I appreciate that it has now been over 35 years since the *Education Act* was passed, and we have heard on many occasions from Yukon First Nation Governments and education stakeholders about changes that they feel need to be made to this important piece of legislation.
- We are collaborating with Yukon First Nations and education partners to do extensive work on reshaping education in the Yukon.
- We remain mindful that some actions may require changes to the *Education Act* to fully implement.

Additional response:

- We are working towards identifying the education priorities that will be established with all 14 Yukon First Nation Governments, the Government of Yukon, and the Government of Canada, and some actions may require changes to the *Act* to fully implement.
- The *Education Act* is complex and significant legislation, and to do this work in consultation with our many interested stakeholders will take time.
- We are currently reviewing the *Child Care Act*, and once that is complete, we will identify future legislative priorities for the Department of Education.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Letter from YFNED in May 2024 requesting a review of the *Education Act*.

Background:

Act Amendment History

- 2002 - removed the staff relations sections and placed them in the Education Labour Relations Act.
- 2013 - added 15 hours of student instructional time and 15 hours of professional development time to each school year.
- 2013 - changed school council elections to the spring and have councils hold office beginning on the next year's school opening date and clarify the scope of powers for the Education Appeal Tribunal to hear appeals.
- 2016 - clarified that the minimum and maximum numbers of members specified in the Act refer to elected members only. Guaranteed First Nation representatives are in addition to these members and do not count toward the minimum or maximum.
- 2022 - promoted equity and non-discrimination and to ensure that all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- 2024 - removed cap on locally developed courses

Act Review History

- A process to review the Education Act began in 1999 and draft Education Act legislation was introduced in the fall of 2022. The government of the day fell before the legislation was to be voted upon.

List of Education Legislation

There are numerous acts and regulations that guide the work of the Department of Education. These include:

For Schools:

- Education Act
 - French as a First Language Instruction Regulation
 - Kindergarten Regulations

- Regulation on Fees for Non-resident Students
- Separate School Regulation
- Alternative Education
 - Home Education Regulations
 - Private Schools Regulations
 - Regulation on Fees for Distance Education Courses
- School Trespass Act
- School Operations:
 - Moveable Soccer Goal Safety Act
 - Moveable Soccer Goal Safety Regulation
 - Student Transportation Regulations
- Teachers:
 - Teaching Profession Act
 - Teacher Certification Regulations
 - Teacher Qualification Regulations
- School Elections:
 - School Board Election Regulations
 - School Committee Election Regulation
 - School Council Election Regulations

For Early Learning and Child Care

- Early Learning and Child Care
 - Child Care Act
 - Child Care Act Exemption Regulation

- Child Care Act Regulation
- Child Care Centre Program Regulation
- Child Care Subsidy Regulation
- Family Day Home Program Regulation
- School-Age Program Regulation

For Post-Secondary and Future Skills:

- Apprentice Training Act
 - Apprentice Training and Tradesmen's Qualifications Regulations
- Occupational Training Act
 - Student Training Allowance Regulations
- Student Financial Assistance Act
 - Student Financial Assistance Regulations
- Trade Schools Regulation Act
 - Trade Schools Regulation
- Yukon University Act
 - Degree Programs Regulation

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT06

Fall 2024

Figures at a Glance

Education

FINANCE

O&M BUDGET (000's)

	2024-25 Mains	2024-25 Supp #1
Education Support Services Deputy Minister's Office \$728 Communications \$953 Human Resources \$2,888 Finance \$1,736	\$6,305	\$6,305
School Authorities K-12 \$90,140 CSFY \$11,278 FNSB \$26,356	\$127,774	\$128,432
Administration and Support Administration \$338 Technology & Student Information \$2,025 Facilities and Transportation \$8,585	\$10,948	\$11,601
Corporate Services and Programs Administration \$410 Information Technology and Analytics \$2,379 Policy, Planning and Evaluation \$1,030 French Programs \$1,616 Training Programs \$10,811 Early Learning and Child Care \$42,500	\$58,746	\$64,590
Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Administration \$114 Student Support Services \$3,333 Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education \$500 Student Wellbeing \$1,798	\$5,745	\$5,445
Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives Administration \$351 Program Delivery and Curriculum Development \$3,906 First Nations Initiatives \$7,775	\$12,032	\$12,032
Yukon University	\$31,195	\$31,195
Total	\$252,745	\$259,600

FTEs by Location

	School based*	Central Administration-school based**	Central Administration***	Total
2023-24 budgeted FTEs (Mains)	1,025.08	18.50	144.30	1,187.88
2023-24 budgeted FTEs (Supp 2)	1,057.70	29.71	146.09	1,233.50
2024-25 budgeted FTEs (Mains)	1,076.78	32.00	144.70	1,253.48
2024-25 budgeted FTEs (Supp 1)	1,087.58	32.00	144.70	1,264.28

*School based includes all three school authorities and only includes those based at a school.

**Central administration-school based includes superintendents, wellness specialists, and consultants (such as curriculum and experiential consultants) whose home base is at Central Administration, but their primary function is to support schools?

***Central administration includes all three school authorities but does not include central administration - school based staff. Includes staff whose primary job function is not school specific or that is administrative or supports the overall department examples include but not limited to ADMs, DM, Executive Assistants, Advisors, finance, policy, data analytics, training programs, communications, human resources and Early Learning and Child Care.

HUMAN RESOURCES

As per Main Estimates		2024-2025	2023-2024
1	Teachers	587.3 FTEs (includes all school authorities)	560.1 FTEs (includes all school authorities)
2	Paraprofessionals (EAs and Remedial Tutors)	Budgeted 275.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)	Budgeted 251.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)

Note: Approval was given to hire an additional 40 FTEs effective July 2023 + 20 FTEs for 2024-25

EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE

The Yukon Universal Child Care commitment is to ensure that all families have access to an average of \$10 a day out-of-pocket parent fees for full-time regulated early learning and child care spaces for children under age six

2024-25

Yukon overall average daily rate for Infant to kindergarten with universal child care: \$9.34

Category	Parent Pays Monthly on average 2024-25	Daily Average Fee 2024-25
Infant	\$264.71	\$12.17
Toddler	\$200.61	\$9.22
Preschool	\$191.83	\$8.82
kindergarten	\$164.45	\$7.56

# of licensed spaces (0 - 12)	# of children enrolled	# of early childhood educators
March 2021: 1,802	March 2021: 1,467	March 2021: 333
July 2024: 2,215	August 2024: 1,920	August 2024: 661

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

		2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
1	Students on IEPs (includes CSFY and FNSB)	365	383 as of June 2024	393 at the end of the 2021-22 school year
2	Student Learning Plans	930	938*	N/A
3	Behaviour Support Plans	77	58*	N/A
4	Safety Plans	33	31*	N/A

*We are working with schools to make sure they are accurately reporting this data. The January information is the most recent we have.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT06

Fall 2024

Figures at a Glance

Education

Educational Psychological Assessments

Completed since January 2023	182 as of June 2024**
Waitlisted	0***

**Data to be updated based on data tracking project work underway.

***The branch has caught up on the list for 2024. A new waitlist will be created for the 2024-25 school year as needed. Numbers will change as the data tracking project is implemented.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

ADULT LEARNERS

2024-2025 Forecast

2023- 2024 Actuals

1	Registered Apprentices	520 (in 2024 calendar year)	574* (in 2023 calendar year)
2	Trade (Journey person) Certifications issued	95 (in 2024 calendar year)	56 (in 2023 calendar year)
3	STEP program positions created	137 (summer 2024)	88 (summer 2024)
4	Summer Career placements created	38 (summer 2024)	31 (summer 2024)
5	Post-secondary student funding expenditures (Academic Year - August 1 to July 31) (Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance, Yukon excellence Awards)	\$5,950,000 (Aug 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025)	\$5,713,554 (Aug 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024)

* The program area recently completed a file review and identified 105 inactive apprentices (inactive for more than 2 years). Communication went out to apprentices to verify their status. Files can be reactivated at any time.

OVERALL ENROLMENT COUNTS IN YUKON SCHOOLS

	May 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Change (+/-) Since May 2024
**All Yukon Schools	6,035	6,164	6,191	27
Rural Schools	1,074	1,065	1,075	10
Urban Schools	4,961	5,099	5,116	17
Elementary Students	3,742	3,769	3,783	14
Secondary Students	2,293	2,395	2,408	13
First Nation School Board	852*	831	834	3
Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon	382	393	392	-1
Yukon Education Schools	4,801	4,940	4,965	25

* Starting in the 2023-24 school year the Yukon First Nation School Board started to operate and manage an additional 3 schools.

** This excludes Aurora Virtual School, École Nomade, pre-kindergarten and post secondary school students.

* Aurora Virtual School	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current
Homeschool	49	132	146	126	127	149
Aurora School (Primary)	98	76	114	117	132	109
École Nomade	12	11	9	24	6	9

* Only current numbers available as historical data is still being compiled and validated.

GRADUATION RATES IN YUKON SCHOOLS

Six-Year Graduation rate

	2017-23
Students enrolled minus outmigrants plus new arrivals	372
Dogwood Diploma Graduated	297
Adult Graduation Program Graduated	22
Six-Year Graduation rate	86%

Grade 12 graduation rate

	2022-23
Potential Graduates	373
Successful Graduates	295
Grade 12 Graduation Rate	79%

*Note: The Department of Education anticipates receiving 2023-24 graduation rates in late October or early November, which will be reviewed and published by December 2024.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

Education

Value:

- We want to ensure that all Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offering all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is actively working with Yukon First Nations and Canada as partners in the joint renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan for 2025-2035, also referred to as JEAP.
- It is an exciting time in education, the past few years we have seen unprecedented change, and I look forward to seeing where we can go next.
- In the meantime, we continue to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to implement actions that support the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan 2014-2024. The four priority areas include:
 - K-12 Culture and Language,
 - Authority, Control and Responsibility,
 - Sustainability, Supports and Success, and
 - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to the implementation of the JEAP, some actions to date include:
 - Continuing to work with Yukon First Nations on a government-to-government basis at the community-level to address education priorities in their Traditional Territory, often through an education or funding agreement. In 2024-25 we committed approximately \$1.83 million to support this work with 14 Yukon First Nations.

Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

Education

- Continuing work with the Yukon Native Language Center, providing \$1.19M in funding to support the revitalization of Yukon First Nation languages.
- Allocating \$2.6 million to specifically support language initiatives within the schools in 2024-25.
- Finalizing a student data sharing Memorandum of Understanding and data working group with Yukon First Nations and currently working on updating this work.
- Providing \$735,000 to the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to support their work on the Joint Education Action Plan and administering the First Nation Education Commission.
- Working with First Nation governments and other partners to deliver and enhance early learning child care program in the Yukon.
- Launching the Ready-to Learn Schools initiative in Fall 2022 in schools across the Yukon.
- Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.

Additional response:

- The establishment of the First Nation School Board with eleven schools now operated by the First Nation School Board is an example of Yukon First Nations reclaiming authority and control over education, a key commitment of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- The First Nation School Board is provided the following funds to support the implementation of the JEAP:

Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

Education

- \$1.2 million for language teachers in the schools
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 audit recommended that the Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the status of the Joint Education Action Plan's initiatives and determine how and when to complete those that remain.
-

Background:

- The four priority areas in the Joint Education Action Plan, or JEAP, remain relevant, and they will continue to be prioritized and addressed through collective and community-level agreements. Those priority areas are:
 - K-12 Culture and Language
 - Authority, Control and Responsibility
 - Sustainability, Supports and Success
 - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap
- We combined the two previous Transfer Payment Agreements with CYFN (one for Education Initiatives, one for FNEC) and added more resources for JEAP for a one-year term agreement for \$735,000 (up from \$435,000 combined annual amount from the two previous 3-year agreements). This now flows to YFNED as per CCOE and CYFN request, instead of CYFN.
- Work continues in this regard, for example:
 - Transfer Payment Agreements with Yukon First Nations, allocating over \$1.83 million among the 14 Yukon First Nations.
 - Signed a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2020 with the Chiefs Committee on Education. The Data Working Group was formed to collaborate and establish arrangements to enable and expedite the sharing of Yukon First Nation student aggregated data for the purpose of improving the delivery of education programs and improving student outcomes.

Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

Education

JEAP Renewal Progress

- In October of 2023, the First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) provided its first draft of a JEAP Implementation Plan ('the implementation plan') for the ten-year period from 2025 to 2035. At this time, Education also received notice that the original Joint Education Action Plan 2014-2024 principles and priorities will remain the same for 2025-2035.
- The initial draft of the 2025-2035 draft implementation plan was prepared by the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate ('the Directorate'), as advised by FNEC to support the renewal of the JEAP.
- At an FNEC meeting on May 9, 2024, the Department provided FNEC with initial feedback on the draft Implementation Plan.
- A Working Group was established in June of 2024 to move forward collaboratively to finalize a joint draft of the JEAP Implementation Plan for consideration and approval by Yukon First Nations government and the governments of Yukon and Canada.
- The Working Group has representatives from FNEC, Yukon Education and the federal government.
- On October 25, 2024, Minister McLean hosted a leadership meeting with Yukon First Nation Chiefs invited to discuss the progress of the development of the draft JEAP Implementation Plan for 2025 – 2035, including each governments priorities for education with respect to inclusion in the Implementation Plan.
- First Nations governments and Government of Yukon approval processes, timelines and next steps were also topics of discussion at leadership meeting.

Student performance data reporting

- The Data Sharing MOU between CCOE and Yukon Education has established a Data Working Group. This group has representation from Yukon First Nations, Yukon Education and CCOE technical staff. The purpose of the group is to allow for the sharing of aggregated YFN student performance data and to ensure a role for YFNs in the review and quality assurance process for such data.
- In the past, there have been issues in producing relevant reports on Yukon First Nations student performance data and sharing this data with Yukon First Nations.

Session Briefing Note

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Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

Education

- To address these issues and more effectively support Yukon First Nations data requests, the department has developed a YFN dashboard containing various datasets. This dashboard has been provided to YFNs and YFNED.
- The department is working collaboratively with the Data Working Group and YFNs, within the ATIPP Act to develop solutions for sharing data with Yukon First Nations while respecting privacy laws.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students when they are in our care in Yukon schools.

Recommended response:

- It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the specifics of any lawsuit when they are before the courts.
- Every resident of the Yukon has the right to approach the courts if they believe their legal rights have not been respected.
- It is not the Government of Yukon's policy, nor its intentions, to restrict any citizen's access to legal recourse to voice their concerns.

Additional response:

- All Yukoners have a legal duty to report suspected abuse, harm, or unlawful behaviour against children, and all allegations or reports of harm are taken seriously.
- We focus on addressing and meeting the educational requirements of all students, while proactively sharing information with families to ensure they remain confident that their children are safe and secure while at school.
- When sharing information on any incident or claim, we must maintain the privacy and dignity of all staff and students involved.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- A number of civil actions have been filed against the department in regard to the sexualized abuse of students, alleged holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff at Jack Hulland, and community schools, and special education rights of students not being respected.

Background:

- The Department of Education is assigned legal counsel from the Department of Justice when legal claims are made against the government.
- As of June 2024 there were 10 active litigation claims involving the Department of Education in Yukon courts.
- The Government of Yukon cannot comment on specifics of any case before the courts.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum: refer to CU05

Curriculum Resource Material Review – Catholic Curriculum: refer to CU02

School Council Code of Conduct: refer to EP05

Value:

- The Department of Education values diversity in its school communities and wants to provide safe, welcoming, inclusive, and affirming learning environments for all students.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- People of all sexual orientations, gender identities, ancestry, places of origin, ethnicities, citizenships, religions, ages and abilities have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- School authorities work with their entire school community to develop and implement proactive strategies that support the inclusion, respect and dignity of 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their families.
- Parents, guardians, and caregivers are encouraged to contact their child's school for information on how Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity inclusive education is being implemented. This includes details about safe spaces, contacts, activities, and organizations that promote equality and non-discrimination in Yukon schools.

Action plan:

- The Department of Education updated its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, also known as SOGI, policy in August 2023, as outlined in the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- When we released the SOGI policy update, we committed to further work, including clarifying gender identity inclusion in sports.
- As part of our continued SOGI policy review, we are looking at the best ways to support schools to implement the policy in schools.

Yukon Child and Youth Advocate review

- In June of 2024, the Government of Yukon announced that it has referred the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- This referral asks the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's Office to assess the SOGI policy's current impact and make recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe schools and school communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

ARC Foundation:

- In the fall of 2023, the department contracted the ARC Foundation, a charitable foundation, to help educators implement the SOGI policy and foster more inclusive schools. The foundation is providing the tools and resources of the SOGI 1,2,3 program.
- The SOGI policy requires schools to develop school-based procedures and guidelines. Schools, school boards and councils have the support of the Department of Education, and guidance of best practices from the ARC Foundation.
- As Minister of Education and the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, I am fully committed to the ongoing implementation of the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and am encouraging the two departments to collaborate on this priority.

Catholic school parent concerns about textbook:

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- While Catholic schools have the right to provide religious education programs and lessons that teach Catholic values to their students, they do not have the right to provide teachings about sexual orientation or gender identity that are inconsistent with Yukon's laws and Department of Education policies.
- Catholic schools in the Yukon are public schools, and Catholic educators are Yukon public servants. All schools and teachers must adhere to all Government of Yukon legislation and policies.
- There is no place for homophobic or transphobic teachings in our public school system.
- We remain committed to working with the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to jointly review instructional resources and materials that uphold and teach Catholic values and align with Yukon law and Department of Education policies.

Education Act Amendments response:

- In spring 2022, the Government of Yukon was pleased to support amendments to the *Education Act* to promote equity and non-discrimination and to ensure that all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- We continue to encourage and support schools to meet their legal obligations to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is considerable interest in how Yukon schools are offering safe and inclusive environments to 2SLGBTQIA+ students, including the SOGI policy's statement that schools will recognize people's correct pronouns, as declared by the individuals themselves. This requirement applies to students who have not made official changes to their name or gender in school records.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- SOGI 1, 2, 3 implementation in other provinces has been under scrutiny.
-

Background:

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and SOGI Policy

- Our updated SOGI policy notes:
 - “The SOGI policy has always applied to all school-sponsored activities, and trans students continue to be protected and entitled to support.”
 - “The next rounds of evaluation will include deeper discussions around how to better proactively foster inclusion, with consideration for the inclusion of trans students in sports.”
- Some people believe that schools should tell a parent/guardian if their child wants to be called by a name or pronouns other than their official name/pronouns. The policy states that the “Department of Education values diversity in its school communities and wants to provide safe, welcoming, inclusive and affirming learning environments for all students.”
- While we understand the importance of involving parents in the lives of their children, the issue is a delicate one that must consider the human rights of students, particularly those who are transgender or nonbinary. We believe that schools should involve parents when there is a specific problem or issue that could impact the child's safety, wellbeing, or education.
- Training and resources are offered to all staff. Further training is required for staff members and counsellors identified as safe contacts to prepare them to respond knowledgeably to 2SLGBTQIA+ students and students with 2SLGBTQIA+ family members.
- Yukon schools have a number of universal, stand-alone washrooms available, and we are working to ensure that all school facilities have stand-alone or gender-neutral washrooms. Building standards have now been updated to ensure new schools will have gender inclusive washrooms.
- In the 2021 LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, the Department of Education made a number of commitments, including to update the SOGI policy.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- The August 2023 updates to the SOGI policy address issues such as use of a student's correct gender pronouns, update terminology to be trans-inclusive, address gender-identity inclusion in sports, and clarify points of contact and responsibilities at the department and school levels.
- On March 23, 2022, the opposition asked the Minister to commit to engaging with the school community to update the SOGI policy before the end of the current school year (June 2022).
- The funding agreement for Catholic schools in the Yukon accommodates religious instruction while emphasizing that they are publicly supported schools with the same responsibilities as other schools, including those identified in the SOGI policy.

Education Act

- Amendments to the *Education Act* make it a legal requirement for Principals to ensure that initiatives and activities in schools are inclusive of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- School administrators have been provided with information about their legislative responsibilities as well as reference materials and resources.
- Counsellors and administrators have been provided with local and national SOGI and Gender and Sexuality Alliance information.
- At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year the Department of Education provided professional development training to administrators and teachers on the requirements of the Education Act and the SOGI and Safe and Caring Schools policies.
- Several Yukon schools have Gender and Sexuality Alliances and other 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives.

Catholic school parent concerns about textbook

- Following a comprehensive review by Department of Education personnel and St. Francis staff members, a new textbook was selected for use in the Grade 12 Morals and Ethics course at St. Francis for the 2024-25 school year.
- This review was part of Yukon Education's commitment that all educational materials align with both St. Francis' curriculum and the Department of Education's policies.

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation

Education

- The Catholic Episcopal Corporation and the Department of Education are both pleased with this outcome and will continue to review resources and support educators in delivering Catholic education in line with the department's policies.

Catholic school concern about school council meeting comments

- Holy Family School Council held a meeting in June 2024 where a School Council member is noted to have made comments that run counter to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (SOGI) policy ("marriage is between a man and woman" and that "homosexuality and pride are deadly sins").
- After this comment was made by a School Council member, a teacher at Holy Family left the meeting. The teacher feels that the comment violated the Department of Education's SOGI policy.
- The teacher complained to the Department of Education asking for the removal of the School Council Member and was informed that the Department does not have the authority to remove an Elected Council Member.
- The teacher indicated that the Education Act allows for an application to the court to determine a removal. The teacher also said the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification policy does not adequately address what should happen when it is violated and does not feel supported by the Department of Education and is upset that there have been no consequences (removal of School Council Member) and has since indicated that they have filed a human rights complaint.
- The Department of Education will support Holy Family's administration and School Council to extend a code of conduct into the operations.
- The Department will follow up with Holy Family School Council Chair to deal with this matter and to ensure the policy is being respected.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-26

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Management of Student Records in Schools

Education

Value

- We understand the importance of transparency, accessibility, and security when it comes to student records. It is vital for families to have access to this information, and we are committed to ensuring that these rights are upheld.

Recommended response:

- Under the *Education Act*, section 20, parents, caregivers, and students aged 16 or older have the right to examine and copy their child's, or their own student records.
- We are committed to transparency, and to maintaining open and clear communication between schools and families.
- In managing these records, we strictly adhere to the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP)* Act, ensuring robust student privacy and data protection.
- We encourage families seeking access to student records to collaborate with their school administrators for efficient and guided assistance.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Records management was discussed during the fall 2023 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Background:

- The *Education Act* requires a student record be maintained for each enrolled student. These records are maintained according to established guidelines.
- Student records may be withheld when there is an ongoing RCMP investigation and/or civil lawsuit where legal holds of records are in place.
- During an RCMP investigation the RCMP may request that records provided as evidence be held in confidence for the duration of the investigation.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT10

Fall 2024

Management of Student Records in Schools

Education

- When an investigation is closed, and the Department has final clearance to proceed, families who request access to these records will be provided with their documents.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

Education

Safer Schools– HOT07/DPT14

Value

- The wellbeing, safety, and protection of students when they are in our care is our top priority.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon accepted, in principle, all eight of the Ombudsman's recommendations on its February 2024 Safer Schools Action Plan assessment.
- On August 27, 2024, we provided a progress update to the Ombudsman.
- We have made significant progress on each of the recommendations.
- The policy and procedure documents have been revised to reflect the Ombudsman's recommendations, and drafts are in internal reviews.
- While the reviews are underway, we are addressing staff training and supports.
- We appreciate the work of all the organizations that have reviewed, reported, or made recommendations on improving student safety. We are committed to continuing system-wide improvements.
- While we have made significant positive changes through the Safer Schools Action Plan, we know there is still more work to do to improve safety and security in Yukon schools. We are committed to continuing this work and we appreciate the recommendations provided by the Ombudsman in this latest report.

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

Education

Additional response:

- In 2024, we accepted the Ombudsman's recommendations in principle - we agree with all the recommendations but have work to do to determine specific details, and complete further analysis, adjustments, and planning.
- Accepting in principle allows us the flexibility needed to effectively implement and operationalize the recommendations. This flexibility is valuable, as there are different ways to achieve the desired outcomes while keeping the safety of our schools and the protection of students at the forefront.
- We thank the Ombudsman and his staff for collaborating with the Department of Education on this review and supporting us with our continuous improvement of processes to ensure the safety of our children.
- We have incorporated the recommendations from the Ombudsman into our work to review and improve our policies and processes.
- The valuable insights provided by the Ombudsman will bring greater clarity to our policies and processes.
- We thank the Ombudsman for their thorough and careful investigation into this matter. Their work is appreciated and will significantly contribute to making our schools safer.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The update to the Ombudsman on their February 27, 2024, report may lead to questions regarding Education's work addressing the recommendations.

Background:

Recommendations

- In the second report, the Ombudsman has eight recommendations that relate to:

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

Education

1. the authority, usability and understanding of policy, procedure and guidance documents
2. the documents needed to respond to serious incidents in school settings and interdepartmental cooperation.
3. the accountability for compliance and use of all guidance and procedures developed from the Safer Schools Action Plan; and
4. the training requirements, implementation and tracking of the legislation, policy, procedures and guidance documents that address serious incidents and communications with families.

Process

- The Office of the Ombudsman investigated a 2021 complaint that the lengthy delay by the Department of Education to inform the parents, guardians and caregivers of students at Hidden Valley Elementary School about 2019 allegation of sexualized abuse of a student by a staff member was unfair. This matter has been the subject of four independent investigations.
- The Ombudsman issued findings in two parts: The first report was issued on September 7, 2023, examining:
 1. why the Department waited more than 19 months to inform parents,
 2. why the Department began sharing information following a CBC news story; and
 3. whether the Department had an obligation to communicate with the parents when it first became aware of the alleged abuse or whether it was prohibited from doing so by law.
- The Ombudsman concluded that the complaint about the communication failure was substantiated but did not make any recommendations at that time.
- The second preliminary report was issued on December 18, 2023, reviewing the Safer Schools Action Plan to determine if it is sufficient to avoid a reoccurrence of the communications failure that resulted in unfairness to the parents as reported in the first report.
- After the Office of the Ombudsman completes their preliminary investigation report, the authority is provided with the report to verify facts, consider the

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

Education

recommendations, and provide comments in relation to the preliminary report for consideration by the Ombudsman.

- The Office of the Ombudsman released their second report on February 27, 2024.

2023 Annual Report of the Yukon Ombudsman, Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner, and Yukon Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

- Among the formal investigations listed in the 2023 Annual Report, the *Left in the Dark – A Special Report on the Hidden Valley Elementary School sexualized assault* (sic) was listed.
- It further noted that “the first of two investigative reports found unfairness in the Department’s delay in communicating with parents ... about allegations that a staff member sexually abused a student, depriving parents of the opportunity to take timely action to help their children.
- It continued, that “the second investigation focused on evaluating the Department’s Safer Schools Action Plan, developed in response to the communications failure.
- The report further notes that the Ombudsman issued his draft report to the Department in December 2023, and as required under the Act, gave them the opportunity to review and provide comment by January 31, 2024.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-23

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

Education

Values

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and partners to monitor and improve student outcomes by identifying and analyzing root causes that can negatively impact a student's learning.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is in the process of developing a 10-year Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners.
- We are engaging with our partners prior to finalizing the strategy to ensure we are taking the time to do this work in a good way.
- The Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners will help us better understand what students need to thrive. It will also help us make better decisions based on facts and current data.
- Over the past year, IRP Consulting led an extensive engagement with Yukon First Nations and the broader education community. The feedback from this engagement forms the foundation of our strategy.
- The strategy aims to address the longstanding gaps in student performance and improve outcomes for Yukon students, including First Nations students, rural students, and students with diverse learning needs.

Additional response:

- The strategy will help us develop a deeper understanding of how we can best support students and make evidence-based decisions that ensure all students have an opportunity to succeed.
- Education staff are committed to doing this work in a good way: with kindness and supportiveness, taking the time to listen, learn, and understand.

Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

Education

- All initiatives in Education - including in schools and in our central services - will align with the values and intentions of the strategy.
 - We highly value our collaborative work with Yukon First Nations, the First Nation School Board, the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to improve outcomes for Indigenous students.
 - We have included the Yukon Association of Education Professionals throughout the development of the Strategy and will complete final engagements prior to releasing the strategy.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the 2019 audit, the Auditor General identified achievement gaps between rural and urban students, as well as Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students.
 - The 2023 Mandate letter states the Minister of Education's work includes "... finalizing the development of a Student Outcome Strategy for implementation to address the long-standing gaps in student performance and improve outcomes for students in the Yukon, including First Nations students, rural students, and students with diverse learning needs."
-

Background:

- Yukon education staff were provided with an update on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners during Welcome Week, August 20 – 23, 2024.
- On March 5, 2024, the Yukon Association for Education Professionals served notice to bargain, pursuant to the Education Labour Relations Act. To respect the bargaining process, formal consultation with the Yukon Association for Education Professionals will take place after bargaining has concluded. In the meantime, the Department has shared an update to give staff a sense of what was heard during the IRP engagements and what the learner outcomes will be. Officials are working with partners to support the strategy's rollout and implementation between 2025 and 2035.

Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

Education

- Recommendation #42 from the 2019 audit, states “The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to address the long-standing gaps in student performance and improve student outcomes, particularly those of Yukon First Nations and rural students.”
- In response, the Department of Education committed to “collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments... to develop and implement an outcome management improvement strategy for the Yukon education system.”
- The Yukon First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) provided a clear preference for the department to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations.
- The Department of Education continues to work with FNEC and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, which is expected to be finalized for the 2025-26 school year.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Video Surveillance: Refer to SI09

Value:

- The Department of Education takes protecting the privacy of Yukoners' personal information very seriously.

Recommended response:

- Department staff have worked diligently to increase awareness of privacy requirements and best practices through training and information.
- Steps have been taken to train managers and staff on the protection of privacy.
- We are actively reviewing workflow processes and training opportunities to prevent privacy breaches.

Additional Response:

- The department's privacy management policy and plan is being reviewed and updated and the privacy awareness culture at the Department of Education has seen a noticeable improvement.
- Staff have been trained to identify, report, and mitigate risk of privacy breaches and are ensuring contractors and service providers are aware of their obligations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On March 25, 2024, the Yukon Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner tabled their 2022 Annual Report with the Yukon Legislative Assembly which featured two stories involving the access and privacy aspects of video surveillance at schools.
 - In 2022, a privacy breach occurred at the Department of Education involving the personal information of 537 individuals that had applied for the Yukon Grant.
-

Background:

- The department is documenting what personal information they collect and how they handle and safeguard that information for all program areas through the Personal Information Map project. This project is near completion.
- The department follows the Yukon Government Privacy Breach Protocols as set out by the government's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy office including notifying the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of significant breaches.
- The 2023 Information and Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner Annual Report noted that of the 83 total privacy files opened that year, 11 files were related to the Department of Education
- The 2023 report described a Compliance Audit for the Department of Education regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of student images or video on internet platforms. The IPC made 6 recommendations. The Department accepted 4 recommendations and rejected 2.
- The 2022 Information and Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner Annual Report took special interest in video surveillance at schools. It described a complaint received in November 2021 about its use of video surveillance in Yukon schools. The Information and Privacy Commissioner conducted an investigation, an Annual Report noted that the Department of Education rejected its recommendations. The Department responded that use of the technology was justified.
- The report also described the Information and Privacy Commissioner's compliance audit to evaluate whether the use of video surveillance in schools adequately protects personal information. The Department of Education committed to ensuring that any new video surveillance technology in schools complies with the 24 recommendations.
- The Information Privacy Commissioner Office completed a Breach Evaluation Report which was sent to the Department of Education in November 2022.

- In November 2022, the Department of Education accepted and started acting on the 4 recommendations in the Information and Privacy Commissioner's evaluation Report on the breach of Yukon Grant information.
 - Actions include:
 - Since January 1, 2024, 158 staff have received annual privacy training.
 - Staff have been trained on:
 - When, why and how to use Secure File Transfer.
 - What is a privacy breach, staff's duty to report, and the process for reporting.
 - What is unauthorized collection, staff's duty to report, and the process.
 - Guidance on how to reduce risk of a breach through better email practices.
 - Another 25 staff have received training on collection notices and consent.
 - Privacy training sessions occurred during Welcome Week 2024 for Yukon Education teachers and school administrators.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to DPT11
Student to Student Harm in Schools: refer to HOT13/SSS04

Value:

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students when they are in our care, at any school in our educational system.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- Since the Safer Schools Action Plan's release, we have done significant work to ensure safe learning environments, and we are committed to supporting students, teachers, and families.
- The action items in the Safer Schools Action Plan emphasized creating safe and caring environments, transparency, accountability, victim-centered approaches, collaboration, and reconciliation in education settings.
- Although the Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented, the work to ensure students are safe at school will never end.

Additional response:

- We continue to work on actions to build back trust and repair and restore confidence in our ability to respond to critical incidents and support school communities.
- We continue to take meaningful steps to improve government-wide coordination in response to critical incidents so that we ensure timely and appropriate supports for children, their families, and the school community.

- We continue to work hard to address policy gaps and enhance safety and oversight mechanisms across all departments and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
 - A few highlights of our ongoing work:
 - We have ongoing training for school-based staff in the requirements of safer schools.
 - We are working on updates to policy and procedure documents to reflect recent recommendations by the Ombudsman.
 - We will be forming a Yukon Parent Advisory Committee to support identification of safety and wellness issues in Yukon schools so we can continue to make well-informed decisions to improve safety for all students in Yukon Schools.
 - We are planning engagement with other government departments, partners, Yukon First Nations and other education partners to enhance prevention and responses to student-to-student harm.
 - We are evaluating how to better support schools, students, families and our contracted school bus services to improve safety for all who ride school buses.
 - In 2023, we updated our Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy and are actively progressing work through our Reimaging Inclusive and Special Education initiative to ensure the creation of inclusive and welcoming learning environments for everyone.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Ombudsman's office released the second of its two reports on the Safer Schools Action Plan on February 27, 2024, and the Government of Yukon provided the Ombudsman's office with a progress update on August 27, 2024.
-

Background:

- The Government of Yukon announced in a news release on June 20, 2023, full implementation of Safer Schools Action Plan.
-

- Key advancements include:
 - Implementation of new policies and procedures for preventing and responding to harm by adults, including guidance for information sharing and reporting allegations to the RCMP (actions 1 and 6).
 - Completion of actions 2, 3, 11, 18 and 20, focused on enhancing corporate guidance and leadership capacity across the organization to improve coordination and response management of critical incidents.
 - The development of comprehensive victim support plans (action 4).
 - A new joint agreement between the departments of Education and Health and Social Services regarding interdepartmental operations and communication when a child's safety is, or is likely to be, at risk (action 7).
 - New corporate procedures and guidance for responding to situations where employees are charged, convicted, or under investigation for criminal conduct, including improved information sharing with the RCMP within the bounds of appropriate legislation (action 8).
 - Completion of training and new requirements for all school-based staff on preventing and responding to harm by adults (action 10, 13 and 14).
 - Implementation of new onboarding practices for all school-based and administrative staff (action 12).
 - Development of processes to strengthen the collection, maintenance and archiving of the assignment of adults who work with students in school-related activities (action 15).
 - Development of a process for ongoing review of policies, procedures and best practices for higher risk educational settings (action 17).
 - Finalization of a Values and Ethics Code for Government of Yukon public servants (action 21).
 - Finalization of a new government-wide communications policy that outlines roles and responsibilities of the public service for leading internal and external communications related to critical incidents and emergencies (action 22); and,
 - An updated temporary assignment directive to provide employees with development opportunities and encourage sharing and networking between departments (action 23).

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT07/DPT14

Fall 2024

Safer Schools

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Graduation rates are an important metric to assess the performance of the school system and support effective decision-making.

Recommended response:

- The department is committed to providing every opportunity for students to graduate and we recognize students follow diverse paths through their educational journey.
- As much as possible, the department follows current British Columbia methodology for calculating graduation rates as we share both curriculum and our student information with British Columbia.
- British Columbia is adding additional graduation rate analyses, and the Yukon is looking how these changes can be applied in the Yukon context.

Additional response:

- Every jurisdiction, including the Yukon, faces challenges with tracking students who stop regularly attending school, complicating the accurate calculation of withdrawal, outmigration, and drop-out rates. We are working to improve our processes and systems to improve our tracking.
- The department is in the process of building a data warehouse to improve the reliability of our data. A data warehouse provides a single, unified repository for the department's data which will significantly improve data reliability and support advanced reporting and analytics.
- Education has engaged the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to validate its student data and graduation rate calculation methodologies. Education intends to continue this collaboration to ensure the most accurate data and analysis possible.

- The department has begun exploring potential attendance policy and procedure changes to improve tracking of withdrawals and outmigration from the Yukon education system.
- Additionally, the department is developing strategies to improve student outcomes which will guide future changes to how graduation and other metrics are calculated and reported, including Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education, the planned Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, and supporting the development of the Joint Education Action Plan.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since December 2023, there have been numerous inquiries in the House regarding graduation rates.

Background

- British Columbia is moving to the “First-time in Grade 12 Graduation Rate” and has added “5-year” and “7-year Graduation Rate” analyses to the current “6-year Graduation Rate” calculation.
- Analyzing complex student data is challenging and graduation rate calculations are tied to understanding the entire student population. Larger jurisdictions rely on estimating this data, which is not a statistically viable option for the Yukon.
- On June 4, 2024, a news release from the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate alleged the department is intentionally inflating graduation numbers to make rates look better.
- Yukon First Nations Education Directorate takes a different approach to calculating graduation rates than the Department of Education. YFNED calculations treat all students who did not graduate within five years as drop-outs and simply divides the number of Dogwood graduates in a cohort by the number of students who originally enrolled in Grade 8.
 - There are many reasons why students may not graduate from a Yukon secondary school within five years. For example, students may have moved to a different

jurisdiction, graduated with an Adult Dogwood Diploma or an Evergreen School Completion Certificate, or may have enrolled in an online program based outside of the Yukon without notifying their school.

Mary Cameron	2024-10-24
Deputy Minister, Department of Education	Date approved

Value:

- Using reliable methodologies in calculating education statistics supports informed decision-making and accountability.

Recommended response:

- As much as possible, the Department follows the British Columbia methodologies for calculating and reporting statistics as we share our curricula, assessments and student information system with British Columbia.
- Where differences exist between British Columbia's methodologies and the Yukon's, it is often due to the Yukon's small population size. British Columbia relies on methodologies and data reporting practices suited to a larger population. The Yukon must adapt these methods to account for our smaller, unique demographic.
- One of these differences is British Columbia's use of a method to estimate outmigrants, which they use to then help estimate drop-out rates, which is a key component for graduation rate calculations. The Yukon is too small to rely on this estimation method and must use other methods to determine drop-out rates while ensuring as much accuracy as possible.

Additional response:

- As part of its efforts to Indigenize and decolonize the school system, the department is working to incorporate the First Nations principle of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession of data, commonly known as OCAP, into our methodologies.
- How this principle is implemented could have significant bearing on how the department reports on the student population in the future.

- Measuring student success is important and the department continues to look for new ways to present the data within each metric of the reports we produce, while balancing important factors such as privacy and transparency.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions on how education statistics are calculated have been asked in the House and media, including on graduation rates, absenteeism, and several of the standardized assessments (e.g., Boehm and Foundation Skills Assessments).
-

Background

- School administrators are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the data they input to the information system.
 - The department is developing processes and systems to help administrators in these efforts.
- There are many situations, such as the calculation of graduation rates, where the reality being described by a particular metric is too complicated to properly describe the whole situation in a single metric. In these situations, analytics teams will use multiple metrics to describe different parts of the story to illustrate the situation as much as possible.
- The Department of Education publishes annual reports, including the *How Are We Doing* reports and the Yukon Wide reports that convey statistical information for the education system. Within these reports, there is a section for each metric that explains the methodology employed in its calculation.
- It is important to note that analyzing complex student data can be challenging and time-consuming. To resolve this problem, the Department is in the process of building a data warehouse, which will enable automation of many processes and improve efficiency and reliability.
- Yukon First Nations Education Directorate takes a different approach to calculating graduation rates than the Department of Education. YFNED calculations treat all students who did not graduate within five years as drop-outs and simply divides the

number of Dogwood graduates in a cohort by the number of students who originally enrolled in Grade 8.

- o There are many reasons why students may not graduate within five years, as students move to different jurisdictions, graduate with an Adult Dogwood Diploma or an Evergreen School Completion Certificate or enroll in an online program based outside of the Yukon without notifying their school.
- Education has also engaged the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to help test and validate its graduation rate calculation methodologies.
- In small populations, aggregated data can more easily reveal individual identities, raising significant privacy concerns, so the department looks for alternative methods for making or representing these calculations, or in some cases chooses not to make a calculation at all.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

Education

Student Data - Graduation Rates: refer to TAB HOT11/DPT15

Student Data - Methodology: refer to TAB DPT16

Value:

- Reporting and sharing student data with Yukon First Nations and other partners supports informed, effective, evidence-based decision-making.

Recommended response:

- We report available student data in many ways, including the annual Yukon-Wide and *How Are We Doing* reports.
- Over the years, reports can vary slightly from previous ones, reflecting improvements in data availability and processes; reports may also be revised and reposted if mistakes or discrepancies are detected.
- We participate as members of a Data Working Group that was established under the Chiefs Committee on Education and includes members from Education, Yukon First Nation governments, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate. This supports our joint goal to improve outcomes for Indigenous students in the Yukon.

Additional response:

- The department gathers, analyzes, and shares student data throughout the school year to give all education partners a better understanding of how students are doing.
- We are exploring the establishment of *Integrated Service Agreements* under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to share non-aggregated data with interested First Nation governments.

Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

Education

- Collaborating with Yukon First Nations to carry out research and analysis initiatives to improve student outcomes is an important component of our approach to using data.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In 2019, the Auditor General identified achievement gaps between rural and urban students, as well as Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students, and found that Education has not done enough to create partnerships to develop and deliver educational programs that meet the needs of Yukon First Nations students.
-

Background

- *School Profile* reports give an overview and analysis of each school's student assessment results and enrolment numbers and are provided to school administrators each January.
- Yukon-Wide reports provide an overview for the general public of academic performance and attendance using comparative and historic analyses of urban, rural and Yukon First Nations, Other Indigenous and non-First Nation students.
 - Yukon-Wide reports are published every spring on Yukon.ca.
- *How Are We Doing* reports are a product of the Data Working Group and focus on Yukon First Nations student performance data,
 - The 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 *How Are We Doing* reports are still being reviewed by our Yukon First Nation partners. While under review, they remain available on Yukon.ca.
- While the department follows British Columbia's methodologies and data reporting practices as much as possible, differences do exist, as there are contextual variations due to the different jurisdictional sizes.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Education

Value:

- Residential schools are an unfortunate part of Canada's shared history, and we acknowledge the impacts this had, and continues to have, on Yukon First Nations and all Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education's role in implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action is vital, and we take this responsibility seriously. We stand as allies to support Truth and Reconciliation initiatives across all Yukon schools.
- The Department is working to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and establish a more inclusive public education system in the Yukon, one that meets the needs of Yukon First Nation students and offers all students the opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- This includes creating more culturally appropriate early education programs, delivering curriculum that tells the full story of Yukon and Canadian history, including residential schools, treaties, the Indian Act, and other Indigenous history.
- We also support teachers to integrate Indigenous knowledge in the classroom, understand and embrace First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being, and build a classroom environment where all students are valued and belong.

Additional response:

- The establishment of the Yukon First Nation School Board is a major step in advancing reconciliation – a path that started over 50 years ago with the historic document, championed by Yukon First Nations Chiefs: Together Today for our Children Tomorrow.

- This August, I celebrated the signing of a Letter of Agreement between Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon renewing our shared commitment to education in the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory.
- This Letter of Agreement is a testament to our government's dedication to working together to build a stronger, more inclusive education system that reflects the values, culture, and history of Yukon First Nations people.
- We continue to work with other Yukon First Nations who, like Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, wish to achieve stronger co-governance of education through agreements under section 17.7 of their Self Government Agreements.
- I also want to highlight the work we have done to achieve Action 63: "to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal issues, including developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools."
- This is an ongoing action, but I can confirm that the Department of Education continues to embed Yukon First Nations ways of knowing doing and being into school programs and the revised school curriculum in all subjects at all grade levels. As examples,
 - I am pleased to share that we are launching a new unit to support Grade 5 Social Studies on the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools in Yukon and across Canada.
 - This unit was developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge Keepers; residential school survivors and Educators.

- I am also pleased to share that the Grade 10 Indian Residential School unit was revised, and educators engaged in a training session on the unit this month.
- Further to this, the Department of Education has recently announced the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning policy.
- This policy outlines the full control individual First Nation governments have to develop, deliver, and assess successful completion of accredited learning to support students in earning up to 12 elective credits towards graduation.
- Approving locally developed courses that include - Ancestral Technology, Youth for Dignity, Mentorship, Outdoor Education, Yukon First Nation Leadership, Learning Strategies, and more. Yukon First Nations Studies 12 was developed as an adaptation to British Columbia's First People's 12.
- I commend the work of our teachers, facilitators and especially our students who engage with this important and sensitive work with respect and curiosity. This gives hope that the next generation of Yukoners will have a deeper understanding of our shared history.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report calling for greater partnerships with First Nations and more culturally appropriate curricula and curricula about residential schools.

Background:

- The department's work in this area includes:
 - In 2021, a landmark framework agreement was reached with the Chiefs of 10 Yukon First Nations governments to establish a Yukon First Nation School Board.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Education

- In the 2024-25 school year, 11 schools are operating under the First Nation School Board.
- Curriculum developed on Indian Residential Schools working with YFN and knowledge keepers for grade 10 social studies.
- A Joint Education and Action Plan was developed for 2014-2024 and work is underway towards renewal of that plan.
- Working with individual Yukon First Nation governments on community-level education and funding agreements to improve educational outcomes for their citizens and learners on their Traditional Territories at local schools. The department has allocated approximately \$1.83 million total to use towards joint education priorities.
- Cultural and language initiatives - First Nations Initiatives (FNI) Branch.
- Establishing the First Nation Initiatives & Student Learning Division - Department officials worked with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish an Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives & Student Learning.
- Between 1903 and 1985, the Yukon had six residential schools in Carcross, Whitehorse, Dawson, and Shingle Point. The Lower Post School in northern B.C housed Yukon Indigenous students. Each school was operated by a religious order with funding from the federal government.
- The Government of Yukon supports Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project, and work is ongoing to identify missing children and search for unmarked gravesites.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-22

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach

Education

Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students: refer to SSS03

CASA Wellness Specialists: refer to HOT02/CAS09

CASA Mental Health Outcomes for Youth: refer to CAS04

Value:

- The health, safety, and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is developing a comprehensive mental health and wellness approach. This is an important part of the overall work we are doing to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- We're taking a holistic approach to mental health and wellness, focusing on preventing issues and promoting mental health. Additionally, the approach will provide support and interventions both in and out of school when needed.
- The mental health and wellness approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- We will be bringing the draft comprehensive mental health and wellness approach to our partners for consultation this winter.

Additional response:

- We are working to enhance the links between mental health and wellbeing resources available within the community, provided by partners and stakeholders, with resources accessible within the school environment.
- The approach will align with Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy and is guided by the recommendations from the Yukon Youth Territorial Strategy from the 2023 Youth Summit, which

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach

Education

shares important perspectives from youth on supports that work for them.

- We are incredibly proud to be doing this important work, and we look forward to sharing it.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is funding through a CASA commitment to invest an additional annual investment of \$1,000,000 (across Yukon government) for mental health outcomes for youth.

Background:

- Work on the Comprehensive Mental Health Approach started in 2023.
- The development of this approach has been supported through \$20,000 in CASA funding in the 2023-24 budget.
- There is public demand for more mental health support – especially for youth – response to the pandemic and the substance use health emergency. The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and Child and Youth Advocate Office have been advocating for clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- It is essential that students and learners have timely access to the assessments they require to support their educational inclusion and achievement.

Recommended response:

- Student Support Services has enhanced its service delivery model for assessments and consultations, thereby providing more accessible and efficient support for students.
- In the 2024-25 school year, regular training is being provided for Learning Assistance Teachers and other school team members. This training covers the school-based team process, collaboration with Student Support Services, and the assessment referral procedure.
- The time required for assessments varies based on factors such as the complexity of the student's needs, assessment type and receiving parental or guardian consent. It also depends on the availability of the professional conducting the assessment.
- While a student is waiting for a formal assessment, there are many steps school staff can take to address a student's learning needs and support their success at school. Staff may implement many strategies recommended by the school-based team or Student Support Services staff during the consultation process.

Additional response:

- When an educator, parent or caregiver has concerns about a student's learning, the first step is to request a school-based team meeting to discuss the student's needs and collaborate on what strategies or interventions should be implemented to support the student.
- If a referral is received from the school-based team, Student Support Services staff determine the type of consultation, or assessments

needed. They make this determination by reviewing the information presented by the school-based team and in the student's file.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In their 2019 report, the Auditor General of Canada made a recommendation that the Department of Education prioritize students for specialized assessments (part of Recommendation #70).

Background:

- As of June 19, 2024, there were 393 students on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Student Support Services is continuing to support schools with standardized documentation of these plans.
- Student Support Services completed 182 psychological educational assessments between January 2023 and June 19, 2024. Students do not have to have a formal assessment to receive learning supports at school.
- The Education Act provides the framework for special education programs, including an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- CASA commitment: to provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators, or physicians. If the government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Reimaging Inclusive and Special Education: refer to RI04

Value:

- The Department of Education is taking action to create safer and more inclusive schools where students are ready and supported to learn.

Recommended response:

- Ready-to-Learn is being implemented at an additional seven schools in the 2024-25 school year.
- It is important to remember that this work is cumulative, meaning the schools listed for each school year are new schools that were added, but are in addition to the work continuing in the schools listed in the previous school years.
- Ready-to-Learn trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive and to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive, or social age.
- In fall 2024, the department will begin work on a review of the Ready-to-Learn implementation to identify areas for improvement and areas of celebration.

Additional response:

- Except in the rarest of cases, students do not come to school intending to be disruptive or harmful to others.
- Ready-to-Learn helps educators to understand brain development, functioning, and learning, and to understand that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- Ready-to-Learn is an approach that supports positive social change and wellbeing for all students and staff, and we will continue to communicate information with school communities, offer training opportunities related to this program, and share progress on implementation.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This initiative is part of the department's response to the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and to the 2019 Office of the Auditor General Report on Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon.
-

Background:

- Ready-to-Learn was developed by brain development and trauma expert, Dr. Bruce Perry, and is informed by more than 30 years of research. A key component of this initiative is teacher training in an evidence-based model called the Neurosequential Model in Education, or NME.
- The department continues to contract two professionals who have the expertise, experience, capacity, and capability to create a unified approach in schools across the Yukon.
- We have two educators leading a Neurosequential Model in Education certification program for 20 educators. We have a further seven positions at the Department of Education being certified in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics.
- We developed a series of seven short videos designed to provide insights into various aspects of the Ready-to-Learn initiative, including its practical application, student brain development, the significance of relationships, and an overview of the Neurosequential Model in Education.
 - These videos serve as a powerful tool to foster a deeper understanding of the Ready-to-Learn initiative among all school stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and the broader school community.
- The Yukon First Nation School Board has stated its support for the Neurosequential Model in Education approach and has already implemented Ready-to-Learn in many of its schools.
- Staff development on positive methodologies to managing student behaviours and supporting students with diverse and special educational needs is a priority for Education.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals has also communicated the need for training and resources to support teachers to create inclusive classrooms.

- Ready-to-Learn Schools was launched as a pilot project at Takhini Elementary School in 2019.
 - In the 2022-23 school year, Ready-to-Learn continued at Takhini Elementary and was implemented at Selkirk Elementary, Jack Hulland Elementary, and Grey Mountain Primary, all in Whitehorse, Nelna Bessie John in Beaver Creek, and St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction.
 - In the 2023-24 school year it was implemented at Hidden Valley Elementary, Holy Family Elementary, in Whitehorse, and at Robert Service School in Dawson City, and Tantalus School in Carmacks.
 - The approach is being implemented in the 2024-25 school year at Elijah Smith Elementary, Whistlebend Elementary and FH Collins Secondary in Whitehorse. Del Van Gorder school in Faro, JV Clarke school in Mayo, Ecole Nomade in Dawson City and Khatinas.akh in Teslin.
 - Every high school is also supported through our School based Team Community of Practice.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-02

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

Education

Ready to Learn Schools: refer to RI03

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

Value:

- We are dedicated to creating an inclusive, equitable and effective learning environment for all students, including students with diverse backgrounds and learning needs.

Suggested response:

- Reimagining inclusive and special education, commonly referred to as RISE, is an initiative that was designed to support sustainable long-term system changes to create better learning outcomes for all students regardless of ability. It aims to address the root causes of impediments to learning by providing more inclusive and culturally safe environments at all Yukon schools.
- In November 2021, the First Nations Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education approved the “Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education Workplan”, which addressed the 2019 Auditor General Report on K-12 Education, the Review of Inclusive and Special Education as well as the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Review on Attendance.
 - We have completed the 2021-2024 RISE workplan and will collaborate with our partners to develop the next phase.
- This new workplan will be shaped by recommendations from the community of inquiries, implementing key initiatives from the previous work plan while addressing any identified gaps.
- We look forward to continuing this work with our partners in a good way, as we aim to significantly improve educational outcomes for all students.

Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

Education

Additional response:

- A key initiative under RISE that launched in fall of 2022 was Ready-to-Learn Schools, a program grounded in the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- This model trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive, or social age.
- As part of RISE, we are also developing a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach that aligns with the Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy. The approach will include prevention, developmental and clinical responses. It will also aim to improve connections to mental health and wellbeing support provided by partners and stakeholders.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2021-2024 RISE workplan is complete and a new phase is beginning with partners.

Background:

- Along with responding to the 2019 Auditor General Report on K-12 Education, the Review of Inclusive and Special Education as well as the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Review on Attendance, the projects within the RISE initiative also address many of the desired outcomes in the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners and the Joint Educational Action Plan.
- There were initially eight Communities of Inquiry. Two of the Communities combined into one to better address the questions.
- The completed 2021-2024 RISE workplan will be found on yukon.ca (Fall 2024)

Session Briefing Note

Tab# RI04

Fall 2024

Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-16](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06

Universal Child Care: refer to EL07

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- We value the importance of early learning and child care for Yukon families and the need to continue to improve children's learning opportunities and outcomes.

Recommended Response:

- With the introduction of universal child care in April 2021 the Government of Yukon committed to supporting high quality early learning and child care that is accessible, affordable and inclusive.
- To support high quality early learning and child care, we are following through with our commitment to review the Yukon's *Child Care Act*, which is a priority in my mandate letter.
- The review of the *Child Care Act* is focused on enhancing the legislation to better embody the principles of quality, affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility within the early learning and child care sector.
- On September 18, 2024, we released the What We Heard Report from our most recent consultation and engagement to support the review of the *Child Care Act*.
- We were very pleased with the response to the review.

- We will continue our collaboration with First Nation governments, early learning and child care providers, educators and the Child Care Board as this work progresses.
- I look forward to sharing information about this work as it progresses.

Additional Response:

- We began this work by reviewing feedback from engagements with First Nations governments, the Yukon Child Care Board, and stakeholders since early 2021.
- On March 27, 2023, we released a report based on feedback that outlines themes that can shape the review of the *Child Care Act* and a summary of possible amendments.
- We have acted on many of the priorities we heard in these engagements. Since April 2021, we have made changes to policies and implemented new programs.
- In addition to affordability for families, partners and stakeholders asked us to specifically look at quality and wages for educators.
- We have followed through by increasing wages for early childhood educators to some of the highest in Canada, as well as offering access to funding for a comprehensive health insurance benefits program. In 2023/24 we invested just under \$9.8 million in wage enhancements and benefits.
- Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) play a critical role in providing education and care for young children in the Yukon. We have standards in place and a wage grid based on ECE certificate level. We acknowledge that the wage grid may need to change over time to reflect higher levels of education and experience.

- We are investing in ongoing learning and development for educators and providing funding for operators to enhance their early learning programs.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The mandate letter directs the Minister of Education to continue to work to review the *Child Care Act*.

Background:

- The *Child Care Act* came into force on July 1, 1990.

Review of *Child Care Act*

- On November 20, 2023, Minister McLean announced the review of the *Child Care Act* and the public engagement was launched on November 27th.
- Engagement sessions were held December 2023 through February 2024 with First Nations government officials, early childhood educators, owner/operators, early learning advocates, and others.
- A survey directed at families (but open to all Yukon residents to complete) resulted in 434 responses.

What We Heard / Potential *Child Care Act* amendments

- Based on the engagement feedback, the report highlights several potential *Child Care Act* amendments that could, if passed, strengthen and legislate improvements already implemented through the new universal child care system, including where government funding has reduced rates for families to below \$10 per day on average, increased minimum wages for early childhood educators to some of the highest in the country, and enhanced program quality.
- The report also includes potential amendments that could:
 - improve inclusive supports,
 - simplify subsidy processes for families and operators,
 - modernize credentialing and licensing requirements for educators,
 - support continued professional development for educators, and
 - update the role and powers of the Yukon Child Care Board.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL01

Fall 2024

Child Care Act Review

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-12

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Child Development Centre Funding

Education

Highways and Public Works will respond to building and lease questions.

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06

Universal Child Care: refer to EL07

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- Education works collaboratively with partners, including the Child Development Centre, to improve ways to provide the best services and supports to Yukon children and families.

Recommended response:

- We acknowledge and very much appreciate the Child Development Centre's important work helping families and young children access inclusive early learning and therapeutic services.
- In 2024/25, we signed a two-year transfer payment agreement for a total value of \$9,638,764 to cover operational expenses. That agreement, combined with a three-year agreement signed in July 2023 for \$1,336,155 to cover the costs of their new space, provides more certainty to the program and to Yukon's families depending on their services.
- This dedicated funding allows the CDC to provide services to children and families in every Yukon community.
- The CDC moved into their new location at 206 Hanson Street in August 2023. This new space accommodates all CDC programs and staff, including their therapeutic preschool.

Child Development Centre Funding

Education

Context – this may be an issue because:

- The CDC operated out of temporary spaces until they moved into their permanent home in August 2023.
- The move was postponed from October 2022, due to delays in construction.

Background:

Space

- The CDC was temporarily located out of three spaces (Waterfront Place, Industrial Road, and Alexander Street) until August 2023 when they moved into their new space at 206 Hanson Street.
- The total cost of renovations and fit up for the new space was \$2,685,005, including \$125,000 in fit up costs. The lease cost for 2023-2026 is \$501,058 annually or \$39.50 per square foot, prorated for 2023-24. The lease will increase by 2.25% annually starting in year 4.

Organizational review and structural renewal

- In 2021-22, the department funded the CDC to undertake a review of services.
- The structural renewal recognizes the need for a new approach to service delivery that addresses the increasing number and complexity of children waiting for services.
- In 2023-24, increased funding was provided for administrative support and funding for phase two of their renewal which includes funding for program support and to pilot a family partners project that provides much needed therapeutic and coordination support.
- Total funding for 2024/25 is \$5.3 million, an increase of approximately \$600,000, which funds the lease and supports the renewal for the entire year.

Approved by:

[DM]

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

Education

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL05

Universal Child Care: refer to EL07

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments and stakeholders to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we move toward a future where all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

Recommended response:

- We have clearly heard during engagements on universal child care that in addition to affordability and accessibility for families, we needed to address quality.
- We have made great strides in addressing quality by:
 - increasing wages for educators to some of the highest in Canada;
 - increasing bursaries available for educator learning and development; and
 - introducing funding for licensed child care programs to access comprehensive health insurance benefits.
- We were pleased to host a fall conference in September 2024 for over 350 early childhood educators from across the Yukon to give them an opportunity to come together and learn from each other. Rural

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

Education

educators were provided with a travel subsidy to support their participation.

- Investing in early childhood educators is one way we continue to support the growth and expansion of high-quality early learning and child care in the Yukon.

Additional response

Partnerships

- On April 5, 2023, we signed a three-year funding agreement valued at \$925,802 with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to offer a First Nations designed “Understanding the Early Years” course. Once successfully completed, participants receive a level one early childhood educator certificate.
- The course supports culturally competent educators with an understanding of Yukon First Nations, and culturally inclusive programs. Partnerships such as these are critical for reconciliation.
- We continue to fund Yukon University to provide enhanced course offerings in rural Yukon communities.
- We are providing education bursaries for post-secondary study, as well as an enhanced bursary, up to \$500, for educators to access other learning and development opportunities. We continue to contract with individuals and organizations to create and deliver workshops and training opportunities.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- As we create new licensed spaces and improve quality in programming the cost of delivering universal child care will increase.

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

Education

Background:

Quality Enhancement Funding, including cultural and inclusive supports

- Licensed programs and early childhood educators have access to funding to develop high-quality and culturally rich early learning programs and environments.
- \$100,000 is budgeted annually for ECE bursaries and an additional \$100,000 for professional development organized by ELCC.
- \$255,892 is available annually to Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre, owned and operated by Kwanlin Dün First Nation, for a cultural connector program.
- As of August 2024, approximately 92% of licensed centres are taking advantage of comprehensive health insurance benefit funding.

Learning and development

- The first Understanding the Early Years Course delivered by the Early Years Program at YFNED course rolled out in Dawson City on September 11, 2023, with 14 early child educators participating from the three local programs.
- By signing on to universal child care, all ELCC providers have committed to collaborating on all improvement activities such as quality measurement, professional development for their staff, and collaboration with early learning specialists.
- ELCC launched the online early childhood educators learning hub on August 9, 2022. We continue to develop and update this resource.
- Beginning in late August 2022, the ELCC branch began hosting open houses and monthly professional development opportunities for educators and program managers.
- ELCC funds Yukon University to offer early learning courses in rural communities. In winter 2024, we had 26 students from 8 rural communities taking early learning classes. This funding will continue in 2024-25.

Bursaries

- In 2023-24, 87 bursaries (85 part-time and 2 full-time) were awarded. Of the full-time bursaries, one recipient was from a rural community and one from a Whitehorse French-language program. Twenty-three of the part-time bursaries went to recipients in rural Yukon.

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

Education

Professional Diploma Pathways (PDP) Program

- The PDP Program ended in April 2024 but during the program more than 51 educators benefitted from taking early learning courses without any out-of-pocket expenses.

Other initiatives

- We are continuing to work on the development of a robust data management system to support high-quality early learning and child care in the Yukon.
- The review of the ELCC supported child care program began in September 2022 with a local consultant contracted to undertake an independent review. The final report was received in February 2024. As part of the review, ELCC engaged an expert in the field to review the findings and write an executive summary with recommendations. ELCC released the report in May 2024.

Technical advisory committee

- The technical advisory committee was established in September 2022 to satisfy Canada's requirement to have an advisory committee and to address an internal need to invite others into our work in a formal way.
- The advisory committee includes representatives from First Nations governments, rural and urban operators, French language programs, early childhood educators, Child Care Board, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (Early Years Program) and the Child Development Centre
- Including First Nation governments and stakeholders through a more formalized process allows the ELCC branch to collaboratively engage on an ongoing basis and transparently shape the direction of the Yukon early learning and child care system.
- Most recently in August 2024 ELCC met with rural child care providers to discuss the unique challenges of operating in small rural communities.

Other

- Quality Roots, a program currently funded by Canada and provided by Partners for Children a local not for profit, works with licensed early learning and child care programs to support quality in programming. Their funding from Canada expires on March 31, 2025.
- ELCC Director meets regularly with a coordinator from the program. They recently asked ELCC to consider funding them after their current funding expires.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL03

Fall 2024

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-11-12](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

Education

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and community partners to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we advance a future where all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

Recommended response:

- Our three-year agreement with Canada will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- Our partnership with Canada will support our mutual vision of high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.
- These investments will support more families benefitting from affordable child care.

Additional response:

- We are also looking forward to more details on the Federal Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Loan Program, announced in the Federal Budget 2024, which will further increase access to early learning and child care.

Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

Education

- Investments to date, supported by funding from Canada, provide Yukon families up to \$8,400 in yearly savings on child care expenses, provides increased wages for early childhood educators and increased funding to operators of licensed early learning and child care programs.
- These investments support the work we are already doing at the Department of Education to improve outcomes for all Yukon children.
- I hold my hands up to educators working across the Yukon to support the best possible outcomes for Yukon's youngest children.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Infrastructure funding was announced in May 2024 during a joint conference with Minister McLean and Minister Sudds, the Federal Minister responsible.

Background:

- The Minister of Education signed the funding agreement with Canada on March 31, 2024. Under the infrastructure fund Yukon will receive a total of \$7,689,753.
 - 2023/24 \$2,283,404
 - 2024/25 \$2,598,232
 - 2025/26 \$2,808,117 (with an additional 4th year expected).
- The agreement states that Yukon can roll over 100% in the first year and 10% in the remaining years. Although Canada has indicated that the rollover can be negotiated.
- The priorities identified for the funding include:
 - Increased access to Indigenous led early learning and child care
 - Increased access to Francophone early learning and child care
 - Increased access to early learning and child care in underserved communities in rural Yukon
 - Enhanced accessibility for children with disabilities in existing early learning and child care programs

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL04

Fall 2024

Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

Education

Value

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments, partners, and stakeholders to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we move toward a future in which all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to high quality early learning and child care that is accessible, affordable, and inclusive.
- We have a strong interest in supporting the sustainability and growth of early learning and child care in the Yukon.
- Since the implementation of universal child care (2021) we have created more than 485 additional child care spaces in Whitehorse, Dawson City and Ross River. We also supported the reopening of the child care centre in Pelly Crossing. We recently licensed two after school programs in Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education is actively working with other departments, Little Blue and the Dawson Society for Children and Families, to support their expansion.
- In 2021, we provided funding for Little Blue to update their feasibility study, and in 2022 and 2023 we provided additional funding to support expansion planning and design.
- We continue to support the child care centre financially by providing operational funding. In 2024-25, we have a transfer payment agreement for \$507,025. Apart from this, we provide additional funding for supported child care, health, and safety enhancements, and learning and development.

Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

Education

- Officials are in regular contact with the Little Blue program, and we will continue to collaborate with them.
- I will share additional information as, and when, it becomes available.

Additional response:

- Our new three-year agreement with Canada will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- We are also looking forward to more details on the Federal Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Loan Program, announced in the Federal Budget 2024, which will further increase access to early learning and child care.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There are three programs operating in Dawson City, including one operated by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government. Each has a waiting list.
- Little Blue confirmed on September 4, 2024, that they have fifty-two children on their waiting list, with all of them being under school age and seven of them not born yet.
- Dawson City is the only community in the Yukon where the Department of Education has not implemented early kindergarten. Education is continuing discussions with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in regarding the future of early kindergarten in the community.

Background:

Infrastructure funding

- Yukon signed an infrastructure agreement with Canada on March 31, 2024. Under the agreement Yukon will receive \$7,689,753 over three years, with a fourth year of funding anticipated to support exclusively not-for-profit early learning and child care providers to create new spaces, mitigate aging infrastructure, and increase accessibility.

Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

Education

- At this point in time, no parameters have been put in place to determine how the fund will be dispersed.
- This fund may present an opportunity for Little Blue to access infrastructure funding.

Current situation

- Little Blue is currently housed in the Haldenby House constructed in 1903 with an addition built in 2008.
- In 2014 a structural assessment was completed and recommended several repairs with the biggest issue being the roof.
- The ELCC Director and the Dawson Society for Children and Families are meeting bi-weekly to support the Little Blue program. ELCC is funding the completion of an audit to support the Society. The Society is working to get their audits completed.

Little Blue inspections

- Little Blue received a yearly inspection on September 17, 2024, which includes a requirement for an environmental health inspection and a fire safety inspection.
- Random inspections were conducted on November 28, 2023, February 20, 2024, April 16, 2024, and June 07, 2024.

Health and safety enhancement funding

- This far in 2024/25, ELCC has provided Little Blue with \$17,324 in additional funding to patch and paint the interior of the building, replace smoke detectors, and install emergency lighting.
- In March 2024 ELCC provided \$21,061 in funding to paint the exterior of the building and fence and make upgrades to the backyard
- In July 2023 they were provided \$3,150 in funding to have three trees removed from the property that were leaning over buildings
- In March 2023 they were provided \$6,899 for roof repairs
- In November 2022 they received \$1,525 to replace their hot water tank
- In March 2021 they received \$1,985 for a kitchen hood fan and mold removal
- In November 2020 they received \$1,842 for safety upgrades

Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

Education

- In October 2019 they received \$4,260 to complete a mold/moisture impact assessment
- In February 2018 they received \$4,830 to paint the child care centre
- In August 2016 they received \$5,000 to replace their oil tank
- In July 2014 they received \$37,500 for building improvements

Little Blue expansion

- On December 15, 2015, MLA Silver stated during question period in the Legislative Assembly that “A Liberal government would fund this facility. When will the government be making a decision on this request, or should it be added to the ever-growing list of projects the next Yukon government is going to have to address?”
- In a Yukon Liberal Party release on October 12, 2016, it was announced that during the all-party candidate forum “Silver also plans to remind Dawson residents of his long-standing commitment to find a permanent home for the Little Blue Day Care”.
- At an election forum in Dawson City on October 17, 2016, then MLA Silver said that “his government would find a permanent home for the Little Blue Day Care”.
- In 2021-22, the Society received \$5,400 from the Department of Economic Development and the Community Development Fund (CDF) to update its 2014 feasibility report. Additionally, the Department of Education (ELCC) provided \$16,030 in funding to offset the consultant fee for “Feasibility – Little Blue to Big Blue”.
- The Society engaged Klondike Development Organization (KDO) in October 2021, to update the 2014 report. In February 2022, KDO submitted their update, ‘Little Blue to Big Blue Feasibility Update’ with the following findings:
 - The update supports the need for an expanded program and states: “The funding of childcare has improved significantly since 2014.”
 - “Under the current funding and fees framework, the proposed Big Blue facility can be viably operated and maintained over the long term.” It is worth noting that KDO did not consider the capacity of the Society to acquire land and construct the new building.

Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

Education

- In 2022-23, the Society applied for and received CDF funding to advance the next step of their building project, which involved hiring a professional contractor for the blueprints/design and cost estimates.
 - This step cost \$102,000, of which the Society received \$75,000 from the CDF, committed \$12,500 of its own finances, and ELCC committed and paid \$14,500.
 - The Society hired ORO Enterprises Ltd., a local Dawson City business, to complete the blueprints/design.
- The Society is focusing their planning around Parcel K, next to the Old MacDonald Lodge site in Dawson City.

Community child care need

- According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, as of March 31, 2024, there were 261 children aged 12 and under in Dawson City. Early learning and child care is primarily for children aged 12 and under, with exceptions for children with diverse developmental needs, to age 16.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care

Education

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Universal Child Care: refer to EL07

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- The Department of Education works collaboratively to provide services and support to Yukon children and families, including to students who are also parents.

Recommended response:

- The Teen Parent Centre (TPC) Child Care Society was initially licensed on January 31, 2023, to operate Tágà Măy, an early learning and child care program.
- They currently have a four-member board and function out of the Teen Parent Centre building in Whitehorse, and we support their ongoing child care programming.

Additional response:

- The educators at the Teen Parent Centre, the staff and early childhood educators of the TPC Child Care Society work together to support students and families.
- We are pleased to continue to offer a teen parent grant, which provides funding for free child care for high school students who are also parents. This funding is available to Yukoners across the Yukon at whatever early learning and child care centre they use.
- As of August 2024, there were 16 children enrolled in the early learning and child care program located at the Teen Parent Centre.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL06

Fall 2024

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In December 2022, the TPC Child Care Society was formed to take over operation of the on-site early learning and child care program and they continue to require financial and operational support.

Background:

On-site child care

- The TPC Child Care Society, currently with four board members, was initially issued a license on January 31, 2023, to operate the early learning and child care program at the Teen Parent Centre.
- In 2024-25, ELCC has a transfer payment agreement with the society in the amount of \$341,555.
- The department's Early Learning and Child Care unit has regular meetings and communication with the society to answer questions and provide support.
- Board members from the society, the team leader in charge of the Teen Parent Centre/Aurora Virtual School, the Superintendent overseeing the program, and ELCC staff met on August 23, 2023, to discuss programming and working collaboratively.
- ELCC staff meet with the director in charge of the program regularly.
- ELCC is monitoring the program and will continue to support the child care centre.
- There are five early childhood educators, and 16 children enrolled as of August 1, 2024.
- The operating name of the early learning program is Tágà Măy, Southern Tutchone words for "by the river."

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Little Blue Learning Centre Expansion: refer to EL05

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06

Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08

Value:

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and community partners to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we advance a future where all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

Recommended response:

- With the introduction of universal child care in April 2021 the Government of Yukon committed to supporting high quality early learning and child care that is accessible, affordable and inclusive.
- The review of the *Child Care Act* is focused on modernizing and strengthening legislation based on the principles of quality, affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility within the early learning and child care sector.
- Many of the items noted in the 2023-24 Yukon Child Care Report are long standing issues and we intend to address many of these concerns through the review of the *Child Care Act*.
- In 2024-25, the budget for Early Learning and Child Care is \$42.5 million, with an additional \$515,000 invested in capital to support the development of a data management system. Among other quality initiatives, the funding is currently supporting:
 - Fee reductions for families up to \$8,400 yearly,

- Wage enhancements for more than 500 early childhood educators, and
 - 77 licensed operators, including nine First Nations government owned and operated programs, representing 2,264 licensed spaces
- The universal child care program, when combined with the subsidy program for lower income earners, means some families have no out-of-pocket expenses for child care. Additionally, teen parents continuing their education and grandparents with primary responsibility for their grandchildren receive free child care.
- Since the implementation of universal child care in April 2021, and as of August 14, 2024, more than 485 child care spaces have been created in Pelly Crossing, Whitehorse, Ross River and Dawson, and programs continue to expand and grow. All licensed programs are part of the universal child care program and receive funding from the Yukon government.
- The funding agreements signed with the Government of Canada in July 2021 continue to support development and expansion of the Yukon's universal child care system and early childhood educator workforce development.
- Early Childhood Educators play a critical role in providing education and care for young children in the Yukon. We have standards in place and a wage grid based on certificate level. We acknowledge that the wage grid may need to change over time to reflect higher levels of education and experience. We will continue our collaboration with First Nation governments, early learning and child care providers, educators and the Child Care Board as this work progresses.

Additional response:

- We provide funding – including wage enhancements – to all licensed programs to reduce operational and administrative expenses, and to support program needs.
 - We also administer a supported child care program that provides funding to licensed programs for additional supports for children who need them in order to participate fully in the program.
 - Providing greater access to early learning and child care programs that are affordable, accessible, and inclusive supports Yukon families and reduces barriers to entering and staying in the workforce.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- As we create new spaces, increase enrollment, and improve quality in programming, the cost of delivering universal child care in Yukon will increase.
 - Operators have asked for increases in funding to keep up with inflation increases over the past three years.
 - There have been media requests concerning educator wages being included in a modernized Child Care Act.
-

Background:

Federal Legislation on Early Learning and Child Care

- Bill C-35, An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada, received Royal Assent on March 19, 2024. Key elements of the legislation include core principles of a national early learning and child care system, ongoing collaboration, long term funding support, and accountability.

Summary of Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Funding from Canada

- Under agreements with the Government of Canada, the Yukon government will receive approximately \$54.4 million from 2021 to 2025, to further enhance the universal ELCC program.

Minimum wage increases and increased costs to operators

- On April 1, 2024, the Yukon's minimum wage increased from \$16.77 to \$17.59 and level three educator wages increased to a minimum of \$32.90 in Whitehorse and \$34.70 in rural communities. Many child care providers pay more than the minimum in order to recruit and retain staff.
- The wages for educators are tied to minimum wage increases whereby program operators must pay at least the minimum wage, and the Yukon government provides a wage top-up. For Whitehorse level 3 educators, Yukon contributes 47% of the mandated wage and in rural Yukon we contribute 49% of the mandated wage. Child care providers absorb the costs of increases to wages.

Affordability

- Parent fee increases are controlled to ensure parent fees remain affordable. Fees can only be adjusted on April 1 of each year. The maximum increase allowed is 3%.
- Parents must pay out of pocket for fee increases. Additionally, parents/caregivers may pay extra fees for optional services, like hot meal programs.
- The Yukon Poverty Report Card (for 2022 and published in February 2023) by Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition reported that the living wage had reduced from previous years due to the implementation of universal child care and families having to pay less for child care.

Economy

- In 2020, the Centre for Future Work published a report on "The Role of Early Learning and Child Care in Rebuilding Canada's Economy after COVID-19" by noted economist, Jim Stanford. The report provides broad estimates of the economic benefits of a universal ELCC program, projecting:
 - Direct jobs and economic activity associated with provision of ELCC services.
 - Increases in women's labour force participation and employment thanks to better availability of quality, affordable child care.
 - Long-term benefits from improved capacities of children who participate in high-quality ELCC.

Funding for operational and administrative expenses for ELCC program operators

- Quality Program Enhancement funding is provided for each space in a licensed centre. The amount depends on the space category – infants, toddlers, preschool, kindergarten, or school age.
- Additional funding is provided to operators to reduce their operational and administrative expenses and to support program needs. This funding provides for 37% of program building expenses (such as rent/mortgage, insurance, electricity, heat, janitorial, etc.) in Whitehorse and 43% in rural communities.
- Start-up funding is available for the creation of new licensed programs. Funding is also available to address health and safety concerns.
- Funding provided by Yukon government to licensed programs has not increased since UCC was implemented in 2021 and ELCC has started reviewing the funding program to assess whether changes are required.

Yukon Enrollment versus licensed capacity

- As of June 30, 2024, Whitehorse is at 90% of total capacity and the Yukon overall is at 85% of licensed capacity. This does not account for programs that make decisions to limit enrollment based on several factors including staffing, noise level, support quality, etc.

Recognition

- The Early Childhood Education Report (ECER) from the Atkinson Centre at the University of Toronto ranks provinces and territories on 5 categories (governance, funding, access, learning environment and accountability) and 21 benchmarks of quality with a maximum score of 15.
- The ECER released on April 25, 2024, notes Yukon has a score of 10.5, more than double the score of 5 that Yukon received in 2020. The implementation of universal child care with affordable child care, managed child care fees, an educator wage grid, and the transfer to Education all helped to increase the score.
- Sue Lancaster, Executive Director of Little Blue Learning Centre in Dawson City, was awarded a 2024 Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL07

Fall 2024

Universal Child Care

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01

Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02

Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03

Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06

Universal Child Care: refer to EL07

Value:

- We recognize the importance of early learning and child care for Yukon families, and the need to continue to improve children's learning opportunities and outcomes.

Recommended response:

- We value our ongoing dialogue and collaboration with the Yukon Child Care Board and the important input that members provide in the development of high-quality early learning and child care services.
- In its Annual Report for 2023-24, the Yukon Child Care Board recognized the review of the *Child Care Act* and how they are honoured to be a part of this work.
- The review of the *Child Care Act* is focused on modernizing and strengthening legislation based on the principles of quality, affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility within the early learning and child care sector.
- The Board made four new recommendations that we are in the midst of reviewing as we just received the report. They also noted actions that still need progress, including the commissioning of an early learning framework.
- Many of the actions that the Child Care Board draw attention to are also noted in the *What We Heard Report* that was released in September that we intend to address in legislation.

- I am proud of the work we have accomplished together with our partners and acknowledge that there is more work to be done in collaboration with the Yukon Child Care Board.

Additional response:

- The department engaged with the Child Care Board on the review of the *Child Care Act* from November 2023 to February 2024 and we will continue to work closely with the Board as this project moves ahead.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The new 2023-24 annual report, received on November 15, has to be tabled during the Fall sitting as per the requirement of the *Child Care Act*.
-

Background:

Yukon Child Care Board (YCCB)

- The YCCB is established under the *Child Care Act* to:
 - encourage the development and support of child care services,
 - make recommendations to the Minister on matters pertaining to child care,
 - review government policies, programs, services, or procedures in matters pertaining to child care
 - advise on the planning, development, standards, coordination, and evaluation of child care services, and
 - hear appeals under the Act.
- The Board currently has eight members, which includes a First Nations representative from a rural community. On August 8, 2024, two members were reappointed for two-year terms. Kristen Kennedy is the current chair of the Board, but she has provided notice that she will be resigning in January 2025. A minimum of seven board members is required by the *Child Care Act*,

YCCB annual report 2023-24

- The 2023-24 annual report is to be tabled during the current Legislature sitting as per section 4(11) of the *Child Care Act*.

- The report is supposed to be provided to the Minister by June 30.
- The report noted that the Child Care Board is honoured to be a part of the work to review the Child Care Act, stating:

“The Yukon Child Care Board is honoured to be part of this work and dedicates itself to another year of collaboration, creativity, and commitment.”
- The YCCB made four recommendations for 2023-24:
 - Develop an Early Childhood Educator Registry
 - Create a clear definition of quality and the means of measuring it
 - Increase staffing in early learning and child care centres
 - Meet all commitments made in the Canada-Yukon Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement)
- The YCCB also noted where they believe that progress on their 2022-23 recommendations has not advanced adequately.
- Items the Board noted, within their annual report with no action include:
 - **Yukon government officially adopts and mandates the BC Early Learning Framework**

ELCC recently met with BC government officials to ask for them to waive their copyright on the BC Early Learning Framework and allow Yukon to adapt the framework to Yukon. The Indigenous content in the BC framework was developed by and for BC Indigenous people. The Yukon would want to hold space in a Yukon early learning framework to have local Indigenous content developed by each First Nation.

ELCC is currently using the BC Early Learning Framework as the foundation for educator professional development, it is referenced in monthly educator newsletters and copies are provided to centres and educators free of charge. The BC Early Learning framework is also used by Yukon schools from kindergarten to grade 3 and in the early learning program at Yukon University. Requiring centres to base programming on an early learning framework will be reviewed while working to modernize the *Child Care Act*.
 - **Yukon government mandates a specific number of professional development hours that all educators must complete** - the Director has no authority to mandate professional development hours but hopes to do so in a modernized *Child Care Act*. That being said centres are encouraged to have professional development days and funding is not interrupted if they close for that purpose. Additionally, ELCC staff

provide monthly professional development directly to educators and bursaries continue to be offered.

- Yukon Government develop focused and intentional ways in which to support the exceptional challenges of programs that are in rural parts of Yukon – ELCC provides additional funding to rural programs as a part of universal child care. Funding is provided to Yukon University expressly to allow for additional early learning courses to be offered in rural communities such as a project in Mayo that is supporting educators to work towards their ECE diplomas. ELCC also has meetings with rural operators to discuss challenges they face and for rural programs to learn from each other.
- Yukon Government hires a person from a Yukon Community to be a specific liaison for the programs in Community – given the vastness of the territory it would be difficult for one person to accomplish this task. Rural communities have assigned and consistent staff who work with rural programs individually.
- Yukon Government adds Level 4 and Level 5 for educators who hold actual early learning diplomas (Level 4) and further education in early learning such as a degree, Masters, or PHD accreditation – Recognizing higher levels of education will be explored in new legislation. The practice of providing certificates to individuals without an early learning background ceased in 2022.
- The YCCB also noted that they would like to see:
 - Yukon Government rewrite the inspection reports used for spot inspections to mirror an ELCC lens – all inspectors are early childhood educators and inspections are conducted through a ECE lens. ELCC will have additional discussions with YCCB to see what they envision.
 - Yukon Government make inspection reports of programs more easily accessible to the public – ELCC is hoping to address this through the review of the act. Currently, there is no legislative authority to publish inspection reports. They are however available to the public at the ELCC office and programs have to make their reports available at their programs.
 - Yukon Government undertake a collaborative review of the inspection process – ELCC hopes to address inspections during the review of the *Child Care Act*.
 - Yukon Government renames the term inspector – current legislation refers to the term inspector – this could be revisited during development of the new *Child Care Act* but the term is consistently used across Canada.
- ELCC staff meet with the Board regularly to share information.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EL08

Fall 2024

Yukon Child Care Board

Education

- Yukon Child Care Board members participated in the 2024 Early Learning and Child Care Conference and the Chair of the Board made opening remarks.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

Education

Value:

- The Department of Education is committed to enhancing community involvement in our work to ensure we are supporting Yukoners on their learning journey – from cradle to career.

Recommended response:

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education provides advice on system-wide education matters, and we value the input we receive.
- With the advice of the committee, membership was enhanced to include service providers such as the LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon; youth-serving organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club of Yukon, Territorial Youth Committee (formerly Communities Building Youth Futures), and the Bringing Youth Toward Equality – Empowering Youth Society; as well as organizations advancing the interests of learners including the Child Development Centre, Child and Youth Advocate's Office and l'Association franco-yukonnaise.
- The Committee last met on September 19, 2024, and we continue to seek their perspectives and advice on educational initiatives as we develop our path forward.

Additional response:

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education typically meets quarterly, and committee information is available on Yukon.ca.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in this advisory group on Yukon Education, which reviews information and provides advice to the Deputy Minister.
-

Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

Education

Background:

- The committee's work during the 2023-24 school year focused on the Integrated Outcome Strategy, the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, and Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.
- The committee, as of April 2024, includes (31 representatives):
 - Educators (4),
 - Yukon Association of Education Professionals (1)
 - Association of Yukon School Administrators (1)
 - School Council Chairs (3)
 - First Nations Education Commission
 - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (2)
 - Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards & Committees (1)
 - Catholic Education Association of Yukon (1)
 - CSFY (1)
 - First Nation School Board (1)
 - Yukon University (1)
 - Child Care Board (1)
 - Child Development Centre (1)
 - Child and Youth Advocate Office
 - Association franco-yukonnaise (1)
 - LDAY Centre for Learning (1)
 - Autism Yukon (1)
 - Boys and Girls Club (BGC) (1)
 - BYTE – Empowering Youth Society (1),
 - Communities Building Youth Futures (CBYF) (1)
 - Yukon Parent Advisory Committee (1 vacancy)
 - Youth Representative
 - Education officials, including the Deputy Minister (chair) and ADMs

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-01

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We work collaboratively with the commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) to support the learning needs of French Minority Language students and the path for the administration of French Minority Language education in the territory.

Recommended response:

- I am happy to report that, for a second year, French Minority Language students have access to an in-person French-language program of instruction in Dawson.
- This was a priority for the Francophone school board and Francophone parents in Dawson.
- We are continuing to work with the CSFY and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, as the CSFY moves forward with their implementation of the French Minority Language program in Dawson.

Additional response:

- The CSFY, the Department of Education, and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in have established an effective working relationship, and officials will continue to navigate and approach the work ahead together.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is currently an in-person French Minority Language program of instruction being offered in Dawson.

Background:

- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) was created in 1996. And is responsible for education in French as a First Language throughout the territory. It runs three schools, one program, and one child care centre.
 - Three schools:
 - Émilie-Tremblay School (EET), four-year-old kindergarten to grade 6

- Paul-Émile-Mercier Secondary School Community Centre (CSSC Mercier), grade 7 to 12
- Nomad School, home schooling program, five-year-old kindergarten to grade 12
- One Program:
 - Programme en français langue première de Dawson (Confluence), four-year-old kindergarten to grade 5
- One child care centre
 - Garderie du Petit Cheval Blanc, child care centre, after-school program and summer camp
- As of November 4, 2024, Department of Education's data indicate 405 students are enrolled in French-first CSFY schools for the 2024-2025 school year.
- In 2023-24, CSFY opened a Programme en français langue première de Dawson, as well as taking over the management of the Garderie du petit cheval blanc child care centre.
- The CSFY rents space at 486 King Street in Dawson City for the in-person French Minority Language program of instruction, Confluence.
- As of August 12, 2024, 15 students were enrolled in the French Minority Language program of instruction: pre-K to grade 6.
- Under the terms of the agreement, the CSFY will provide an in-person French Minority Language instruction program in Dawson City for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26.
- A letter of agreement between Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in was signed on August 30, 2024. TH and Government of Yukon subsequently shared information with CSFY regarding this agreement.
- In 2023-24 the French language program was funded as part of a Transfer Payment Agreement with CSFY in the amount of \$763,000.
- Funding for 2024-25 and 2025-26 will follow the existing CSFY funding agreement.
- The government is not constructing a school facility for the CSFY in Dawson City as part of the agreement.

CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon

Education

- This program will run for a minimum of three years, during which time an assessment will be undertaken of the ongoing need and suitability of the program.
- Department officials continue to meet with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and CSFY officials regularly.

History of the in-person French Minority Language program of instruction in Dawson

- In May 2023, the Department of Education and CSFY engaged in a mediation process regarding the establishment of an in-person French language program of instruction in Dawson for the 2023-24 school year.
- On May 8, 2023, Dawson francophone parents filed an injunction to the Supreme Court of Yukon to approve and fund the establishment of a full-time, in-person French as a minority language program in Dawson for the 2023-24 school year.
- On July 10, 2023, a mediation agreement was reached, and the Dawson's parents' injunction has been formally discontinued.
- In September 2024, the signed Letter of Agreement on Education in Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory was shared with CSFY.

The CSFY becomes manager of the daycare

- In September 2023, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) officially became manager of the Garderie du petit cheval blanc, an establishment offering early childhood education and childcare services.
- This transition, which had the support of the CSFY school community and the organization that previously managed the Daycare, ensures the future of the establishment.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The *Education Act* allows for a variety of learning environments, including private schools, to suit student and family learning needs.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education does not operate or manage private schools, nor does it provide staffing or funding to private schools.
- The department is not responsible for providing support to students attending private schools, either in the Yukon or outside of the territory.
- The department does work with Yukon private schools to ensure they meet their requirements under the *Education Act* and *Private Schools Regulations*, and works with them through the Aurora Virtual School to assess student achievement.

Additional response:

- Curriculum and instruction at private schools is the responsibility of the school and not the department.
- Under the *Education Act*, only students at government-run schools, including those operated and managed by a school board, are entitled to special education programming.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Minister has a role in approving, monitoring and evaluating private schools.

Background:

- Private schools charge fees for students to access programs and services offered by the school, and no grants or contributions can be made to a private school by the Minister, the Commissioner in Executive Council, a school board, or a council.
- The *Education Act* defines a private school as “a school, including a school operated by a religious denomination, other than a school operated by the Minister or a school board, that offers educational programs during school days to school-age children.”

- There are currently two private schools operating in the Yukon: the Yukon Montessori School, which serves grades 1 to 7, and the Yukon Wild School, which serves students in kindergarten to grade 7.
- The Minister of Education is responsible for approving an application for registration or accreditation of a private school.
- Private schools must:
 - Provide courses of study that meet the goals and objectives established by guidelines approved by the Minister
 - Agree to regular evaluation and monitoring as determined by the Minister
 - Meet all local and territorial health, safety, and building standards
 - Meet standards of student achievement, as measured by achievement testing, comparable to those of schools operated by the Minister or a School Board

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

Education

School Governance and Associations: refer to EP07

Yukon First Nation School Board: refer to FN04

Value:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to enhancing community involvement in school governance.

Recommended response:

- The *Education Act* outlines a process for school communities to decide whether to be governed by a school board or the Department of Education directly.
- The Department of Education provides information regarding this process and it is up to each school community to decide whether they wish to join a board.
- Thank you to all school board trustees and school council members for your dedication to fulfilling your important role in supporting student success.
- I would like to recognize the Chief Electoral Officer, Max Harvey, and his team at Elections Yukon, who continue to work tirelessly to oversee the democratic process in communities across the Yukon.

Additional response:

- I encourage any school councils and school community members considering forming or joining a school board to reach out to the Department of Education, recognizing that the First Nation School Board took several years to establish.
- School council vacancies after an election and during the term are common and can be filled by the current school council or the incoming school council nominating people, or through a by-election.

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is interest in the school board and council elections, and the school board referendum process. There was media attention, and a record number of Yukoners voted in the spring 2024 school council elections.
-

Background:

- School board elections take place every three years, and school council elections are held every two years.
 - The next election for school boards trustees will be held in November 2025, and in May 2026 for school council members.

2024 School council elections

- School council election polling took place on May 4 and May 6, 2024, as well as through mail-in ballots.
- Three schools held a poll to elect members to their school councils.
- Members in 14 Yukon Education operated schools were elected by acclamation. All school councils meet quorum and have at least two members.
- A total of 79 candidates put their names forward for 86 elected positions in 17 school councils.
 - 13 school council positions remain vacant.

Joining a school board

- Education officials worked with the First Nation School Board (FNSB) and Elections Yukon to establish a process for schools to consider joining the school board after it has been in existence for at least one school year, as allowed for in the *Education Act*.
- Under the Act, a new or existing School Board can be substituted for an existing school council when the school council, or 20% of the electors in the attendance area, requests that a referendum be held.

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

Education

Leaving a school board

- Should a school community wish to withdraw from a school board or join a different school board, it is within the Minister's authority under the Education Act to approve or not approve.
- A fair process would need to be followed, such as a referendum with a clear majority for the Minister to proceed with such a decision.
- The Minister would then establish a different attendance area for the school, which would allow for a School Council to be established for the school as a Yukon Education authority school.

Expanded Voting

- To enable a fair, transparent and feasible election, the Chief Electoral Officer continued the following changes from the 2022 school board elections for the 2024 by-election and school council elections using his authorities under the Education Act to address new or unforeseen circumstances:
 - Use of internet voting pilot,
 - expanded use and circulation of mail-in ballots, and
 - expansion of voting to Saturday.
- For any of the process changes used in 2022 and 2024 to become permanent, changes to the Education Act and School Board Election Regulations would be required.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- School Councils play a critical role as key partners in the Yukon education system.

Recommended response

- School Councils support two-way communication between a school and the school community by supporting decision making and contributing to the success of students.
- Every School Council may make rules for its internal procedures and meetings. This can include a values and ethics code or code of conduct.
- The department will support a School Council with the creation and implementation of a code of conduct if requested.
- The Catholic Education Association of Yukon and Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees have code of conducts available to view on their respective websites

Additional response:

- The Minister of Education has no authority to revoke any individual publicly elected members from a School Council.
- School Councils participate in the development of school-based policies, rules and procedures and shall consider any advice provided to it by the school administration and staff.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been stories in the media and a human rights complaint made, calling for the removal of a Holy Family School Council member.
-

Background:

- According to the Education Act, the chair of a School Council may exclude someone from a meeting who, in the opinion of the chair, is guilty of improper conduct at that meeting. This decision by the chair can be overruled by the School Council via resolution.
- The authority to determine whether an elected School Council member is qualified to remain a member rests with a judge. The criteria for the disqualification of a School Council member is specific and is listed in the Education Act.
- Holy Family School Council held a meeting in June 2024 where a School Council member is noted to have made comments that run counter to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (SOGI) policy ("marriage is between a man and woman" and that "homosexuality and pride are deadly sins").
- After this comment was made by a School Council member, a teacher at Holy Family left the meeting. The teacher feels that the comment violated the Department of Education's SOGI policy.
- The teacher complained to the Department of Education asking for the removal of the School Council Member and was informed that the Department does not have the authority to remove an Elected Council Member.
- The teacher indicated that the Education Act allows for an application to the court to determine a removal. The teacher also said the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification policy does not adequately address what should happen when it is violated and does not feel supported by the Department of Education and is upset that there have been no consequences (removal of School Council Member) and has since indicated that they have filed a human rights complaint.
- The Department of Education will support Holy Family's administration and School Council to extend a code of conduct into the operations.
- The Department will follow up with Holy Family School Council Chair to deal with this matter and to ensure the policy is being respected.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT09/EP05

Fall 2024

School Council Code of Conduct

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process

Education

Education Appeal Tribunal: refer to SI04

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- Under the *Education Act*, parents and students can appeal decisions that significantly affect education, health, or safety; and in certain cases, they can make that appeal to the *Education Appeal Tribunal*.
- Most disagreements or issues that arise in school communities can be settled through courteous and respectful discussion.
- We encourage all members of our school community to try to resolve any dispute with the people who are directly involved through a collaborative and restorative process before escalating the issue to higher levels.

Additional response:

- The *Education Act* requires each school board or council to establish a dispute resolution process for local appeals in their school.
- Student and staff privacy regarding disputes is legally protected; if a problem involves the behaviour of another student, teacher or staff member at the school, there are limits in what information can be made available to the public.
- The Department of Education has established a *School Council Dispute Resolution Procedure Policy* for use as a reference template by school councils; the policy and information on the dispute resolution process for Yukon schools is available online at Yukon.ca.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EP06

Fall 2024

School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Disputes arise in schools and issues often become public via social media.
-

Background:

- Under the Department of Education's *School Council Dispute Resolution Procedure Policy*, school administrators are responsible for resolving disputes between the school, parents, and teachers.
- To resolve problems in school communities, the department recommends these steps.
 - a. Speak with the teacher or staff member involved.
 - b. If the problem is not resolved, raise your concern with authorities in this order:
 - i. principal or vice-principal.
 - ii. superintendent or school council
 - iii. Assistant Deputy Minister of Schools and Student Services

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP04

Yukon First Nation School Board: refer to FN04

CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon: refer to EP02

Value:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to enhancing community involvement in school governance.

Recommended response:

- School council members and school board trustees play a significant role in supporting student success.
- The Department of Education works directly with school councils and school boards to ensure schools are operated effectively.
- We respect all roles and responsibilities of school councils and school boards outlined in the *Education Act* for the governance of schools.
- While school council and school board members are independently elected, all schools are required to follow Department of Education legislation and policies, including the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.
- School Council members sign an oath of office and are guided by a code of conduct.

Additional response:

- We also collaborate with the Association of Yukon School Councils Boards and Committees and the Catholic Education Association of Yukon to support the work of school councils, seek advice and address issues affecting the education system.

School Governance and Associations

Education

- I want to thank all current and previous members of school councils, school boards and associations who have worked hard to make their school communities a better place. Your dedication is appreciated.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about how the department works with and supports school boards and councils due to recent court cases and controversy about school council members speaking against the Department of Education's SOGI policy.

Background:

- There are 29 public schools in the Yukon. Of these:
 - two are operated by the Francophone School Board (la Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, or CSFY),
 - 11 are operated by the First Nation School Board (FNSB), and
 - 16 are operated by Yukon Education (Department of Education), with local oversight provided by elected school councils.
 - 3 of the Yukon Education schools are Catholic.
- The *Education Act* governs how school boards are created, how schools can be added to the education area of a board and outlines a board's powers and duties.
- The choice of whether any school is governed by a school board is decided by that school's community's electors.
- The Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) is the non-profit association of school councils in the Yukon and 13 school councils are currently members of AYSCBC.
- The Catholic Education Association of Yukon (CEAY) represents the 3 Catholic school councils.
- In 2023-24, a member of the Catholic Education Association, who also serves on a school council made statements that attending members felt opposed the SOGI policy at a school council meeting.

School Governance and Associations

Education

- This matter was widely reported with calls for the school council member to resign. While the Department does not condone the council members' statements, there is no mechanism to force an independently elected school council member to resign, or the authority to compel the council to comply.
- Education officials and a consultant from the ARC Foundation are working with CEAY to develop acceptable SOGI procedures, including expectations for an inclusive environment, which applies to all our public schools including our Catholic schools.
- In 2020, a committee made up of representatives from the Department of Education, Association of Yukon School Councils Boards and Committees, the Catholic Education Association of Yukon, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate developed a 'Resource Tool,' that contains detailed information about the roles and responsibilities of school councils, the Department of Education, and Yukon First Nations in the operation of schools and the Yukon education system.
- In 2020, the government and the CSFY settled a longstanding lawsuit relating to the roles and responsibilities of the CSFY as a school board.
- The duties and powers of school councils are described in sections of the Education Act, primarily Section 113. In partnership with their principal these duties and powers include:
 - reviewing and approving school growth plans
 - reviewing and developing school-based policies
 - participating in hiring school principals
 - making recommendations on how school budgets are spent; and
 - advising on matters such as:
 - school calendar
 - staffing needs
 - school renovations
 - school programming
 - discipline policies
 - student transportation
 - proposing locally developed courses in consultation with the Department of Education

School Governance and Associations

Education

- The duties and powers of school boards are described in sections of the Education Act, primarily Section 116. These duties and powers include:
 - ensuring that its schools are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act
 - selecting staff, including principals and teachers, for hiring, dismissal, discipline, transfer, promotion, and demotion
 - reviewing and approving school growth plans
 - establishing policies for the administration, management, and operation of its schools, including a student attendance policy
 - providing educational programs, including locally developed courses
 - advising the Minister respecting school closures, and transportation services

Joining a school board

- Education officials worked with the First Nation School Board (FNSB) and Elections Yukon to establish a process for schools to consider joining the school board after it has been in existence for at least one school year, as allowed for in the Education Act.
- Under the Act, a new or existing School Board can be substituted for an existing school council when the school council, or 20% of the electors in the attendance area, requests that a referendum be held.

Leaving a school board

- Should a school community wish to withdraw from a school board or join a different school board, it is within the Minister's authority under the Education Act to approve or not approve.
- A fair process would need to be followed, such as a referendum with a clear majority for the Minister to proceed with such a decision.
- The Minister would then establish a different attendance area for the school, which would allow for a School Council to be established for the school as a Yukon Education authority school.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# EP07

Fall 2024

School Governance and Associations

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Yukon Parent Advisory Committee

Education

Value:

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students when they are in our care.

Recommended response:

- The Hidden Valley Elementary School Parents Advisory Committee is transitioning to a Yukon-wide Parent's Advisory Committee, which the department is now working to advance.
- We're establishing this Yukon-wide committee as part of our ongoing work on safer schools and as a place for families from all Yukon communities to share their concerns and ideas.
- Our upcoming actions include consulting with school councils, school boards, Yukon First Nations, and other educational partners, creating terms of reference, and inviting people to join the committee.

Additional response:

- Consultation is essential for outlining and prioritizing our efforts to improve safety in Yukon schools, and diversity on the committee is important for getting a complete view of how to make schools safer.
- Parents and guardians are essential partners in education, and we are committed to developing and working with this committee to advance the department's work to create safe and caring environments.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions were raised by the opposition during the Spring 2024 session on composition and consultation around the development of a permanent parent advisory committee for all schools.
-

Yukon Parent Advisory Committee

Education

Background:

- The Yukon Parent Advisory committee and school councils serve different functions and will not overlap in responsibilities.
 - For example, school councils are responsible for tasks such as reviewing and approving school growth plans, reviewing school-based policies for dispute resolution, setting educational priorities, and advising on staffing and transportation.
 - In contrast, the committee is specifically focused on improving school safety for all Yukon schools.
- The backgrounder in the August 30, 2024, news release, “Government of Yukon continues to work to support safe and inclusive schools,” noted the Department of Education’s work toward establishing a Yukon-wide Parent Advisory Committee.
- School councils will be contacted through their chairs, and school boards will be approached via their executive directors. We'll also speak with the First Nation Education Commission through their chair. Additionally, the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education will be consulted via its members. Outgoing members of the Hidden Valley Elementary School Parents Advisory Committee will also be asked to lend their support, as they have been instrumental in advancing the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- The Hidden Valley Elementary School Parent Advisory Committee was established in 2022 as an action of the Safer Schools Action Plan.
 - Terms of Reference were created to guide the work of this committee. The terms stated that “the Committee expires after one year, unless otherwise stated by the Minister of Education.”

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Good nutrition is vital for students' mental and physical health and increases all students' learning potential.

Recommended response:

- On April 1, 2024, Canada announced it is investing \$1 billion over the next five years to create a National School Food Program.
- Canada's new National School Food Policy outlines broad principles and objectives to help support the long-term vision of every child having access to nutritious food in school.
- We are looking forward to learning more from the federal government on the parameters of the National School Food Program funding and we are eager to negotiate a bilateral agreement for the use of these funds.

Additional Response:

- The Future of School Food Programs working group has been meeting since 2022 to identify areas for improvement in the delivery of school food programs in Yukon and to propose options for implementing a universal school food program in Yukon.
- The group is co-chaired by Yukon Education and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate. The working group includes members representing:
 - Department of Education (including Department officials, teachers and administrators)
 - Department of Health and Social Services (Health Promotion)
 - Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Agriculture)
 - Yukon First Nations Education Directorate
 - Yukon Food for Learning Association
 - Liard First Nation
 - Kluane First Nation

- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
 - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
 - Yukon Food Security Network
 - School council members
 - We are appreciative of our partners and the ongoing work they do to support Yukon students.
 - Our investment in school food programs is a commitment to the health and wellbeing of our students, ensuring they have access to nutritious meals.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The government of Canada has committed to working with provinces, territories and Indigenous partners on implementing the new National School Food Policy, including negotiating multiyear bilateral agreements for National School Food Program funding.
-

Background:

- The Yukon government provides the Yukon Food for Learning Association with \$137,000 in ongoing annual funding. This funding includes \$115,000 from Health and Social Services and \$22,000 from the Department of Education.
 - In the 2023-24 budget the Government of Yukon announced a one-time financial enhancement of \$500,000 to strengthen existing school food programs.
 - The Yukon Food for Learning Association received \$450,000 to distribute to all Yukon schools and Yukon First Nation Education Directorate received \$50,000 to support school feasts.
 - This funding was a crucial part of the government's efforts to further support nutrition programs in all Yukon schools and help ease the financial burden on families with school aged children.
 - All Yukon schools offer some level of food programming for students.
-

- School food programs in Yukon schools are currently administered and funded through a combination of funding from the Yukon Food for Learning Association and funding from Jordan's Principle.
- The Yukon First Nation Education Directorate receives Jordan's Principle funding from the federal government to administer nutrition programs for Indigenous students in Yukon public schools. In schools that lack capacity for meal preparation, food is prepared in a commercial kitchen off-site and then delivered to the school.
- Porter Creek Secondary School, St. Francis of Assisi, F.H Collins, and CSSC Mercier all have commercial kitchens. All schools have some capacity to deliver food and nutrition programs to students through smaller kitchens or Home Economic rooms.
- The commercial kitchens at Porter Creek Secondary School and CSSC Mercier are made available through a special request for user groups to access through the Joint Use Agreement with the City of Whitehorse.
- Upgrading current infrastructure to meet commercial kitchen standards is a complex process that will involve extensive design and planning.
- We are currently working with Yukon Food for Learning Association to assess the current kitchen infrastructure in schools.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives

Education

Education Agreements: refer to FN02

JEAP Agreement Renewal: refer to DPT07

Value:

- We are working with Yukon First Nations to ensure that all schools meet the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Recommended response:

- We work with Yukon First Nations:
 - On a government-to-government basis,
 - At the community level, on education for their citizens and on their Traditional Territory, and
 - Collectively, at the Yukon-wide level with various education partners
- We will continue to work in partnership with First Nations governments to improve educational outcomes for students through:
 - The Joint Education Action Plan,
 - Community-level Education Agreements, that support community priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan
 - Negotiating and implementing 17.7 agreements and supporting agreements like the recently signed Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Letter of Agreement that allow for stronger co-governance of education in traditional territories.
 - Responding to the 2019 audit, including the work to Reimagine Inclusive and Special Education,

Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives

Education

- A Memorandum of Understanding and Transfer Payment Agreement with the Yukon Native Language Centre,
- Implementing the Joint Collaboration Framework, which outlines how the department and Yukon First Nations will collaborate to address their joint education priorities, and
- Other initiatives, such as, developing a Yukon First Nations Credit Policy, implementing the Ready-to-Learn schools initiative, and the Dashāw K'e (Indigenous Academy) at F.H. Collins.

Additional response:

- As of the start of the 2024-25 school year, 11 schools across the Yukon are operated by the First Nation School Board, marking a historic step in reclaiming educational responsibility by Yukon First Nations—a journey that began over 50 years ago with "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow."
- This demonstrates effective collaboration between Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon to advance reconciliation, support First Nations students, and enrich all Yukon students with knowledge of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 audit from the Auditor General of Canada found that the Department of Education has not done enough to collaborate with Yukon First Nations. During the Public Accounts hearing in January 2022, the Chief's Committee on Education said Education needs to collaborate more effectively.

Background:

- In 2019, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommended that the Department of Education complete and implement its policy to collaborate with

Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives

Education

Yukon First Nations as well as a strategic action plan with specific, measurable actions and timelines to support its work with Yukon First Nations.

- The Yukon First Nations Education Collaboration Framework was developed in partnership between Department of Education officials and the members of the First Nations Education Commission (FNEC) and is organized with the same priority areas identified and agreed to in the Joint Education Action Plan:
 - Yukon First Nations Cultures and Languages
 - Authority, Control and Responsibility
 - Sustainability, Supports and Success
 - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap
 - Data and Student Information
- The Collaboration Framework outlines opportunities for joint action, timelines, and implementation strategies, such as supporting Yukon Native Language Centre for language revitalization, negotiating joint priorities in Education Agreements, implementing 17.7 provisions under five Self-government Agreements, ensuring all students learn about Yukon First Nation language and culture, supporting the First Nation School Board, building resources for teachers to incorporate First Nations perspectives, developing a Learner Outcome Strategy, and implementing the Data Sharing MOU.
- In response to feedback from many Yukon First Nations partners about allocation of credits for Yukon First Nations led cultural experiences, a draft Yukon First Nations credit was developed and shared with members of First Nations Education Commission (FNEC) in May 2023, and approved by FNEC in May 2024 in Dawson City.
- The Indigenous Academy (Dashāw K'e) at F.H. Collins, in operation since 2021, explores learning through Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being with an experiential approach.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# FN01

Fall 2024

Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-16](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We are working with First Nations and educational partners to improve educational programs, services, and outcomes for all Yukon students.

Recommended response:

- Yukon First Nation governments are essential partners in supporting First Nations students and in teaching all Yukon students about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- We will continue to work with individual Yukon First Nation governments on community-level education and funding agreements to improve educational outcomes for their citizens and learners on their traditional territories at local schools.
- The Government of Yukon has committed to allocating \$1.83 million for Yukon First Nation governments to use toward joint education priorities at the community level.

Additional response:

- This community-level collaboration reflects our government-to-government relationships and commitment to reconciliation.
- It also reflects our commitment to working closely with Yukon First Nations to support First Nation students and respond to the recommendations from the 2019 Audit and the priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan.
- Funds that flow to the First Nation School Board are separate and distinct from the funds designated for Education Agreements.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 audit found that the Department of Education has not done enough to collaborate with Yukon First Nations. The Chiefs Committee on Education said Education needs to collaborate more effectively during the Public Accounts hearing in January 2022.

Background:

- The formula for allocating funding varies from nation to nation based on criteria such as number of students, number of schools and targeted projects.
- We currently have education funding agreements with 12 Yukon First Nations. Officials from the Department of Education have been meeting with Yukon First Nations officials to discuss government-to-government education priorities.
 - Carcross/Tagish First Nation
 - Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
 - First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun
 - Kluane First Nation
 - Kwanlin Dun First Nation
 - Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
 - Ross River Dena Council
 - Selkirk First Nation
 - Ta'an Kwäch'an Council
 - Teslin Tlingit Council
 - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
 - White River First Nation
- Department officials continue to work with Liard First Nation and Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation to finalize their funding agreements.
- Department of Education officials will initiate discussions with Yukon First Nations throughout winter 2024 to discuss joint education priorities and Education Agreements.
- There are regular meetings with each Yukon First Nation throughout the year and the ADM and Director of First Nation Initiatives are available when any concerns or questions come up.

Other examples of local collaboration:

- We have worked collaboratively with Yukon First Nations on a number of programs, units, camps, and resources for Yukon schools, including Yukon First Nations Credit policy to support credits for on the land and locally delivered education programs:
 - Dooli: traditional knowledge resources with the Northern Tutchone nations for schools in Pelly Crossing, Mayo and Carmacks and teacher training.
 - External credits with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in: First Fish, First Hunt, and Moose Hunt as part of their 17.7 education agreement.
 - Spring culture and trapping camps for Chief Zzeh Gittlit School with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government, and for Kluane Lake School with Kluane First Nation, amongst others.
 - Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Ghùch Tlâ School established curriculum on first fish, hunt, or trapping.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools

Education

JEAP Agreement Renewal – please see DPT07

Value:

- Revitalizing First Nation identity and heritage strengthens safer, healthier communities. Leadership, education, and training should be grounded in culture and language.

Recommended response:

- We continue to deliver language and culture programming in Yukon Schools.
- Yukon government allocates \$1.19 million annually to the Yukon Native Language Centre to support Yukon First Nations language revitalization.
- We also support the professional development and fluency of Yukon First Nations language teachers through a pilot program: two teachers can apply for full time study to increase their language fluency. This aligns with Breaking Trail Together priority for increased professional development for Yukon First Nations professionals, and also strengthens our language programs in schools.
- The Department of Education is collaborating with Yukon First Nations on bilateral government-to-government Education Agreements, that will continue to support the delivery of culture and language in schools.
- Through government-to-government discussions, we are exploring new ways of delivering Yukon First Nations Language and culture in our schools and connecting schools with communities. For example, at Porter Creek Secondary School we are piloting a language

Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools

Education

coordinator role to support language, culture and land-based learning opportunities throughout the school and in the community.

Additional response:

- In collaboration with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada, we are advancing the Joint Education Action Plan.
- Efforts include sharing resources with Yukon First Nations and meeting our obligations for language instruction.
- We are reviewing the Yukon First Nations K-12 Language Framework and Action Plan and aligning efforts to support language revitalization and foster language appreciation in future learners.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Enhancing language and culture education is a priority and a key pillar of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- The Office of the Auditor General of Canada's 2019 audit report recommended that the department do more to support the inclusion of Yukon First Nation cultures and languages in schools.

Background:

- The JEAP renewal presents an opportunity to discuss funding for language, heritage and culture with Yukon First Nations and federal ministers. This issue also aligns with discussions and interests from other provinces and territories.
- The Department of Education is developing a funding strategy for Indigenous education based on the Joint Education Action Plan, Collaboration Framework, and Education Agreements with Yukon First Nations.
- The Council of Ministers of Education of Canada's (CMEC) Indigenous Education Plan 2023-27 outlines priorities on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. Recent discussions include shared provincial and territorial interest in increased federal funding support for Indigenous languages.

Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools

Education

- The Yukon government transferred the Yukon Native Language Centre to the Council of Yukon First Nations in 2018 to aid in the revitalization of First Nation languages, with support for First Nations language teachers.
- The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People includes a foundational value: “Culture, Language, Spirituality and Relationship with the Land”, which guides work in this area.

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-05](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP04
School Governance and Associations: refer to EP07

Value:

- The Government of Yukon, Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board share the common goal of providing high quality and culturally appropriate education, based on an Indigenous worldview, for all Yukon students.

Recommended response:

- The First Nation School Board governs eleven schools across the Yukon. This is an historic step for Yukon First Nations and their citizens.
- The First Nation School Board is enabling Yukon First Nations to reclaim greater responsibility for the administration and management of education programs for students in their communities.
- As Minister of Education, I will continue to collaborate with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board trustees as I exercise my oversight authority for Yukon education.
- I will also continue to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations on their educational priorities for their citizens.

Additional response:

- The First Nation School Board held its first election in November 2022.
- As of August 2024, there are five elected trustees: Shadelle Chambers, Dana Tizya-Tram, Jocelyn Joe-Strack, Gillian Staveley and Mats'äsäna Mą (Sarina) Primožic.

- With the original eight schools plus three that joined as result of February 2023 referendums, there are a total of eleven schools that make up the First Nations School Board, with nine in communities and two in Whitehorse.

Additional response - Funding:

- We are currently working with the First Nation School Board to negotiate a new Transfer Payment Agreement.
- In the meantime, the department has entered into an Interim Transfer Payment Agreement with the First Nation School Board to continue to ensure the First Nation School Board has funding to support their board operations.
- The 2024-25 Budget includes amounts for the operations of the 11 schools under the First Nations School Board; this includes amounts for the last 3 months (April, May, and June 2024) of the 15- month Transfer Payment Agreement (April 2023 to June 2024).
- The department worked with the newly elected trustees on a final financial arrangement for the First Nation School Board funding formula to create equitable funding between school authorities and to establish consistent service levels in the provisioning of K-12 education programs.

Additional response – YG work with FNSB to support student outcomes:

- The First Nation School Board has developed their own Literacy and Numeracy strategies and started implementing these strategies in their schools for the 2023-24 school year and we support these efforts and celebrate these successes.
- Over the 15-month Transfer Payment Agreement with the First Nation School Board (April 2023 to June 2024), Yukon government

provided \$1,562,000 to support their work to improve student outcomes.

- The Department of Education works closely with Yukon First Nation governments on a government-to-government basis to develop Education Agreements to support better outcomes for First Nation students.
 - We are committed to working with the First Nation School Board on the Education Agreements that affect the schools that they operate.
- Three school authorities operate schools in Yukon – the First Nation School Board, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) and Yukon Education.
- While all must work within the established curriculum, legislation, regulations, and policies, each school authority has considerable autonomy regarding how education is delivered in their schools.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There will be considerable interest in how the First Nation School Board is operating the eleven schools under its authority, and the impact of this on all Yukon students.

Background:

- On September 19, 2024, an interim TPA was signed to ensure the First Nation School Board has funding to support their board operations and governance. This Interim TPA expires on December 31, 2024
- The negotiation team has met a number of times through August and September, On September 20, 2024, the First Nation School Board submitted a funding proposal to support the TPA negotiation discussions.

- The breakdown for the 15-month TPA (which ended June 2024) with the FNSB included:
 - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eight schools \$29.3M – this includes the same cost factors and drivers as the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, or CSFY, with a minor difference for rural remoteness.
 - Board governance and administration of eight schools of \$3.3M.
 - Discretionary grant for Indigenous recognition \$4.8M.
 - One-time funding for governance of community committees \$450k.
 - Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$3.125M.
- The TPA was amended to include funding to support the three new schools as well as to extend the expiry date past June 30, 2024, while negotiating the new TPA.
- The following schools are operated by the First Nation School Board (FNSB):
 - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, Old Crow, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.
 - Johnson Elementary School & Watson Lake Secondary School, Watson Lake, Liard First Nation.
 - Ross River School, Ross River, Ross River Dena Council.
 - St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
 - Nelna Bessie John School, Beaver Creek, White River First Nation.
 - Grey Mountain Primary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
 - Takhini Elementary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
 - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing, Selkirk First Nation.
 - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross, Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
 - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, Kluane First Nation.
- JV Clark School (Mayo) electors voted in 2022 to not have their school operated by the FNSB.

- An Interim funding agreement was in place to ensure a successful transition for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The total amount of this agreement was \$13,094,188 (to March 31, 2023) and represented base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
- For 12 months of the funding agreement that ended on June 30, 2024 provided the FNSB with \$27,322,346 for the operation, administration, salaries and strategic initiatives for the original 8 schools along with the School Board for the 2023-24 school year.
 - The previous funding agreement was updated to include the 3 additional schools and any enrolment changes in early 2024.
- Following the establishment of the First Nation School Board, the Minister of Education appointed an interim governance committee based on recommendations of the Chiefs Committee on Education.
- This committee oversaw operations of the school board until November 2022, when school board trustee elections took place.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Classroom assessment practices support learning as a life-long process and value the importance of supporting each child's individual learning journey.

Recommended response:

- Educators involve parents and students in the learning process by using ongoing, meaningful feedback to support student growth.
- Students are assessed on the learning standards identified in a curriculum and supported to improve their proficiency of each standard.
- All school authorities - Yukon Education, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and the First Nation School Board - follow the same K to 12 curriculum and reporting structure, however, how learning objectives are met and assessed in the classroom may vary.
- Students in Grades 10 to 12 continue to receive percentage scores and transcripts for post-secondary school.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There continues to be varying reactions to Yukon's decision to adopt standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting.

Background:

- Grade 12 students also receive percentage scores at the mid-point of their course for pre-admission to post-secondary schools.
- Yukon schools are responsible for completing the formal assessments outlined in the assessment matrix. In addition, formative assessments and classroom assessments are also a regular part of classroom practice.
- The Yukon student assessment matrix for Yukon Education Authority operated schools was updated in September 2022.

- The updated matrix includes updated literacy assessments for both English and French Immersion students.
 - There is criticism to the updated Matrix with respect to literacy assessments.
- The assessment matrix does not include formalized assessments completed by Student Support Services specialists.
- The main features of the modernized assessment and reporting guidelines and procedures are:
 - Flexibility to increase parent and student involvement in the learning process using ongoing, meaningful feedback in conversation with parents/students and examples of student work to show learning progress to parents, caregivers, and students.
 - More informal communication options with parents.
- The recommendations from the Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy include a continuation of the working group to explore literacy interventions and inclusion of Indigenous ways of teaching literacy. This work is currently underway.
 - These further developed recommendations are likely to impact current assessments of literacy in the future.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Curriculum Resource Material Review – Catholic Curriculum

Education

Value:

- We are committed to ensuring that schools are safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for students, staff and community members of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

Recommended response:

- All curricular resources approved for use in Yukon public schools are assessed using many factors including alignment with public school policies and the Education Act, curricular fit and appropriateness of content for age and grade level.
- When concerns are raised about the content of resources being used in Yukon schools the department will investigate.
- While Catholic schools have the right to provide religious education programs and lessons that teach Catholic values to their students, they do not have the right to provide teachings about sexual orientation or gender identity that are inconsistent with Yukon's laws and Department of Education policies.

Additional response:

- Following a comprehensive review by Department of Education personnel and St. Francis staff members, a new textbook was selected for use in the Grade 12 Morals and Ethics course at St. Francis.
- This review was part of Yukon Education's commitment that all educational materials align with both St. Francis' curriculum and the Department of Education's policies.

Curriculum Resource Material Review – Catholic Curriculum

Education

- The Catholic Episcopal Corporation and the Department of Education are both pleased with this outcome and will continue to review resources and support educators in delivering Catholic education in line with the department's policies.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In March 2024, the Department of Education heard concerns in an anonymous letter that a textbook being used by St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School went against the Department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy.
 - This issue received media coverage and was subsequently raised in Question Period by the Third Party.
-

Background:

- The department provides schools with a catalogue of curriculum resources, all of which are approved for use in Yukon schools.
- Yukon schools have some autonomy to select secondary resources, but this material must be approved by Yukon administrators.
- After a thorough review, the textbook that raised concerns, "Called to Happiness: Guiding Ethical Principles" was not recommended by the Department of Education as some language conflicted with the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy.
- The new textbook, "In Search of the Good", is published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

First Nation Programming in Schools

Education

Value:

- We work to ensure all Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offer all Yukon students opportunities to understand Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Recommended response:

- Culturally inclusive and welcoming learning environments help to support student success at school.
- All Yukon schools work with the "Cultural Inclusion Standards in all Schools" developed by the First Nations Education Commission.
- The Yukon's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum is designed to give value to the local context of each community.
- I am pleased to share that we are launching a new unit to support Grade 5 Social Studies on the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools in Yukon and across Canada.
- This unit was developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge Keepers; residential school survivors and Educators.
- I am also pleased to share that the Grade 10 Indian Residential School unit was revised, and educators engaged in a training session on the unit this month.

Additional response:

- The Department of Education has recently announced the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning policy.
- This policy outlines the full control individual First Nation governments have to develop, deliver, and assess successful completion of

First Nation Programming in Schools

Education

accredited learning to support students in earning up to 12 elective credits towards graduation.

- We continue to build relationships with Yukon First Nations and collaborate on an ongoing basis to develop additional materials, resources, and supports for culturally inclusive school programming.
- Ensuring Yukon educators have the professional learning opportunities and resources they need to include this learning in their class lessons is a priority for the department and a key to successfully delivering the modernized curriculum.
- We also have several education consultants available to schools with information on how to localize resources to reflect Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.
- The First Nation School Board will also guide us on new and culturally rich ways to deliver the K-12 curriculum and programming that can be used in all Yukon schools.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Office of the Auditor General of Canada's 2019 audit report recommended that the department do more to support the inclusion of Yukon First Nation cultures and languages in schools.

Background:

- Recommendation #109 from the 2019 audit is: "The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages."
- The Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives branch and the Curriculum and Assessment unit have worked with Yukon First Nations to develop curriculum materials and deliver training and support to Yukon educators relating to how

First Nation Programming in Schools

Education

students learn about Yukon First Nations cultures, languages, and histories, such as:

- A new grade 5 unit about residential schools is being rolled out this year with supported training.
 - Draft sample units for K-12 educators, integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
 - Grade 10 Residential School Unit undergoing graphic design.
 - Many approved locally developed courses that give value to the local context of communities.
- The Cultural Inclusion Standards in all Yukon Schools are being integrated into School Growth Plans.
 - They were developed at the 2016 Yukon First Nation Education Summit and approved by the First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) in April 2016 and have been introduced to school principals. School principals participated in discussions and planning for the standards at the 2017 Yukon First Nation Education Summit.
- The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) has worked with the department over the past few years on several initiatives related to the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP), including these standards.
- In September 2021, a new Indigenous Academy started operating out of FH Collins Secondary – a cooperative effort between the school, school council, First Nations, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.
- The Academy is based on a similar program from School District 23 in British Columbia and is a "learning community" where several core subjects are taught through a primarily Indigenous worldview with wrap-around supports provided for students.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-22

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- We value Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge keepers as teachers of Yukon First Nations culture, language and ways of knowing, doing, and being.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is pleased to share we have approved and introduced the new Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy.
- This policy recognizes and honors the value of Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge keepers as teachers of the culture, language, history and traditions.
- This policy gives a pathway for Yukon First Nations governments to plan and deliver courses and/or experiences for Yukon students that allow students to receive credits towards the Indigenous graduation requirement as outlined in B.C.'s graduation program.

Additional response:

- This policy came into effect on September 30, 2024, National Day for Truth & Reconciliation and is part of the Yukon government's ongoing efforts toward truth and reconciliation and strengthens the role of Yukon First Nations in shaping education programs for Yukon students.
- Yukon First Nations will have full control over who delivers and assesses the student learning for those credits.
- The policy responds to long-standing calls to action, including those outlined in Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow and various public reports such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.

- Students will still be required to meet all other programming outlined in B.C's graduation program.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP) filed a failure to consult policy grievance regarding the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy.
 - There could be questions about the rigor of these courses and experiences from the public.
-

Background:

- The desire of Yukon First Nations to deliver their own programming for credit was affirmed at the May 2023 First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) meeting, where an early draft of the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural and Language Learning Policy was shared and substantive feedback on the draft policy was received and incorporated.
- In July 2023, the B.C. Ministry of Education released a new process for First Nations in British Columbia to develop First Nations Authorized courses, or to apply to be providers of “external credentials”.
- Based on this new process, conversations took place between Education and the B.C. Ministry of Education to develop a credit-granting process to allow Yukon First Nations to develop and deliver education programming for credit that would also meet the B.C. requirements.
- A revised Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning Policy was shared with FNEC at their February 8, 2024 meeting, and additional feedback was received and incorporated into the policy.
- At the FNEC meeting on May 9, 2024 the decision was made to move forward with finalizing the policy.
- On September 27, 2024 the President of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals requested the department to hold off on implementation of the policy.

- The department responded, on September 27, 2024, that we will be moving forward with implementation because this policy does not impact the employment relationship or increase workload of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals bargaining unit members.
- On October 1, 2024, the President of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals responded to the department and the Executive Director of the First Nation School Board that they have a responsibility to their members to ensure that consultation on any policies should not be overlooked by government and requested an opportunity to meet to discuss the policy and obligation to consult further.
- The department responded on October 2, 2024 to thank the Yukon Association of Education Professionals for sharing that they agree with the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural and Language Learning Policy in principle and that department officials were available to discuss the policy but confirmed any discussions were not consultation on the policy.
- On October 11, 2024, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals filed a grievance with the Public Service Commission – Labour Relations Branch for failure to consult on the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural and Language Learning Policy
- In the spring 2024, the department officials met with President of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to share that the First Nation Education Commission approved the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural and Language Learning Policy.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

Education

LGBTQ2S+ – Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation: refer to HOT06/DPT09

Value:

- It is a top priority to support healthy, active, safe, and caring learning environments in all Yukon schools.

Recommended response:

- Yukon's Physical and Health Education curriculum includes age-appropriate learning standards on physical literacy, health and active living, social and community health, and mental wellbeing.
- We work with educators, health experts, and community members to ensure we use up-to-date practices to create an inclusive school environment for all students.
- We appreciate the need for families to be aware of curriculum topics and invite parents to discuss the curriculum topics with their child's teacher or school principal.

Additional response - curriculum:

- Students start to learn about sexual identity in Grade 4. Lessons include information about the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty, including those involving sexuality and sexual identity.
- Teachers are provided with resources and professional learning about appropriate language and best practices to teach these learning standards inclusively.
- Yukon's curriculum, resources, and professional learning for educators follow the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy,

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

Education

or SOGI policy, which promotes appropriate, respectful behaviour for all students, including 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

Additional response – SOGI policy:

- To further support 2SLGBTQIA+ students, the Department of Education updated its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy, as outlined in the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- In June of 2024, the Government of Yukon announced that it has referred the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- This review asks the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's Office to assess the SOGI policy current impact and implementation and make recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe schools and school communities for all students, staff and school community members of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- We will continue to engage with students, educators and other members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community as we work to implement and evaluate the updated SOGI Policy.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- Questions about the SOGI Policy are expected.
-

Background:

- Yukon government initiatives that relate to gender identity and safety in schools include:

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

Education

- The LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan committed the Department of Education to updating the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.
- The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People aims to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit+ People.
- The Department of Education's current work to update its policies and processes on safe and caring schools.
- The work of the Communities of Inquiry in response to the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and the Review on School Attendance are creating new definitions of Inclusive and Special Education.
- The department's continuing partnership with ARC Foundation, a charitable foundation supporting SOGI-inclusive educational practices in K-12 school settings, to continue to implement the tools and resources of the SOGI 1,2,3 program to create more inclusive schools for students.

Curriculum

- Content related to sexual health begins in kindergarten when students learn the proper name of all their body parts.
- With younger students, sexual health topics focus on general health and safety. In later grades, this content expands to include content such as topics related to pregnancy, the prevention of sexually transmitted infections and overall healthy sexual decision making.
- In grades 4-10, Physical and Health Education curriculum includes strategies for students to protect themselves and others from potential abuse, exploitation, and harm in a variety of settings.
- Parents and caregivers can opt their children out of lessons related to sexual health and as a result are responsible for ensuring their children understand the associated learning standards.
- Schools ensure that students who are not participating in sexual health programming at school are supervised. Schools may provide teachers on call to support students who are opted out of sexual health programming.

Resources

- All schools are provided with the Better to Know resources.

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

Education

- Video and teaching resources for Grades K to 3 are available for use in Yukon Schools.
- Grade 4-7 Better to Know resources, previously known as SHARE, were previously reviewed. The revised resources were available to teachers beginning in the 2022-23 school year.

Professional learning

- All Yukon Education schools that had a Professional Development Day on August 17, 2023, received professional development in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Inclusive educational practices to support their roles and responsibilities in the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy.
- The Departments of Education and Health and Social Services follow best practices in comprehensive sexual health education as taught by Options for Sexual Health (OPT BC) in Vancouver. Health and Social Services employs Certified Sexual Health Educators who have been trained through OPT BC. Many Yukon educators have received training for teaching classroom lessons from Certified Sexual Health Educators.
- Since September 2017, Education and Health and Social Services have held workshops at the majority of Yukon schools. Topics included:
 - Better to Know, or BTK (previously SHARE).
 - Comprehensive sexual health curricular competencies for various elementary grade levels; and
 - Grade K-12 comprehensive health learning standards.
- We have organized and delivered (and continue to do so) professional development workshops open to all Yukon teachers on sexual health education in collaboration with Health and Social Services. We have also worked with Health and Social Services to deliver professional development workshops to the nursing community who are closely involved in K-12 education.
- Teachers most recently engaged in professional development on sexual health resources in January 2024.
- We have implemented new training, developed through work on the Safer School Action Plan, in all schools to enhance student safety and raise awareness about appropriate adult behaviour.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# CU05

Fall 2024

Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Adult Graduation Diploma (High School): refer to AE01

Value:

- Our goal is to ensure all Yukon students have the skills and knowledge necessary for their transition into higher education, training, or the workforce – whatever their path may be.

Recommended response:

- To graduate with a Dogwood high school graduation diploma, grade 10 to 12 students must follow the B.C. Graduation Program, including the requirement to complete four credits in an Indigenous-focused course.
- All Yukon school authorities, including Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and Yukon private schools, have the same graduation requirements.
- Students are required to earn a minimum of 80 course credits and complete the B.C. Provincial Graduation Assessments in numeracy and literacy to graduate.

Additional response:

- The Indigenous-focused course graduation requirement came into effect in the 2023-24 school year and all Yukon schools are ensuring students have access to course offerings to meet this requirement.
- A key graduation requirement for all Yukon students is completing the B.C. literacy and numeracy assessments in grades 10 and 12 to demonstrate overall skills in literacy and numeracy, rather than the student's proficiency in a specific course.
- This year, in alignment with B.C., Yukon has implemented updates to the required Grade 10 social studies curriculum to explicitly include teaching about the Holocaust.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Completing 4 credits in an Indigenous-focused course is now a graduation requirement for students. There may be questions about how to meet this requirement, specifically regarding Indigenous languages.
 - Questions may be asked about if there are differences between the graduation programs for Yukon public and private schools as well as between the school authorities – Yukon Education, CSFY or FNSB.
 - Questions may be asked regarding the updated Social Studies 10 curriculum to include teachings about the Holocaust.
-

Background:

- Of the 80 credits required to graduate with a Dogwood diploma, 52 are required credits and 28 are elective.
 - There are several ways for students to earn the 28 elective credits. These include:
 - External Credentials (credits earned through approved external bodies such as dance classes affiliated with Royal Academy of Dance),
 - Dual Credits (grade 11 and 12 students can take a post-secondary course and earn credit at their high school level and earn credit at that post-secondary institution towards a credential (i.e., a university degree),
 - Independent Directed Studies (students initiate their own area of learning expanding upon a Ministry-approved course and receive credit), and
 - Locally developed courses (courses developed by a school and approved by a committee and taught by a Yukon certified teacher) – with the recent amendment to the Education Act, there is no restriction on the number of locally developed credits that can count toward elective credits.
 - In addition, a First Nations credit policy is currently being explored as an additional option for Yukon students to earn elective credits and to meet the Indigenous-focused course graduation requirement.
 - There are many ways for students to meet the requirement for Indigenous-focused credits including B.C. curriculum Indigenous-focused course offerings, Indigenous-focused locally developed courses, or Indigenous languages at grades 10 –12 level, and when the YFN credit policy is finalized, these credits will also meet the Indigenous graduation requirement.
-

- B.C. Indigenous languages are offered to students in grade 10-12 to meet the Indigenous-focused course requirement. The importance of developing and implementing Yukon language courses that can also meet this requirement aligns with the Yukon First Nation K-12 Language Framework and Action Plan developed by Yukon First Nations Education Directorate (YFNED) and First Nations Education Commission (FNEC); and aligns with the Language and Culture pillar of Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP).
- The graduation assessments include a grade 10 numeracy assessment, a grade 10 literacy assessment and a grade 12 literacy assessment.
- French Immersion students and Francophone students must complete additional assessments to graduate with Dual Dogwood Diplomas.
- French Immersion students must complete a grade 12 French immersion literacy assessment and Francophone students must complete a Francophone literacy assessment at both the grade 10 and grade 12 level.
- Grade 10 to 12 students have ongoing classroom assessments, such as final projects, learning portfolios, and exams. These are determined at the school level.
- No changes have been made to the requirements for the Adult Dogwood Diploma or Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires en Colombie-Britannique, both of which the Yukon follows.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Developing and improving literacy skills throughout life is essential to an individual's right to an education and is a top priority for the Department of Education.

Recommended Response:

- Teaching literacy is complex and there is no single approach that works for all students.
- Educators need to have a well-developed 'toolbox' of strategies and approaches that are based on current research and data
- The implementation of the Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy announced in Fall 2023 is underway.
- This Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy and the First Nation School Board's Literacy Strategy both place a strong emphasis on the structured literacy approach.
- The Department of Education has data from Reading Recovery that is supportive of student success. Reading Recovery is a strength based, child centered approach to teaching that creates an individualized series of lessons for each student.
- We are implementing a variety of literacy instruction approaches, including structured literacy. The Reading Recovery intervention is in place to support the most vulnerable literacy learners in Grade 1. The education team is striving to meet the diverse needs of Yukon students.

Additional Responses:

- Literacy support teachers are in place in many K-7 schools.
- New resources are in place to support the implementation of a structured literacy approach in primary and intermediate grades.

- Classroom support, professional development sessions, and training sessions are ongoing this school year to support the implementation of structured literacy programming.
 - A rural education consultant is providing ongoing literacy support to Yukon Education-operated rural schools.
 - The Department of Education is committed to supporting educators by providing training and resources to enhance their instructional toolkit.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions about Yukon's literacy approach have been raised in a Public Accounts hearing, due to a submission from Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, as well as in past budget debates.
 - The Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy indicates that school-based literacy support teachers for K-7 schools will be in place for this school year.
 - While literacy support teachers have already been implemented in many schools, there are delays as we support the collective bargaining process of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP).
 - Inquiries about the literacy support teachers in K-7 classrooms have been sent to the Director of Curriculum and YAEP.
-

Background:

The Yukon Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy Working Group

- The working group met throughout 2023 and provided evidence-informed recommendations for the strategy in alignment with BC's curriculum. The working group continues to meet to guide implementation.
- Co-chaired by a Yukon First Nations member, the working group is comprised of representatives from the Department of Education, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, LDAY, Boreal Clinic (speech pathologist), teachers, administrators, and YAEP.
- The working group is also tasked with the ongoing work of strengthening the strategy to be more inclusive of Yukon First Nations' perspectives.

Implementation status

- The strategy recognizes the important recommendation of protecting the integrity of learning assistant teacher roles to ensure students are accessing the support needed for success.
- The recommendations from this strategy along with teacher recruitment efforts are working toward solutions to protect learning assistant teacher positions in schools.
- Literacy support from education consultants and the rural consultant is ongoing.
- Educators can expect to see some new screening tools for phonetic awareness and decoding by next school year

Literacy and Curriculum

- The Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy involves a phased approach over the next three years that includes:
 - Increasing learning opportunities for educators and implementing literacy support teachers in schools to provide continued support to educators, guided by a literacy consultant.
 - Ensuring culturally inclusive materials and approaches to support Structured Literacy.
 - Using up-to-date evidence-based practices, meaningful consultation with partners, and frequent review and quality assurance processes to measure success and provide iterations of support where necessary.
- An education consultant's portfolio has changed to K-12 Literacy Consultant.
- The strategy includes a recommendation to continue working on exploration of literacy interventions and Indigenous ways of teaching literacy. This work has started and may impact assessments and intervention methods in the future.

Reading Recovery

- The working group has made evidence-based recommendations on literacy interventions, including Reading Recovery, and that are currently being reviewed.
- Implementing literacy support teachers for K-7 schools may have some interruptions as we support collective bargaining with YAEP. This will include evolving the Reading Recovery/Early Literacy positions.

- Some administrators have asked to utilize a centralized Reading Recovery teacher position to become a literacy intervention specialist.

Tracking literacy progress

- The BOEHM and Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessments provide data on student's literacy at primary levels.
- School principals, teachers and learning assistance teachers can access assessment results to track the literacy and comprehension progress of a student over time.
- Reading and writing are assessed at key points during a student's education, including Grades 4 and 7 through the Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments. These assessments are written early in the school year so teachers can use the information from these assessments to adjust teaching instruction and provide individualized support to students.
- At the high school level, students are assessed through Grade 10 and Grade 12 Literacy Assessments.
- Updates to literacy assessments mandated for Yukon Education schools are in effect in the 2024-25 school year. Benchmark assessments replaced the previously mandated District Assessment of Reading Team (DART).

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- We value the importance of offering courses for students that respond to the needs of the local community and First Nation.

Recommended response:

- Yukon's curriculum, which is based on British Columbia's, is designed to allow teachers to adapt and incorporate local and Indigenous content from Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- We recognize the significant value of local and Yukon First Nations content in our students' education and support their access to locally developed courses throughout their educational journey.
- These courses, no longer limited to 20 per cent of a student's educational program, are applicable towards elective graduation credits, and some can also meet the Indigenous studies graduation requirement and the grade 11 Arts Education or Applied, Design, Skills, and Technology requirement.

Additional response:

- Locally developed courses are developed by Yukon teachers; often in collaboration with a Yukon First Nation.
- Teachers are encouraged and supported to use culturally inclusive approaches in the instruction of all courses.
- The Department of Education oversees the process to develop and approve locally developed courses for use across all Yukon schools.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- With the removal of the 20 per cent limit on locally developed course the public may have more questions about such courses.
-

Background:

- As of August 26, 2024, there are twenty-three approved locally developed courses including Ancestral Technology 10 & 11, First Fish 10, Climate Change 10 and 12, Yukon First Nation Leadership 10, and Outdoor Education 10.
- On April 17, 2024, the Act to Amend the Education Act (Bill No. 307) passed by unanimous consent and removed the 20% limit for locally developed courses.
- The Department of Education has guidelines and procedures for developing locally developed courses.
- The development of a locally developed course may vary in cost depending on the course; it also takes human resources and time.
- A school board/authority and the Minister (or delegate) must approve locally developed courses as per the Education Act.
- Resources to support the delivery of these courses are covered under the school's budget and/or the Curriculum and Assessment Resource Budget for Yukon Education Authority operated schools.
- First Nation School Board and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools that develop courses will utilize their budgets to support the delivery of the course within their schools.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The Department of Education is committed to improving numeracy skills for students across the territory.

Recommended Response:

- Addressing student numeracy needs is a complex task, and no single approach or resource program is a solution for the many factors that influence student numeracy outcomes.
- Yukon Education's numeracy strategy aligns with the First Nation School Board's numeracy strategy and outlines the Yukon's approach to improving numeracy outcomes for students.
- In response to a recommendation in the strategy, a K to 12 numeracy consultant has been hired to support educators with best practices for numeracy instruction and lead the implementation of the numeracy strategy.
- Numeracy support teachers are in place in many K-7 schools.

Additional Responses:

- We also have a rural education consultant who will provide ongoing support to Yukon Education-operated rural schools in addition to the support provided by the numeracy consultant.
- Following other recommendations in the strategy, several Yukon Education-operated schools offered numeracy camps this past summer for students going into grades 4 to 6 as an experiential way for holistic numeracy instruction
- The Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy working group has recommended strengthening the culturally responsive teaching of

numeracy along with continuing to examine numeracy interventions and screeners that inform teaching practices; this work is commencing this school year, and more recommendations are expected.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Data indicates that numeracy proficiencies need improvement for Yukon students.
-

Background:

- On September 8, 2023, the Department of Education released A Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy and Plan.
- Implementing new numeracy support for teachers in K to 7 schools may be delayed as we focus on collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Yukon Education Professionals.
- While collective bargaining is underway, the numeracy consultant and other educational consultants will continue to support educators in their classrooms.
- Training and support for Mathology, a newer mathematics resource, has been ongoing, in collaboration with the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone de Yukon. The working group supports the continued use of this resource.
- The working group will continue to collaborate this coming school year to strengthen the inclusion of Yukon First Nations culture, values, and beliefs within the strategy.

Tracking literacy and numeracy progress

- The BOEHM and Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessments provide data on student's numeracy at primary levels.
- The Mathology resource includes assessments for teachers to use, with instructional supports to address any gaps in student learning.

Assessments and data

- Yukon teachers provide ongoing assessments of students to help students and parents focus on ways to support student growth.

- Numeracy is assessed at key points during a student's education, including in Grades 4 and 7 through the Yukon Foundational Skills Assessments. In the past, these assessments were written late in the school year. They have now been moved to the fall of each school year so teachers can use the information from these assessments to adjust and provide support to students.
- At the high school level, students write the Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-01

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training

Education

Value:

- The Department of Education values and supports ongoing and continuous professional learning opportunities for educators.

Recommended response:

- Our department actively plans and provides in-servicing and professional development opportunities to all Yukon educators, with the goal of improving student outcomes by supporting professional growth.
- Educators are provided with training and professional development sessions each school year that include mandatory training on Department of Education policies, along with professional development on Yukon First Nation history, culture, and beliefs, numeracy, literacy, ready to learn, sexual health curriculum, universal design for learning and more.
- We also allocate \$475,000 annually to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals for their professional development activities to support professional growth, curriculum implementation and other key priorities.

Additional response:

- Throughout the school year, we collaborate with various partners to offer comprehensive professional development for educational staff.
- This includes training in areas like Ready to Learn Schools, the Safer Schools Action Plan, mental health and wellness, sexual health, and literacy and numeracy.
- During this August's Welcome Week, the first since before the Covid 19 pandemic, Yukon Education provided in-service sessions for educators about the history of Indigenous peoples, literacy and numeracy sessions, support for teaching Holocaust, and essential

Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training

Education

training in student protection policy and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity inclusionary practices.

- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals professional development fund is established under the terms of the collective agreement. The annual employer contribution increased from \$460,000 to \$475,000 on September 1, 2015, and this rate remains in effect.
- As collective bargaining is underway between the Government of Yukon and the YAEF, it is appropriate that any discussions involving professional development funding occur between the parties to the collective agreement at the bargaining table.
- The professional development fund between the Northwest Territories Teachers Association and the Government of Northwest Territories is established under the terms of their collective agreement, their fund consists of 2.25% formula based on the gross basic salary of teachers, calculated at the start of each academic year, and is jointly managed through Regional Professional Development committees.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Teachers have requested more flexible professional learning time organized at the school level to better meet their needs.
- The Review of Inclusive and Special Education identified professional development needs to increase inclusive practices within the system.

Background

- Under ss. 46 (2) of the Education Act, in each school year there must be: 15 hours for professional development for school staff and 15 hours for 'non-instructional purposes' specified by a School Board or School Council for its school.
- Under Article 12 of the YAEF collective agreement, the department contributes \$475,000 annually to the Professional Development Fund for 'training and

Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training

Education

development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities’.

- A Joint Trust Fund Management Committee with YAEP and department members (including the Education Director Curriculum & Assessment) sets the parameters for eligible activities for Deputy Minister approval each year, with funding administered by the YAEP’s Professional Development Committee.
- Support for Indigenous language fluency is offered throughout the year, including through courses, resources and site visits offered through Yukon Native Language Centre. For example, there was a 2023 workshop that offered three days of immersive on-the-land language activities and presentations on the deep connections between land and language.
- A Community of Inquiry, formed as part of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education, has been exploring ways to enhance inclusive practices in classrooms and apply a culturally based perspective.
 - We are currently reviewing recommendations from this Community of Inquiry to determine the best strategies for future implementation through professional development.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We provide all early kindergarten to grade 12 students a modern curriculum that follows best practices from across Canada and the world and incorporates the Yukon's context and Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing and being.

Recommended response:

- Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon all follow the same curriculum.
- Core competencies - a set of intellectual, personal, social and emotional proficiencies - are embedded within the curriculum.
- The curriculum focuses on understanding and applying concepts, rather than memorizing isolated facts.

Additional response:

- Our curriculum is student-centered, emphasizing hands-on and personalized learning that integrates career and finance education with applied skills, design, and technology.
- Flexible learning environments are tailored to local contexts and place-based education, and collaboration with Yukon First Nations and schools is key to developing community-specific courses.
- Numeracy and literacy are integrated across all subjects, not limited to English and Mathematics.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The First Nation School Board uses some different resources and assessments to support literacy development and has been mistakenly seen to be departing from the shared curriculum.
-

Background:

- In 2016, the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education recommended Yukon use B.C.'s curriculum, with Yukon and Yukon First Nations adaptations.
- In 2016-17, senior department officials visited all Yukon school communities to present changes to the curriculum through public meetings and meetings for school staff, School Councils, and Yukon First Nations
- Yukon schools began using a redesigned curriculum in kindergarten to Grade 9 in 2017–18, Grade 10 in 2018–19, and Grades 11 and 12 in 2019-20.
- The redesigned curriculum is based on B.C.'s modernized competency-based curriculum. B.C. is a leading jurisdiction in Canada and the world in education. Yukon partners with B.C. and has used B.C.'s curriculum for many years.
- The changes to the curriculum are based on international research and extensive consultations with teachers and experts in education; references are available on the B.C. Ministry curriculum website.
- Teachers and other educational staff continue to engage in inquiry processes through learning networks to improve outcomes for students as an avenue to explore ways to deliver the curriculum to students.
- For the 2024-25 school year, B.C. has updated the required Grade 10 Social Studies curriculum to include teachings about the Holocaust, and as Yukon follows B.C. curriculum, we are also teaching about the Holocaust.
 - Yukon Social Studies teachers received some initial training and resources on Holocaust education during Welcome Week.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# CU11

Fall 2024

Yukon's Curriculum

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Business Continuity - Emergency Preparedness (Strike Action)

Education

Value:

- Effective management of any business and workforce disruption requires streamlined decision making and efficient lines of communication that promote the coordinated exchange of personnel and resources.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education has a Workforce Continuity Plan and reviews it regularly.
- The Public Service Commission leads Workforce Continuity Planning for the Yukon government and representatives from the Department of Education are committee members.

Additional response:

- Specific training is provided to prepare for strike-related workforce disruption.
- Mitigation strategies, such as a skills inventory, gap analysis and cross training, are undertaken to ensure continuity of services should a strike-related workforce disruption occur.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Matters regarding continuity of services, specifically closure of schools, are a public concern.

Background:

- The Collective Agreement between Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Yukon Employees Union will expire on December 31, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals expired on June 30, 2024.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR01

Fall 2024

Business Continuity - Emergency Preparedness (Strike Action)

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Community Housing for Teachers

Education

Value:

- The Government of Yukon recognizes that staff housing has a role in supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in rural Yukon communities.

Recommended response:

- Working within available resources, we assist staff in rural communities in meeting their housing needs.
- This is challenging and complex work as housing supply is limited, especially in rural communities.
- As of October 4, 2024, there are 51 Yukon Housing Corporation units in the communities leased to teachers, across all three school authorities - Yukon Education, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and the First Nation School Board.
- An additional three units are leased by the department and sublet to teachers in a rural community.
- As well, three additional units are leased by the department for the First Nations School Board from Yukon Housing Corporation for short-term education staff accommodation needs in Pelly Crossing, Ross River and Old Crow.
- All other staff have secured private housing, which they either rent or have purchased themselves.
- Teachers' ability to receive extensions on staff housing gives them security and confidence.
 - The Department of Education, Yukon Housing Corporation, and the Public Service Commission created a solution in alignment

Community Housing for Teachers

Education

with policy, where the department will recommend extensions annually on behalf of any teachers subject to renewal.

- This solution ensures that teachers will not receive notices of term end and supports the department's rural recruitment and retention strategy.
- A review of the policy's effectiveness is currently underway by the Public Service Commission and the Yukon Housing Corporation.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Teachers have expressed concerns around communication from YHC/PSC on the policy and process to request extension.
- Not all communities have housing options through Yukon Housing Corporation and many communities have limited private housing options, such as Carcross. Some teachers have expressed concerns about having to commute long distances to attend work at their expense.
- Yukon Association of Education Professionals has voiced concerns publicly that housing is impacting the department's rural recruitment potential.

Background:

- The Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) manages Yukon government staff housing units in accordance with GAM Policy 3.30 Staff Accommodation.
- The policy for staff housing was revised in May 2019 with respect to eligibility, tenancy agreements and duration, rental rates, and assignment.
- In communities outside Whitehorse, there may be staff units provided by YHC. If this is not available, staff are required to find their own private accommodation.
- For communities that do have private market housing, we work with the school principal and contacts in that community to refer staff to available private housing.
- When YHC staff housing is not available in a community the department may provide an employee with improvements on terms and conditions of employment for a specific period (i.e., rent subsidy or additional relocation assistance). The department agrees to consult with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- The number of Education employees, including all three school authorities, leasing staff housing in Yukon Communities is as follows:

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR02

Fall 2024

Community Housing for Teachers

Education

Community	# Staff
Beaver Creek	1
Carmacks	6
Dawson	6
Faro	4
Haines Junction	1
Mayo	4
Old Crow	3
Pelly Crossing	4
Ross River	5
Teslin	4
Watson Lake	13
<u>Total</u>	<u>51</u>

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-07

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

EA Allocation Next steps and work with partners – refer to SSS01
EA-LAT Allocation in Schools - Chart– refer to HR03.1

Value

- All students deserve the support they need to meet their potential.

Recommended response:

- The allocation of educational assistants (EAs) in schools across the territory is a collaborative process involving Student Support Services, superintendents and school board executive directors, principals and learning assistance teachers.
- All partners play a valuable role in ensuring that students receive support to learn and be included. There is a range of student support available, and an educational assistant is one of the most intensive options.
- Both the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon have requested to manage their own EA allocation process.
- The process for the Yukon Education schools is as follows:
 1. Student Support Services shares material for school staff to request EA support for their students. This material includes an evidence-informed rubric for shared and intensive support that considers areas like the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, medical needs and social-emotional skills.
 2. School staff complete this paperwork and share it back with Student Support Services through their superintendents.
 3. As needed, Student Support Services, school staff and superintendents discuss the requests for EA support.

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

4. Student Support Services assigns educational assistance support for each school based on conversations, needs-informed evaluation and budgeted full-time equivalents.
 5. Schools work with human resources to hire educational assistants.
 6. Principals assign educational assistants within their school based on need.
- There are additional considerations for these educational assistant allocations based on factors such as: managing transitions from the Child Development Centre, transitions between elementary and secondary school, and students moving into and within the territory throughout the year.
 - In the spring of 2024, the allocation process for the 2024-25 school year for Yukon education schools was paused due to ongoing consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and work with broader system partners. To respect this work, we allocated EAs for these schools based on the 2023-24 numbers.
 - For the 2024-2025 school year, as of September 4, 2024, there are a total of 338.86 FTEs for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants.

Additional response:

- Under the updated Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers, starting in the 2023-24 school year.
- For the 2023-24 school year, 40 new positions were added. These positions include educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists. We were pleased to provide

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

additional support with direct benefits to our students and learner outcomes.

- For the 2024-25 school year, 21 new positions are being added:
 - 14 educational assistants
 - 4 learning assistance teachers
 - 3 school wellness specialists
- 20 new positions will be added in the following year, 2025-26.
- These time-limited supports will help address the increasing need across the territory's education system.
- For the 2024-25 school year, as of September 4, 2024, there are just over 330 FTEs for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants and hires have been completed across all schools in the Yukon:
 - approximately 50 FTEs for learning assistance teachers, and 280 FTEs for educational assistants.

Context:

- The Department has seen a significant increase in EA requests from schools.
- There is CASA commitment to increase EAs and learning assistance teachers in schools for the 2023-24, 2024-25 (current) and 2025-26 academic years.

Background:

- The allocation for the 2024-25 school year Yukon Education authority schools was based on the actual EA hires as of March 2024 due to the spring 2024 pause in updates to the allocation process.
- Allocation numbers for schools can vary each year as school and students' needs and school enrolments change.

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

- When appropriate, the department supports students with developing independence and self-advocacy skills. When progress is made, the need for EA support may be reduced after evaluating their successful skill development.
- School administrators continue to be responsible for determining day-to-day EA schedules to maximize meeting both individual and shared needs of students, when appropriate.
- There is an increase in EA allocation requests from schools. Schools are still focused on recovery from the pandemic years and working to better understand the needs of students and how best to support their educational programming.

Educational assistant allocation

	Budget FTE EA Allocation	Budget \$	Note:
2024-25 Mains	275.4	\$18.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and 10 new for 2024-25 CASA commitments and 13 for 2023-24 CASA commitments that were not included in 2023-24 Mains. Funding for CASA commitments were provided at a subsequent budgeting exercise
2023-24 Supplementary #2	251.4	\$18.6M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA FTE were added in 2023-24 Mains and personnel funding was provided in Supp #2
2023-24 Mains	251.4	\$18.1M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA commitments were added in supplementary 2023-24 budget exercises (13 new for 2023-24)
2022-23 Mains	249.9	\$17.3M	Includes CSFY and FNSB
2021-22 Mains	248.4	\$16.2M	Includes CSFY
2020-21 Mains	245.4	\$15.9M	Includes CSFY
2019-20 Mains	245.4	\$15.1M	Includes CSFY

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

Note: numbers can fluctuate depending on need, hiring timelines and other factors.

Educational assistant allocation process

- In 2015-16, an 'Educational Assistant Allocation Advisory Committee' recommended a needs-based allocation process. Within this process:
 - Each school assesses its needs and submits a request for educational assistants to the Schools and Student Services Branch.
 - The Student Support Services staff review the schools' requests and use a needs-informed formula to initially allocate educational assistants.
 - Adjustments may be made if the assessed request total exceeds the number of EA positions available.
 - Educational assistants are allocated to schools in the spring, and the principal assigns them within the school to best meet student needs.
 - At the beginning of the new school year, adjustments are made to the allocations based on actual student enrolment, needs at each school, the number of applications received, and positions filled.
 - Allocations may be further adjusted during a school year as needs change.
 - We receive more requests for EAs from schools than we have in FTEs, and Student Support Services is looking at different ways we can meet a student's unique needs as part of the work in Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

Value:

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school and it is a priority to attract and retain the best educators.

Recommended response:

- The ongoing national labour shortage and limited housing options, particularly in rural communities, continue to impact our overall school staffing recruitment efforts.
- For the 2024-25 school year, we are taking many strategic recruitment actions:
 - We posted positions earlier to be more competitive with other jurisdictions.
 - We visited three universities, and placed advertising on Yuwin, Employment Central, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
 - As of September 9, 2024, human resource consultants have attended six in-person education career fairs in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta.
 - On May 9 and 10, 2024, Human Resources, the First Nation School Board, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals attended an Outdoor Education Job Fair and Conference in Alberta.
 - On September 9, 2024, Human Resources attended a job fair hosted by Simon Fraser University.
 - On November 8, 2024, Human Resources attended a career fair hosted by Lakehead Orillia Faculty of Education.
 - These steps support our recruitment efforts.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- We work to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- On November 13, 2024 we launched a recruitment video which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
 - This video will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- & Post-Intensive French, and la Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- We began posting for the Whistle Bend Elementary School in January 2024. All other school educator postings began in April 2024.
- The new CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million in the next budget to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- As per the CASA, we will also provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.
- We have an updated training plan timeline to move this work forward, which has recently been shared with our partners. We have been consulting and collaborating with our partners and education stakeholders, and we will continue to do so.
- We are dedicated to working collaboratively and in the best interests of both Yukon learners and Yukon educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. We are committed to getting this work done.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- This is important work to ensure that educators and learners alike are supported in a good way. We are happy to be hearing from our partners and education stakeholders that they, too, want to continue to collaborate and consult.

Additional response:

Temporary vacancy management

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by administrators, and I commend our administration teams for their ability to effectively adjust where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:
 - temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments,
 - adjustments to student learning groups; and
 - the use of teachers on call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of superintendents to schools under the authority of Yukon Education, or regrouping students, will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.
- If the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* is invoked, employees could be redeployed to other tasks and responsibilities. Classroom operations in the school system do not constitute an emergency under CEMA.
- The Public Service Commission and the Department of Education are working together to identify and implement new initiatives to address teacher shortages. This ensures our students will have the necessary

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

in-classroom support that enables Yukon students to succeed in their educational journey.

Rural recruitment

- Recruitment for education staff and office administration is often a challenge in rural communities.
- This is especially true when recruiting for less than full-time positions, which is often the case as per the staffing allocation.
- Staffing allocations are based on the number of students, with special provisions made for small, rural schools.

Psychological wellbeing

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
 - Health, safety and wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace,
 - Our Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
 - Conflict Management Services, formerly known as the Respectful Workplace Office, as another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

Teachers on call (TOCs)

- As of November 19, 2024, there are 227 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon School Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 30 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

- Note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs have accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of October 23, 2023, there were 181 registered TOCs hired across all three school authorities, with 44 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers from last year DO include the First Nation School Board.
- We continue to recruit teachers on call and recognize that demand for coverage continues to be a challenge.
- We continue to evolve our recruitment efforts to attract candidates for teacher on call roles and to support staff in accepting assignments as they are available. For example, we have enhanced our promotion of teacher on call opportunities specific to each community and are continuing to take steps to improve the experience that teacher on call candidates have throughout each step of our recruitment process.
- We have increased advertising on Facebook, in universities, on Yuwin, Employment Central, and other recruitment sites.
- We sent targeted communications to former teachers on call, retirees, candidates from the Apply to Education registry, and applicants from educational assistant competitions.
- We are working with leaders in community schools to schedule in-person recruitment days, to promote teacher on call opportunities and provide information to community members who may be interested in applying.
- During the 2023-2024 school year, human resources partnered with three schools to host school open houses, at Robert Service School in

School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

Education

Dawson City, École Selkirk Elementary School and Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse.

- For the 2024 - 2025 school year, human resources is scheduled to host school open houses at Robert Service School in Dawson City and Golden Horn Elementary School in Whitehorse.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Teacher and principal vacancies are an ongoing topic in media coverage with concerns expressed by both opposition and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
-

Background:

- Teachers on call fill in as needed when staff are absent from work for short periods of time. Teachers on call come from a range of educational backgrounds. They became part of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals in 2018, and their rate of pay is subject to negotiation in collective bargaining.
- Similar to other jurisdictions across Canada, we have experienced challenges in hiring qualified teachers.
- We do not have rules preventing staff with jobs in one school from applying for other vacancies in the summer, which can result in a “domino effect” of postings. This also affects teachers on call availability, as some teachers on call are successful in competing for vacant positions and are subsequently removed from the teachers on call list.
- Teachers on call were sent from Whitehorse to our communities throughout the 2023-24 year to support school needs and will continue to be sent for the 2024-25 school year, as needed.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-21

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school. Equitable staffing is a priority to ensure that each school community is staffed appropriately.

Recommended response:

- Student enrolment has increased in recent years and the department is working to ensure consistent service levels in schools, as well as effective, targeted support for students with diverse learning needs.
- While overall enrolment is increasing, some individual schools have decreasing enrolment, which may have impacted their school's staffing allocation.
- Yukon school staffing levels are reviewed each fall to align with actual student enrolment and the needs of the students at each school, and any needed adjustments are made.

Additional response:

- As of November 8, 2024, Yukon Education and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools were 98% staffed.
- The First Nation School Board is responsible for their own human resource services, which includes recruitment.
- Schools received their enrollment projections and staffing allocations in January 2024, and based on these projections, administrators worked with their Superintendent to complete their school's 2024/25 staffing plans.
- Some FTEs are held "in contingency" to allow for fluctuations in enrolment that appear in the fall and throughout the school year. This year we have provided contingency to each school authority to support nimble decision making for school needs.

- The department has made a significant investment of 81 new full-time positions over the next three years, starting with the 2023-24 school year.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Allocating staff to Yukon schools is an issue of interest for school communities and often comes up in the legislature.

Background:

- To provide consistent service levels in all schools, maximum class sizes are set out in the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals; staffing allocation is primarily based on student enrolment and class sizes.
- An increase in students sometimes requires an increase in staff to maintain consistent service levels across schools. School staffing plans are made after the allocation is received and may result in jobs needing to be posted or for employees to be redeployed.
- CASA committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers and creating new wellness counsellor positions in the 2023-24 school years, with further increases in the following two years.
 - The staffing allocations do not include the approved Learning Assistant Teacher positions through the Confidence and Supply Agreement.
- There were no layoffs in any Yukon schools, inclusive of First Nation School Board, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and Yukon Public Schools during the 23/24 school year and prior to the start of the 24/25 school year.
- The School Staffing Allocation Handbook was developed to allocate teacher and other school staff positions consistently and transparently. Enrolment, school size, grades taught, rural location and programs of choice (French immersion) are factors.
 - To ensure equitable and standard service levels in all Yukon schools, each school receives a base number of FTEs through the allocation formula, regardless of how many students are enrolled at the school.

- Other resources may be allocated to support specific initiatives, such as Yukon First Nation language teachers, religious education, French programming (Intensive French) and English language learners. These differentiated resource allocations have their own allocation formulas or models.
- Additional FTEs may be provided to schools to support specific initiatives like literacy, numeracy, and early Kindergarten.
- Principals receive a staffing allocation each year, and then they assign the FTEs within their school, with input from their school council.
- The following are prioritized through the staffing allocation handbook:
 - For the 2024-25 school year, Reconciliation Staffing will continue as recommended by a Community of Inquiry stemming from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
 - Reconciliation Staffing is a small step to recognize the systemic inequities and colonialist practices that have negatively impacted Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous students. It reallocates the 10.0 FTE of Achievement Equity staffing to recognize schools based on two factors:
 - Those that have significantly above average populations of Yukon First Nations or other Indigenous students; and
 - Those schools where multiple Yukon First Nations are represented.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

TOC - EA Training and Pay Challenges

Education

Value

- Effective teachers on call (TOCs) and educational assistants (EAs) are important factors in students' success at school.

Recommended response:

- Compensation, training, and orientation are priorities of this government to ensure teacher on call and educational assistants are valued and supported in contributing to their school community.
- The Department of Education human resources branch works closely with Public Service Commission partners to ensure employees are onboarded and compensated in a timely manner.
- To expedite the hiring and onboarding process, Department of Education's Human Resources Branch implemented an e-recruitment system.
- This has enabled the direct hire of staff from last school year into positions again this school year, resulting in no delayed compensation.
- We continue to take steps to improve and streamline the experience of TOC candidates throughout each step of our recruitment process.
- A one-year training program for educational assistants and teachers on call is being developed in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon, with an anticipated completion by Winter 2024.

Additional response:

- We continue to recruit teachers on call. While the number of applicants submitting applications this year is not extensive, it is larger than we have experienced in previous years, and we believe that this is due to our enhanced promotion of TOC opportunities.

TOC - EA Training and Pay Challenges

Education

- As of November 19, 2024, there are 227 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon School Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 30 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.
 - Note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs have accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of October 23, 2023, there were 181 registered TOCs hired across all three school authorities, with 44 pending applications.
 - Note: These numbers from last year DO include the First Nation School Board.
- We have an updated training plan timeline, which has recently been shared with our partners, and we are dedicated to working collaboratively and in the best interests of both Yukon learners and Yukon educators.
- We recognize the renegotiation of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals' collective agreement as an opportunity to collaborate during the negotiation process.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Teacher on call and educational assistant shortages are continued topics in media coverage with concerns expressed by both opposition and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
 - There were pay challenges at the start of the 2023-24 school year that impacted teachers on call.
-

TOC - EA Training and Pay Challenges

Education

Background:

- Teachers on call are hired on a school-year basis. Within the collective agreement, hiring a teacher on call on an indeterminate basis effectively implies 'continuous service'. 'Continuous service,' as defined in the collective agreement, does not apply to teachers on call. This type of potential change is considered significant and would be best suited to collective agreement negotiations.
- 75 teachers on call received training in the Student Protection Policy and related procedures in January 2024.
- On May 3, 2024, as part of the good work across the Department of Education's three school authorities, all educators, including Educational Assistants and Teachers on call, were invited to participate in the Ready to Learn symposium.
 - This was an opportunity for educators, who have committed to further knowledge, self-reflection and implementation of the Ready to Learn initiative, to gather and learn together.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- Effective teachers, teachers on call and educational assistants are important factors in a student's success at school.

Recommended response:

- The Public Service Commission leads the collective bargaining process for the Yukon government.
- Representatives from the Department of Education, the First Nation School Board, and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon participate on the employer's bargaining team.
- With the expiration of the current collective agreement on June 30, 2024, we remain committed to securing a new agreement that is fair, balanced and fiscally responsible, while supporting ongoing efforts to attract and retain highly qualified educators in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon's representatives have been meeting with representatives of YAEP in September and early October 2024 to establish a renewed collective agreement.
- On October 4, 2024 the Yukon Association of Education Professionals informed the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board that negotiations have broken down and requested a declaration that a deadlock exists.
- On October 7, 2024 the Department of Education shared with the school community, including parents, guardians and staff, the statement from Minister Silver regarding collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- This information was shared with the school community after receiving questions from parents and guardians regarding a teacher strike.

- This information was shared by school messenger to provide information to parents and guardians that job action was not imminent, as job action would have impacts on parents and Yukon students.
- Messages sent by school messenger often include staff so they are aware of the communication, as they are typically the first point of contact for parents and guardians of Yukon students.
- On October 17, 2024 the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board communicated to the Public Service Commission that they intend to recommend the establishment of a conciliation board.
- The Public Service Commission is required to nominate a person to be a member of the conciliation board by October 25, 2024, this was completed within the timeframe.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and the Government of Yukon have jointly requested that the board appoint an agreed upon chairperson.
- As of November 18, 2024, the Yukon Teacher Labour Relations Board have not appointed the chairperson for the conciliation process.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals professional development fund is established under the terms of their Collective Agreement. The annual employer contribution increased from \$460,000 to \$475,000 on September 1, 2015, and this rate remains in effect.
- As collective bargaining is underway between the Government of Yukon and the YAEP, it is appropriate that any discussions involving professional development funding occur between the parties to the collective agreement at the bargaining table.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns regarding terms and conditions of employment for bargaining members represented by the Yukon Association of Education Professionals have been expressed by the opposition.

Background:

- The Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals expired on June 30, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement was previously in force for a three-year period, July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2024.
- On March 5, 2024, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals issued a notice of intent to commence bargaining.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Sustained communication between the Department of Education and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals contributes to enhanced relationships between the parties, and positive outcomes for school educators.

Recommended response:

- Effective and efficient consultation improves the relationship between the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and the department of Education.
- Consultation is a process for seeking and providing information, exchanging views, discussing issues to address or resolve issues, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- Consultation is based on an open commitment, by both parties, to the sharing of information and to listening to each other's opinions, observations, and recommendations, prior to decisions being made by the department of Education.

Additional response:

- On September 30, 2016, the department of Education and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals agreed, in writing, to joint principles regarding consultation.
- While collective bargaining is underway, we must respect the confidentiality of the process and are unable to speak to specific items under negotiation.
- If consultation, on items affecting bargaining unit employees in their employment relationship, did not begin prior to receiving notice to bargain, received on March 5, 2024, the Department of Education must maintain status quo and hold off on implementing any changes

to practice, policy or procedures under a new collective agreement is ratified.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns regarding the department's failure to consult with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals have been expressed by the opposition.

Background:

- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals communicated publicly that the department of Education does not meet their consultation obligations under the collective agreement (ex. Educational Assistant Allocation).
- The agreed upon joint principles of consultation are:
 - Engaging in consultation early in any review/change process and providing comprehensive information to the other party above the proposed decision.
 - Providing the other party with a timely and real opportunity to provide their views and opinions on a proposed decision.
 - Remaining open to suggestions and providing considered responses to issues and questions raised.
 - Considering and reviewing any suggestions or opinions made by the representatives; and,
 - Responding to requests for information in a timely manner.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR09

Fall 2024

YEU Collective Bargaining

Education

Value

- Effective employees are important factors in a student's success at school.

Recommended response:

- We must respect the confidentiality of the collective bargaining process and are unable to speak to specific items under negotiation.
- The Public Service Commission leads the collective bargaining process for the Yukon government.
- Representatives from the department of Education will participate on the employer's bargaining team.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns regarding terms and conditions of employment for bargaining members represented by the Yukon Employees Union have been expressed by the opposition.

Background:

- The Collective Agreement between Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Yukon Employees Union will expire on December 31, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement was previously ratified for a three-year period, January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Attendance areas support the governance and operation of schools, the school council election process, assist with developing bus routes, and help to effectively allocate resources that are determined by enrolment.

Recommended response:

- Students at Yukon Education operated schools are expected to attend in the school council attendance area in which they live.
- Only in exceptional circumstances, such as permitting siblings to attend the same school, or responding to a situation that significantly affects the education, health, or safety of a student, will Yukon Education consider allowing a student to attend a school outside their attendance area and this is contingent on school space availability.
- Parents registering their children for school can find the attendance areas on Yukon.ca.

Additional response:

- We review attendance areas when demographics change, a new school or residential area is approved for construction or expansion, or a school joins a school board.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School is Whitehorse's newest attendance area and is based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, plus portions of the previous Takhini Elementary School attendance area.
- The Whistle Bend attendance area is helping address student enrollment growth at north-end elementary schools.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Whistle Bend Elementary school is starting operation this school year, which has adjusted attendance areas, and the department regularly denies requests for students

to attend schools outside of their attendance area when there is not a strong rationale and/or space is not available in a preferred school.

Background:

- The *Education Act* requires that every school be assigned to an attendance area (for school councils) or an education area (for school boards).
- Students may be resident in multiple attendance or education areas since the areas can overlap.
- Any school joining the First Nation School Board (FSNB) requires the dissolution of its attendance area, and in Whitehorse that area needs to be redistributed to the remaining attendance areas.
- Attendance areas were dissolved in 2023 for the communities that voted to join the First Nation School Board: Eliza Van Bibber School, Ghùch Tlâ Community School, and Kluane Lake School.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools

Education

Value:

- Rural schools should have the resources and training they need to deliver early kindergarten programming that supports a child's transition to kindergarten through a literacy-rich, play-based early learning environment.

Recommended response:

- We continue to work with rural school communities, Yukon First Nations, and the First Nation School Board to enhance early kindergarten programs in their communities.
- Other than Robert Service School and Johnston Elementary, all rural Yukon schools offer full-time optional early kindergarten programs.
- The Department of Education is prepared to support early kindergarten programming in Dawson when there is community readiness and will continue to work with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Robert Service School on this matter.
- We will also continue to support the First Nation School Board with early kindergarten in Watson Lake should they require it.

Additional response:

- Early kindergarten supports critical skill development and a successful transition into the school years by providing more time for students to engage in the kindergarten curriculum.
- The department is currently conducting a review of the early kindergarten policy and will finalize the review once Yukon Association of Education Professionals collective bargaining is complete.
- The department will continue to monitor the needs for offering early kindergarten in Whitehorse in the longer term.

Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Enhanced early learning and child care programs were key areas identified during the Standing Committee on Public Accounts hearing on the Office of the Auditor General's report on K-12 education in January 2022 as supporting better student outcomes.
 - YAEP continues to challenge that an early childhood therapy assistant (ECTA) should be replaced with educational assistants as early childhood therapy assistants are not part of the YAEP collective bargaining agreement.
-

Background:

- When more student support is required in early kindergarten classrooms there is the support of an educational assistant and/or an early child therapy assistant.
- Early childhood therapy assistants are currently under the direction of the Child Development Centre (CDC) and are trained by various early learning specialists at CDC.
- Early childhood therapy assistants often work with families and children in early kindergarten prior to the child attending early kindergarten.
- The CDC is in the process of recruiting and interviewing individuals for early childhood therapy assistants in Carmacks, Haines Junction and Faro. Ross River currently does not have any 4-year olds attending early kindergarten, so there is no hiring process presently in place for Ross River.
- The early kindergarten policy required a review of the policy after the first year of implementation.
 - The department has gathered input from educators, administrators, YAEP, and First Nations partners on the early kindergarten policy.
 - This information is in the process of being reviewed to inform updates to the early kindergarten policy and is delayed due to YAEP collective bargaining.
- A working group to provide recommendations for assessment practices for early kindergarten was formed in January 2023.

Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools

Education

- The group consists of members from Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Early Learning and Child Care, Curriculum and Assessment, rural teachers, the Child Development Centre, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
- The group has provided recommendations for the review of the early kindergarten policy and is currently working on measures for assessment of the early kindergarten program.
- Following this, the group will develop assessment practices for teachers to use in the early kindergarten classroom.
- Kindergarten and early kindergarten programs are both optional for parents. Early kindergarten programs are for children four years of age as of December 31st for that year.
- An early kindergarten program policy was approved in 2021 that:
 - Provides guidelines that support high quality early kindergarten programming in all rural schools in Yukon.
 - Establishes parameters for early kindergarten programs to ensure consistency in programming.
 - Allows for flexibility to accommodate local needs.
 - YAEP has questioned whether an early childhood therapy assistant should be replaced with educational assistants as ECTAs are not part of the YAEP collective bargaining agreement.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

Education

Safer Schools: refer to HOT07/DPT14

Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: Refer to DPT04

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- Each school is required to have its own *Emergency Response Plan*, with detailed procedures for emergencies and other unforeseen events, and school staff are trained and prepared to care for students in response to such events.
- When safety issues arise, the department works closely with the RCMP and other agencies to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- As a key action in the Safer Schools Action Plan, we have updated communication guidance for when and how schools are to communicate to parents, internal staff, and other agencies such as the RCMP about incidents that occur at school.

Additional response:

- Schools practice emergency drills on a regular basis; including fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown procedures.
- The Department of Education has several communication platforms to communicate quickly with families by email, text message, or telephone using the contact information that is on each student's record.
- We also remind parents that they should tune in to the radio rather than try to contact the school should an emergency arise to keep phone lines available for emergency use at the school.

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is often public and media attention on school safety issues.
-

Background:

- Each fall, school principals prepare their *School Emergency Response Plans*, which include coordination with the RCMP and other agencies, evacuation routes and alternate sites, and security protocols, so that they can quickly respond to unforeseen events and emergencies.
- Schools provide an updated plan to their superintendent, or School Board executive directors by October 15th. A hard copy of each plan is filed with the administrative assistant for the superintendents and executive directors.
- The first priority during any emergency is to ensure the safety of students and staff. Once this has been addressed, communicating with parents and guardians becomes the priority.
- After an incident, we support school staff through critical incident debriefing; the Employee and Family Assistance Program; restorative approaches (with emphasis on addressing harm and building relationships after an incident); and support and collaboration from the RCMP, medical and other government and non-government agencies.
- The department has licensed a unified communication platform (School Messenger) that automates contact with parents about emergencies via text, voice, and email.
- Schools may also use the Aspen student information system to share information to parent/guardian email addresses only.
- In the fall of 2021, guidelines for communications were developed to assist school administrators to respond to incidents or allegations of assault/abuse/criminal behaviour.
- The department offers training for school staff to identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours, and how to provide effective supports, and redirect behaviours, including: Nonviolent Crisis Intervention; Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports; and Violence Threat Risk Assessment.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SP03

Fall 2024

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan: refer to SO02

Modular Classrooms: refer to SO07

School Capacity: refer to HOT08/SI08

For enrolment numbers see Figures at a Glance: refer to DPT06

Value:

- The Department of Education monitors student enrolment to help school administrators and school communities plan for changing trends and meet their short, mid, and long-term needs.

Recommended response:

- The Yukon's population is increasing and anticipated to continue growing over the years to come.
- We are prioritizing work on long-term capital planning, including the recently announced replacement of Whitehorse Elementary School.
- The new Whistle Bend Elementary School helps to address enrolment growth in the north end of Whitehorse, and we have previously added portables at Hidden Valley Elementary, Selkirk Elementary, and Golden Horn Elementary.

Additional response:

- The Department of Education works with the two Yukon school boards – the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – to assess their enrolment pressures and determine their long-term school capacity needs.
- If enrolment at a school nears program capacity, we work with the school administration and council to find ways to accommodate all students.
- If needed, we work with families on a case-by-case basis to place students at other schools where space is available.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns have been raised about schools perceived to be overcrowded, portable procurement, and long-term capital planning for schools.
-

Background:

- The department is working to address short, medium, and long-term student enrolment growth by taking the following actions:
- In the short-term: By consistent use of our new attendance areas and sending students to other area schools if their grade level is full. In such a case, transportation support is provided with busing, or as a subsidy if busing is not available.
 - 12 students from the FH Collins catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at FH Collins when those students attempted to register.
 - F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed to accommodate a school expansion in the future; however, the school is at 99 per cent capacity and modular expansion will support for the 2025-2026 school year.
 - In the medium-term: By adding portables to increase the number of classroom-sized spaces available, and by monitoring attendance areas and the number of students who live in a school's attendance area to align with the school's enrolment capacity.
 - In the long-term: By confirming approved projects through the Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan and continued long-term facilities planning for schools through the capital planning process.
- The number of students that can be enrolled in a school is based on the number of classroom spaces and classes at each grade at the school, and the maximum class size allowed for those grades.
- School administrators manage their school's spaces on an ongoing basis by maximizing the use of classroom-sized spaces as classrooms, reorganizing students into split-grade classrooms, and increasing the class size beyond the maximum classroom size.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SP04

Fall 2024

Enrolment at Yukon Schools

Education

- Education and the First Nation School Board have clarified enrollment processes for students who wish to attend schools under the First Nation School Board or transfer to another school (e.g., in Whitehorse).

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing

Education

Value:

- The Department of Education offers French second language programs to students, and we work with our partners and school communities to address the long-term needs of these programs.

Recommended response:

Programming

- Currently, the overall student demand for French Immersion programming is being met.
- The Government of Yukon plans to continue École Selkirk Elementary School as a 'dual track' English program/French Immersion school.
- We have committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs with the French Second Language Advisory Committee.
- The French Second Language Advisory Committee includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.

Early French Immersion (Kindergarten):

- Early French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, offered at Whitehorse Elementary school and École Selkirk Elementary school.
- For the 2024-25 school year we committed to offer 18 Kindergarten seats at Selkirk Elementary school and 54 seats at Whitehorse Elementary school, for a total of 72 seats.

French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing

Education

French Immersion teacher recruitment:

- We continue to monitor and plan for enrolment in French Immersion including the recruitment of qualified French language teachers. French language teachers are in high demand across Canada. Recruiting for these positions remains a challenge.
- We continue to attend job fairs both in person and virtually at post-secondary institutes where we know there are qualified French language teachers, to help with targeting our recruitment efforts.
- We have also increased advertising on job boards in post-secondary institutions that offer French language education programming.
- On November 13, 2024 we are launching a recruitment video, which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
 - This video will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts, to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- & Post-Intensive French, Core French and La Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon (CSFY).
- We have continued with pooled competitions and early posting for teaching positions in French Immersion Elementary schools for the 2024-25 school year, thanks to the dedication of our school administrators and superintendents.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is considerable interest in French second language programming and there may be questions about access to this programming, particularly in early grades.

French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing

Background:

Programming

- All Yukon schools under all school authorities, including those offering French Immersion, are expected to follow B.C. curriculum and graduation programs.
- French Immersion Elementary schools may follow different philosophies for teaching reading, however, they are both expected to follow B.C. Curriculum.
- The balance of instructional time between the two languages may differ at Selkirk and Whitehorse Elementary, but the long-term outcomes are the same.
- French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, and is offered at Whitehorse Elementary School, Selkirk Elementary School and F. H. Collins Secondary School.
- Retention in French Immersion drops in high school, so the demand for French Immersion is currently forecasted to be met by the program at F.H. Collins Secondary.
- Whitehorse Elementary School is a 'single track' school offering only French Immersion programs. Selkirk Elementary School and F. H. Collins Secondary School are 'dual track' schools meaning that both French Immersion and English language programs are available.

Early French Immersion (Kindergarten) registration for 24-25 school year:

- The kindergarten registration information night was held virtually on January 24, 2024, for the 2024-25 school year.
- Kindergarten French Immersion registration was open from February 1st to February 18, 2024.
- A lottery system was held on February 20, 2024, because the demand for Early French Immersion (Kindergarten) registration exceeded capacity.
- As of October 2, 2024, there are no students on the waitlist for French Immersion for the 2024-25 school year.
- For the 2024-25 school year, Whitehorse Elementary School has 3 cohorts of kindergarten and 3 cohorts of Grade 1.

French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing

Education

- For the 2024-25 school year, Selkirk Elementary School has 1 cohort of kindergarten and 1.5 cohorts of Grade 1.

Early French Immersion 24-25 school year:

- For the 2024-25 school year, French Immersion seats are still available to families wishing to enroll their child at the Kindergarten or Grade 1 levels.
 - As of October 2, 2024:
 - Whitehorse Elementary School has 1 seat available in kindergarten and 15 seats in Grade 1.
 - Selkirk Elementary School has 0 seat available in kindergarten and 6 seats in Grade 1.
- Since 2015-16, when the demand for Early French Immersion registration began to exceed capacity, the department has used a lottery system for admission to these programs, run with Canadian Parents for French.
- Every year since the lottery process has been in place, all students who desire a place have been able to enroll in French Immersion in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

French Second Language Advisory Committee:

- The French Second Language Advisory Committee was formed in 2010 to strengthen French as a Second Language education in Yukon.
- This advisory body includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.
- Education has committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs and a vision statement has been created in Spring 2023 in collaboration with the French Second Language Advisory Committee.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The Department of Education offers various supports to families when students leave their communities to attend school.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education works with staff and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee to provide a safe, caring, and enriching living environment for rural students in grades 10 to 12 who are pursuing learning opportunities in Whitehorse.
- We are committed to ensuring the program is effectively resourced and meeting today's needs and values – with a student-centered focus.
- The annual operating budget, including personnel, for 2024-25 is \$1.499 million.

Additional response:

- To support relationships and stability for students and staff, staffing and recruitment is a key pillar of the program renewal.
 - A working group is working on the recommendations of the July 2023, Renewal Results and Recommendations final report that was presented to the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee and the Department of Education.
 - Staff positions have been filled as one-year term positions for the 2024-25 school year, to support stable positions for eligible candidates while having flexibility to address recommendations from the renewal, and other positions will be considered as part of the renewal working group.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns have been raised about staffing levels and student safety at the residence.

Background:

Staffing concerns

- In the fall of 2023, some staff at Gadzoosdaa felt that there was not an adequate staffing allotment to support programming for students in residence. Concerns related to permanent staff were covered with casual staff in the short term.
- Departmental staff met with Gadzoosdaa Residence staff and the Advisory Committee to better understand their challenges with service delivery and resourcing.
- Additional staff supports were immediately put in place to ensure effective program delivery. These additional supports will remain in place until the program renewal is completed.
- A program renewal, led by IRP Consulting with input from the Advisory Committee, Yukon First Nations, and the Department of Education was completed July 2023.
 - It looked at areas such as the mandate of the residence, staffing, culturally relevant programming, and student transportation.
- Financial and human resource allocations at Gadzoosdaa have been and continue to remain stable.
 - Budget staffing levels have been as follows:
 - 11.8 FTEs – 2019 to 2024
 - 10.8 FTEs – 2012 to 2018
- As of October 30, 2024, 35 students were registered for the first semester of 24-25 school year from the following communities:
 - Atlin - 2
 - Carcross/Tagish – 8
 - Carmacks – 4
 - Dawson – 5

- Faro – 6
- Haines Junction - 8
- Teslin – 2

Transportation allowances for rural students attending high school in Whitehorse

- Students who are required to live outside their home community to attend school in Whitehorse may be provided with accommodation at the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse, and/or travel subsidies to help offset travel costs to and from home communities during the school year.
- Rural students coming to Whitehorse to attend high school are reimbursed for the cost of travel to and from their home communities during the school year.
- The following principles are now being applied to travel subsidy requests:
 - Students staying at Gadzoosdaa Student Residence because a specific secondary school program is not available in their community, will be entitled to a travel subsidy for expenses they incur for travelling to and from their home community during the school year, up to the maximum amount payable under Student Transportation Regulations (\$13 per day).
 - Students moving to Whitehorse and staying in a private residence because a specific secondary high school program is not available in their community, and they were not able to stay in the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence are entitled to a travel subsidy. This does not apply if students are living with one or both parents in Whitehorse.
 - Students who choose to come to Whitehorse to attend high school when a high school program that is appropriate to their needs is available in their community will not be entitled to a travel subsidy.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-30

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools

Education

Value:

- The Department of Education is continually working to integrate educational technology into school programming and ensure that it is secure, reliable, and equitably accessible.

Recommended response:

- Online, digital learning technologies and resources are a key part of modern, blended, and flexible learning.
- The Government of Yukon has budgeted \$2.5 million for education technology for Yukon students in 2024-25.
- The school IT budget is a five-year plan that fluctuates annually, based on the projects in that fiscal year.
- The Department of Education continues to invest in modernizing school cybersecurity, access to computing devices, IT infrastructure and bandwidth access to meet modern learning requirements.

Additional response:

- Students who do not have access to a personal device can access a school device as needed for their learning.
- We continue to donate some retired computing devices to the Computers for Schools Yukon recycling program for K-12 students.
- The growing availability, popularity and utility of artificial intelligence (AI) is a learning opportunity for us. While there is much to consider, we can embrace the benefits and stress focus on transparency and academic integrity.
- Yukon Department of Education has adopted the B.C. guidelines regarding use of AI in schools.

K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There has been a significant increase in students' use of technology and devices as a result of the pandemic and increased access to technology.

Background:

- In 2023-24, the department budgeted \$2.5 million in education technology to modernize learning in Yukon schools, including investing in upgrading school computing devices, infrastructure, and bandwidth access. The department has continued this for 2024-25 by budgeting an additional \$2.5 million to further advance these initiatives.
- Online and digital learning technologies and resources are part of a blended learning approach for students and teachers.
- With increased enrollment, new schools and an increase in the overall demand for technology, the department continually assesses technological needs, including the provision of computing devices.
- During the summer of 2024, department IT staff visited 35 locations across the territory to perform technical maintenance and IT support. This annual maintenance prepares the hardware, infrastructure and systems that support over 7,500 students and staff.

Mobile devices for students

- The department is using a phased approach to implement network improvements that will advance the connectivity of education-owned and personal computing devices to enhance learning.
- In 2020-21, the department partnered with Yukon First Nation governments for the purchase of 712 laptops to support First Nations students. These devices were delivered to participating First Nation governments and to student citizens.

Connectivity, wireless and bandwidth

- Students have internet access when at school through school wireless networks. For those students who do not have internet access at home, school administrators can consider arranging other options, either within the school or elsewhere in their community when face-to-face learning is interrupted.

K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools

Education

- The department continues to work to improve bandwidth via network upgrades. Education's service standard is one megabit per second (Mbps), per student.
- The department continues to enhance and modernize school networks and wireless capacity each year to ensure they have the capability to meet demands.

Learning technology

- The Information Technology and Support Services branch continues to develop and enhance a robust suite of web-based learning tools to support blended learning.
- The Department of Education continues to develop and enhance K-12 cybersecurity for students and their personal information.
- Classrooms are embracing new and robust modern learning tools. However, the K-12 cybersecurity technology may block untested technology and devices when at the school.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

French Immersion Programming, Enrollment and Staffing: refer to SP05

Value:

- We work with families and school communities to ensure we are effectively managing student enrolment, teacher allocations, and learning spaces, starting with the kindergarten registration process.

Recommended response:

- Families begin to register for kindergarten each year in February, and registration is finalized in September.
- Families can register for kindergarten in schools operated by Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, or the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- Each year, we allocate spaces for kindergarten students based on student enrolment forecasts, staffing allocations, and enrolment trends.
- If the number of students exceeds the number of spaces available at a school, we work with the school authority to determine next steps and contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- French Immersion (FI) programming continues to be in high demand, particularly for kindergarten.
- Questions may arise about enrolment in First Nation School Board (FNSB) schools across the Yukon.

Background:

- Children are expected to attend their attendance area schools.
- With Whistle Bend Elementary School opening in September, pressure has been relieved for English kindergarten spaces especially in the north end of Whitehorse.

- After processing student enrolment forms, the department contacts parents in March to confirm school assignments for their children. Parents then fill out additional forms at that school to finalize registration, including showing proof of their child's age.
- Registration is first-come, first-serve for schools with fewer available spaces than students enrolling. The exception to this is for French Immersion, where a lottery is completed if necessary.
- If we cannot accommodate all in-area students at an attendance area school, we work with the school authority to determine next steps and contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.
- We may adjust classes to accommodate more students at the school (for example, adding an additional student to a class or making a Kindergarten/Grade 1 combined class), or work with the family to assign their child to another school with space.
- Parents in Whitehorse register online or by contacting the Department of Education. We continue to work with the FNSB to ensure processes are clear for kindergarten registration at FNSB schools.

Out-of-attendance area requests:

- Parents are asked to register their child in their attendance area school before making a request to have their child enrolled in a different school.
- To request attendance at a school outside their attendance area, students must complete an out of area form and receive written permission from the Superintendent or Executive Director.

Catholic school programs

- Catholic students are prioritized for registration in the three Catholic schools.
- Both Catholic elementary schools have a separate attendance area to determine which school students should register for based on their residence.

French Immersion programs:

- For the Early French Immersion programs at Selkirk Elementary and Whitehorse Elementary, registration is open for two weeks. When demand exceeds capacity for these programs, the department may run a lottery to fill the programs.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SP08

Fall 2024

Kindergarten Registration

Education

- If spaces are available, we continue to take registrations after the opening week on a first-come, first-serve basis until space is filled.

Approved by:

[DM]

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Significant planning and preparation goes into establishing school calendars, and we aim to set multi-year school calendars to help school communities and families plan around key dates of the school year.

Recommended response:

- We are working with school councils, school boards, and school administrators to create a multi-year calendar of key school dates that we can share with school communities.
- We publish school calendar key dates and a summary of individual school calendars on Yukon.ca when they are finalized or changed.
- We adjust school calendars when needed, including after the school year has started to accommodate unexpected events, such as the Queen's Day of Mourning in 2022.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Requests for key dates for future school years are common as the information is used for business planning outside of government.

Background:

- Under the *Education Act*, the Minister, or the school board, sets the school calendar dates on or before March 31st of each year. For Yukon Education-operated schools, the Minister will consider advice from school councils.
- The school calendar dates include the school opening date, number of days of school operation, length of the school day, and number of minutes of instruction in a school day.
- Each school year includes:
 - 950 instructional hours for students
 - 15 hours for non-instructional purposes determined by individual schools, school councils and school boards

- 15 hours for professional development for school staff who are *Education Labour Relations Act* employees
- School boards may offer additional hours of professional development at their own discretion.
- In communities where there is more than one school (Whitehorse and Watson Lake), school calendars must be the same. This helps manage busing costs and assists families with children attending more than one school.
- The 2024-25 key dates for Whitehorse schools are:
 - August 27, 2024: First day of school for students
 - December 23, 2024, to January 3, 2025: Winter break
 - March 10 to March 21, 2025: March break
 - June 13, 2025: Last day of school for students

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- School Growth Plans are an important way to focus on student success and the impacts of school-level strategies to improve student learning outcomes and engagement.

Recommended response:

- The School Growth Planning Process is one way the department seeks to further identify and address root causes of achievement gaps to support evidence-based approaches to improve success for students.
- School Growth Plans identify the school's educational goals and priorities for the school year and are designed to be the road maps to improvement for each Yukon school.
- Each school is responsible for developing and implementing a School Growth Plan that is reflective of the needs of their school community and students.
- All schools include Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being in their School Growth Plans, aligning cultural, language, tradition and perspectives with the curriculum and local priorities.

Additional response:

- To improve policy and process, and in response to the 2019 Auditor General report, the Department of Education is working on updating the School Growth Planning Policy.
- Updates to this policy will include the Integrated Learner Outcome Strategy that is currently being developed collaboratively with Yukon First Nations and partners in education.
- The Integrated Learner Outcome Strategy will help define areas of focus that every school will use in their School Growth Plans.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 Auditor General report highlighted that the department needs to implement its required oversight mechanisms, including providing summary reports of School Growth Plans to the Minister (Recommendation #47).

Background:

- The Education Act provides that a school plan must be prepared for each school (by the school administration) that contains the school objectives, educational priorities, courses of study by grade, evaluation procedures, recommended budget and staffing requirements, and other information that is required for the effective functioning of the school.
- School Growth Plans are developed collaboratively with Yukon First Nations, school councils, school boards, school staff and students.
- Depending on their scope, plans identify one to three years of educational priorities.
- School Growth Plans are public documents and are shared with the superintendents, executive directors, school councils, school boards, and other local community partners as appropriate.
- School Growth Planning was included in the Auditor General of Canada's recommendations in 2019.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-01

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

The health and safety of students and staff is our first priority. Timely communication with student's families and school staff is critical.

Recommended response

- The School Messenger platform is our most effective and timely communication tool to reach families of students and school staff.
- School Messenger is used for many different forms of communication including safety, reporting absenteeism, communicating upcoming events, and providing families with general education-related information.
- Messages sent by school messenger often include staff so they are aware of the communication, as they are typically the first point of contact for parents and guardians of Yukon students.

Additional response

- On October 7, 2024 the Department of Education shared with the school community, including parents, guardians and staff, the statement from Minister Silver regarding collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- This information was shared by school messenger to provide information to parents and guardians that job action was not imminent, as job action would have impacts on parents and Yukon students.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The use of School Messenger was questioned in the Legislative Assembly for delivering a bargaining update with YEAP to all school staff and families on Oct. 7, 2024.

- The opposition member stated that they believed the purpose of the School Messenger platform was for communicating emergencies only.

Background:

- The Department of Education has used the School Messenger platform for many years for timely communication with parents and staff.
- School Messenger is used daily by most schools to communicate student absenteeism for safe arrival practices.
- School Messenger was particularly helpful during the pandemic when notifying families of COVID exposures.
- Messages sent through School Messenger require an associated email address and messages sent to school communities come from an account called publicschools@yukon.ca, which allows people to respond to a message with any questions.

-

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The Aurora Virtual School (AVS) provides distance and online learning opportunities to Yukon students, including home education students.

Recommended response:

- Three main categories of students are served by Aurora Virtual School:
 - Home education plans - students whose parents choose to provide them with a home education program and register their home education plans. These students follow a home education plan and do not receive distance education courses. They receive eligible reimbursements of up to \$1200 per year from the Department of Education for the purchase of educational resources to support their plans.
 - Home education with distance education courses - students whose parents provide them with a home education program through distance education courses. These students are registered with Aurora Virtual School, which coordinates their distance education courses and pays for these courses. The majority of these students are at the elementary school level. They may also receive eligible reimbursements of up to \$1200 per year for educational resources.
 - Distance learners - students who are either registered full-time at Aurora Virtual School or at another Yukon school who also participate in distance learning courses offered through Aurora Virtual School. These distance courses typically are arranged and facilitated by Aurora Virtual School staff.

Additional response:

- Aurora Virtual School students have not traditionally been included in the overall monthly reports, but moving forward the Department of Education will develop a separate report for Aurora Virtual School students.
- Currently, 149 students are registered for home schooling with Aurora Virtual School. The department is working to design a report to include recent enrolment history and numbers for Home School, Montessori, and Wild School programs.
- Rural principals can use Aurora Virtual School to provide more course options for their students.
- The department provides financial support for resources for students enrolled in home education.
- Financial support for resources was introduced in 2015 as a supportive measure but is not required by the Education Act or any Department of Education policy.
- There has been no increase in the amount (\$1,200 per child per school year) since the fund was created.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is an interest in the Department of Education reporting on students enrolled in the Aurora Virtual School alongside with data from other schools
- Families, particularly in rural communities, may be interested in options for their students to take courses if specific courses are not offered in the community school without opting for home education.

Background:

- The mandate of Aurora Virtual School is to provide students (home educated or otherwise) with Yukon distance learning courses and programming provided directly by Aurora Virtual School rather than by schools from outside of Yukon.
- Regarding home schooling specifically, in Yukon, parents must register homeschooled children with Aurora Virtual School by September 30th each year. Parents are also required to submit a Home Education Plan for each child being home schooled for the school year.
- Aurora Virtual School will register the child of any parent who wishes his or her child to be educated at home. Aurora Virtual School has no authority to approve or supervise the educational program of a homeschooled child.
- The Yukon Francophone School Board/Commissions scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) manages a homeschooling program in French called École Nomade. Participants must register with the program École Nomade.
- Department of Education financial support for resources may be available to parents of students who attend Montessori, home school, Wild School, Aurora Virtual School, or online distance education.
- The department has \$303,000 budgeted for financial support for resources.
- The services include support and resources for families that are: homeschooling; travelling and wish to continue the academic progress of their child; or living in rural communities and cannot access French First Language programs.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SP12

Fall 2024

Aurora Virtual School

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Schools

Education

Value:

- Teachers and students need to be aware of the benefits and potential pitfalls associated with the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education recognizes the recent notoriety associated with artificial intelligence has generated many questions and concerns.
- The department understands both the benefits and challenges with the use of A.I. in the classroom, and our goal is to have digitally literate students that are capable of using artificial intelligence in a safe and responsible manner.
- The department has worked closely with our counterparts in B.C. and has shared resources for the responsible use of artificial intelligence with students, parents, teachers, and school leadership.

Additional response:

- The department's guidance on artificial intelligence aligns with Yukon government's use of artificial intelligence; the main points are cautions about exposing personal information, and to critically evaluate information generated with artificial intelligence for bias, inaccuracies, and fairness.
- Students need to learn about artificial intelligence in the classroom, in connection to curriculum, so that they are better equipped to make responsible decisions on their own.

Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Schools

Education

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Several secondary teachers from Whitehorse's three largest high schools recently wrote a letter to their principals looking for guidance and consistency with how artificial intelligence should be used within Yukon schools.
-

Background:

- Artificial intelligence has become a popular news topic since Chat GPT, Bard, and Co-Pilot broke into mainstream media stories approximately 20 months ago.
- Department of Education staff sat on a technical table with their counterparts at the B.C. Ministry of Education to learn more about how other jurisdictions are handling this.
- We were pleased to see the *Digital literacy and the use of AI* in education: supports for British Columbia schools guidance released earlier this year. We have reviewed this guidance and find that it will work well for the Yukon as we follow the B.C. curriculum already.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Communicable Disease in Schools

Education

Value:

- We are committed to providing safe and healthy learning environments that foster student success – especially for those who depend on a school as a reliable safe space.

Recommended response:

- Schools are required to report suspected communicable diseases to Yukon Communicable Disease Control.
- The Department of Education follows the advice and guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and maintains a close collaboration with their office.
- We recommend that children who are ill – regardless of symptoms – stay home to rest, recover, and avoid infecting others.

Additional response:

- We continue to employ established processes for monitoring and reporting communicable diseases.
- The Chief Medical Officer of Health provides recommendations on school operations, including decisions on notifying others about suspected outbreaks.
- Schools have contingency plans in place when there is a high rate of absenteeism among staff and/or students.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Communicable diseases and their transmission continue to be an issue at Yukon schools.
-

Communicable Disease in Schools

Education

Background:

School Ventilation

- Prior to the start of the school year, all school ventilation systems are inspected, and preventative maintenance work is completed, which includes replacing filters. Filters are then changed every three months; more often if required.
 - Replacement filters for all the HEPA air purifiers have been distributed to schools.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Smoking and Vaping in Yukon schools: refer to SI11

Value:

- The health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority.

Recommended response:

- Students learn age-appropriate information and decision-making skills about drugs, alcohol, safety and risky behaviours as part of the school curriculum, including learning about fentanyl and cannabis.
- Our schools have a strong partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services branch. We can connect students who are at particular risk of harm from substance use with effective and qualified therapeutic practitioners.
- The opioid crisis in the Yukon and the declaration of a substance use health emergency is a serious concern that impacts us all; our hearts are with the families and communities who continue to grieve. We know that this crisis impacts our school communities.

Additional response:

- We strive to make schools places of positive connections for students, and for students to know that school staff care for and believe in them.
- The Government of Yukon's Opioid Action Plan sets out how we will keep students safe. We will continue to work with students, staff and families to educate them about the dangers of illicit drugs, like fentanyl.
- The Department of Education expects all schools to have updated naloxone kits and staff trained in using them in case of an overdose at school.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On August 23, 2023, Health and Social Services released Yukon's Substance Use Emergency Strategy, containing several recommendations where the Department of Education could partner with Health and Social services on implementation.
- At times concerns arise about young people using substances, sometimes prompted by specific school or media incidents.

Background:

- The Yukon's curriculum has learning outcomes from kindergarten to grade 12 related to the dangers associated with harmful substances such as poisons, prescription medications and drugs, starting in grade 5 for illegal drugs.
- All Yukon high schools offer counselling at the school with support from Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services (HSS).
- To enhance the Physical and Health curriculum, the Department of Education has developed a unit on substance use for grade 8-12 teachers, providing them with resources to support them in delivering this topic.
- When substances are discovered in schools, schools work with the RCMP to investigate. They also send communications out to parents and guardians advising what supports are available and the importance of having conversations with their children about drug usage.
- Naloxone training and kits were first made available to principals in spring 2017. Naloxone kits continue to be available in Yukon schools.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process: refer to Tab EP06

Value:

- The Education Appeal Tribunal plays a critical role in giving parents and guardians the ability to appeal certain education decisions such as those related to a suspension or an individualized education plan.

Recommended response:

- I would like to thank the members of the Education Appeal Tribunal for their hard work on resolving issues that may arise.
- I appreciate all opportunities for parties to work together to find mediated solutions.

Additional response:

- Mediation has been used to successfully resolve most disputes and appeals.
- I am not able to comment on the details of any specific student's file.
- The tribunal process respects and upholds the confidentiality and privacy rights of students and their families.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the status of current appeals.

Background:

- The *Education Appeal Tribunal* is a quasi-judicial, independent government body established by the *Education Act* to hear appeals on issues related to decisions made by the department, school councils or schools.
- The tribunal can hear appeals in four areas: special needs, student records, suspensions, and locally developed courses of study.
- On average, the Tribunal receives between 0-3 appeals annually.

- As of September 2024, there was one appeal before the Education Appeal Tribunal.
- In June 2024, the department, at the request of the tribunal, updated the *Education Appeal Tribunal procedures policy*.
- In cases where a mediator facilitates a decision between parties, the chair of the tribunal makes sure any decisions and/or agreements, including commitments and follow-up steps are written and signed by all parties.
- If no agreement is reached, the matter will proceed to a formal hearing.
- Decisions made during a formal hearing of the Education Appeal Tribunal are binding and are filed in the Yukon Supreme Court.

2023- 2024 Reporting

EAT statistics – April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024	
Appeal requests received this year	6
Cases outstanding from previous years	3
Requests discontinued by applicants	3
Resolved by department	1
Not within EAT jurisdiction	1
In mediation	1
Resolved through mediation	1
Pending	2
Hearings	0

Membership

- Pursuant to the *Education Act*, the Minister is responsible for appointing “a chair, a maximum of nine other members and a secretary to the Education Appeal Tribunal”.
- Members are appointed to a length of term specified by the Minister. Currently, members are being appointed to three-year terms.
- The option exists for the Minister to appoint two rural Yukon representatives to the Tribunal.

Current Members

- Debra Bartlette, member from April 18, 2024 to April 17, 2027
- Gwyneth Kovachik-McNeil, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Janet Moodie, chair from November 16, 2023, to November 15, 2026
- Josefine Leideritz, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Kimberley Hardacker, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Margaret Webb, member from April 18, 2024 to April 17, 2027
- Paula Pasquali, member from April 13, 2022, to April 4, 2025

Delays

- Following the resignation of a previous Chair there was a period during the fall of 2023 when the Education Appeal Tribunal was not able to deal with appeals.
- The department reached out to those who filed appeals during this interim period and offered to engage in mediation to help resolve concerns.
- In November 2023, a new Chair was appointed for a three-year term and the backlog of appeals has been addressed.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-25

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Value:

- All students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Recommended response:

- Allegations were raised about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion at three schools:
 - Jack Hulland Elementary School, in the fall of 2023
 - JV Clark School in Mayo on May 11, 2024
 - St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction on July 22, 2024
- We continue to communicate with families, caregivers and staff that there is a range of free-of-charge supports, as we navigate these complex matters.

Investigations and legal matters—holds and restraints:

- As an employer, we have an obligation and are committed to learning more about the conduct of our employees and what happened.
- We fully cooperated with the RCMP's criminal investigation at Jack Hulland School, which has been completed, pending their final report being shared with the Public Prosecution Service of Canada.
- We are working with the Department of Justice on civil lawsuits. Given these are ongoing matters before the courts, we will not be commenting on the specific allegations outlined in the statements of claim.
- These matters are complex and of a most serious nature and will take time to complete.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Managing student behaviour:

- We have trained all Yukon administrators, teachers and staff on new policies and procedures for preventing harm to students as part of the Student Protection Policy.
- We continue to offer regular training sessions on Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® training sessions, which is the standard for managing student behaviours in a positive manner.
- We have clarified expectations for staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion when managing student behaviour. The use of seclusion is unacceptable. Physical holds or restraints are to be used only by persons trained and certified in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Module 6, and only when there is imminent risk of serious physical harm.
 - The Student Protection Policy has been fully implemented, and the expectation for safe treatment of all schools is now clearly communicated to staff.
- In addition, we have increased oversight on Workplace Risk Assessments (WRAs). A Workplace Risk Assessment must be completed any time a hold occurs.
- We have made a commitment to significantly increase school-level supports to strengthen student learning and wellbeing. This includes the addition of 81 new full-time student support positions over the period of 2023-26, subject to legislative approval.
- The Government of Yukon has also committed to \$1 million investment annually over that same period to improve mental health outcomes for youth, subject to legislative approval.
- We will ensure both students and staff are supported to uphold safe and inclusive learning environments.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

Requests for student records:

- The Department of Education fully cooperates with the RCMP during their investigations.
- All student record requests that were on hold due to the RCMP investigations have been completed.
- Any further questions regarding RCMP investigations should be referred to the RCMP.

Administration / supporting staff:

- There is a dedicated team of teachers and staff at Jack Hulland school, J.V. Clarke and St. Elias Community schools. The administrative teams are focused on moving the schools forward in a good way.
- Since November 2021, we've maintained communication with the Jack Hulland school community, providing regular updates and sharing information when we are able.
- We've provided information on support and encouraged families to reach out to the RCMP with information that may have been relevant to their investigation.
- A range of free-of-charge and confidential support continues to be available to school communities.
- We will continue to work with school administration, school council and school boards, on staff support and initiatives as needed.

Communications:

- We will communicate information as we are able to and as it becomes available.
- We continue to remind and encourage families and staff of the resource support available to them, including a dedicated support person that is

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

available to help families navigate the information and support that is available.

Child and Youth Advocate Office:

- We are working with the Child and Youth Advocate on a case-by-case basis to directly support past and present students and families of Jack Hulland School.
 - We will continue to provide updates to the Child and Youth Advocate on the government's ongoing response.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On September 11th, 2023, the RCMP informed the JHES School community they have concluded their investigation, and their final report was forwarded to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada in June 2024.
 - A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, naming the Yukon government and JHES School Council as defendants. The JHES School Council was subsequently dropped from the claim.
 - A decision released September 6, 2023, certified the claim as a class action.
 - A statement of claim for the JV Clark School on July 22, 2024, and a statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 11, 2024
-

Background:

- In November 2021, the Area Superintendent for Jack Hulland Elementary School received information from the acting school principal that there could be school-wide physical abuse of students through inappropriate use of holds and isolation rooms as a means to restrain and address student behaviour.
- Violence at Jack Hulland Elementary School has previously been described as student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher and largely focused on a shared resource program that supports students with behavioural needs (Grove Street program).

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

- RCMP and Family and Children's Services were engaged on November 19, 2021. Production orders for records were completed to RCMP's satisfaction.
- A law group was engaged to conduct the employer's fact-finding investigation using duplicate copies of all the same materials that were disclosed to the RCMP, including Workplace Risk Assessments and other reports involving the use of holds and isolation rooms produced over the last 5 years. A Workplace Risk Assessment must be completed and submitted to the Student Support Services Unit when students demonstrate escalated behavior that may be harmful to others.
- The initial findings from the law group received in April 2022, suggested concerns that holds, restraints and seclusion were not used as a last resort or in situations of imminent danger, but rather for matters of non-compliance or not following the direction of staff.
- As the employer, we have an obligation to address these concerns and prevent future harm and will continue to take this matter seriously.
- Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training – an industry standard training – to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts.
- In May 2022, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter clarifying the employer's expectations of Educators in respect to managing student behavior.
- On May 5, 2022, information was also shared with families, and a meeting was held with participation from Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, to the Yukon Supreme Court by two plaintiffs and their guardians against the Department of Education and Jack Hulland Elementary School Council for holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff.
- Legal counsel for the Department of Education has filed a defense to the class action lawsuit that was submitted in mid-February 2023.
- In May 2023 the Yukon Supreme Court agreed to dismiss the action against the school council.

Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

Education

- June 26 – 29, 2023 a hearing was held to determine if the lawsuit should be a class action.
- September 6, 2023, the lawsuit was certified as a class action on behalf of all students "who were subject to holds and restraints and who were locked in a room and/or placed in seclusion" at the school between Jan. 1, 2007, and June 30, 2022, except for individual accusations of assault and confinement.
- The RCMP have concluded their investigation and are submitted a final report to with the Public Prosecution Office of Canada in June 2024.
- A statement of claim for the JV Clark School on July 22, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on August 20, 2024.
- A statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 11, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on July 19, 2024.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-09

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions

Education

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- Our schools accommodate students with a wide variety of chronic and severe medical conditions, such as diabetes or anaphylaxis, and who may require medication and other care while under school supervision.
- All Yukon schools follow the Administration of Medication to Students Policy, which requires planned care and support for students with various medical conditions, including diabetes.
- School staff have a duty of care to students who are at risk from medical conditions and require up-to-date information and guidance about their specific condition.
- These students require and receive planned care and support at school, on field trips, and while being transported to and from school to ensure their health and safety.
- A collaborative approach with each family is taken to develop a detailed and specific response plan to keep the student well. We rely on parents and guardians to provide information and occasionally training for specific situations, as the student and their loved ones are the experts in the lived experience of the student.

Additional response – Type 1 Diabetes:

- In collaboration with Health and Social Services and the T1D Support Network we have:
 - Updated the existing Administration of Medication to Students Policy.

Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions

Education

- Created a new Health Care Plan form specifically for students with Type 1 Diabetes.
 - Updated the procedures specifically for students with Type 1 Diabetes.
- We will begin formal consultation of these proposed changes with Yukon Education Association of Professionals after the conclusion of collective bargaining.
- We provided training and information sessions for educators and school staff during the August 2024 Welcome Week to ensure that staff have the necessary information to support students living with T1D at their schools.
- We are working with our partners at Health and Social Services to co-develop supports for both students and schools impacted by T1D, based on the recommendations of the Yukon Diabetes Strategy.
- We remain committed to ensuring that both staff and students are supported in schools and are taking steps to do this properly. An important part of this is involving our partners at the Yukon Association of Education Professionals in conversation.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion in fall 2021 for the development of a Yukon diabetes strategy.

Background:

- The Yukon T1D Support Network asked that a policy be written specifically regarding roles, responsibilities and support for students with diabetes; this was echoed in a Public Accounts Committee submission for the 2022 hearing.
- Meetings with the Department of Education and T1D Support Network have focused on creating a draft procedure for students with T1D in the school setting.

Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions

Education

The Yukon Association of Education Professionals will need to be consulted prior to the implementation of updates.

- The Administration of Medication in Schools Policy and related procedures outline roles and responsibilities among school staff, parents, and students regarding medical care and medication.
- The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services are collaborating to establish a pilot position to support students living with T1D across the territory.
- In the 2023-24 school year, there were 18 students living with T1D at eight schools.
- It is anticipated that in the 2024/25 school year, there will be 18 students living with T1D across the territory, all residing in Whitehorse (1 student graduated last year and 1 entered kindergarten this year). Confirmed numbers are typically not available until the end of October when families submit the updated information

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is a top priority.

Recommended response:

- Pest control mitigations are put in place when signs of pests are discovered in Yukon government workplaces.
- If there are signs of pests in schools, staff submit a pest control work order.
- The department works with schools to ensure attractants are minimized and additional custodial resources are made available if needed.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Many schools have food and nutrition programs that sometimes attract pests.
- It is common to see increased mouse activity in the fall and/or when a building is undergoing renovations.

Background:

- On August 15, 2024, school staff notified the department of a mice infestation at EWES. Operations staff contacted Orkin, and work began immediately to address the issue.
- Regular reports from Orkin indicate that mouse activity appears limited, despite these reports, school staff continue to observe signs of mice.
- Orkin continues to attend EWES twice a month.
- The department will continue to monitor the progress of the implemented strategies.
- There has been an increase in food and nutrition programs being delivered at schools. This has resulted in more food stored in the schools and classrooms and increased compost, both of which are attractants for pests.
- We work with school staff, the Health and Safety Management Coordinator, Facilities Services Director and Environmental Health Services on response, prevention, and remediation.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SI07

Fall 2024

Pest Control in Schools

Education

- Currently there is a contract in place with Orkin to provide ongoing site inspections at all Whitehorse area schools.
- An additional contract has been established to provide more comprehensive mitigation measures and to address identified rodent issues at Whitehorse Elementary School.
- This one-year contract, initiated on October 1, 2024, with Orkin Canada, will ensure that the school will be attended for rodent control twice per month for inspection and rebaiting of traps.
- Education will receive regular updates on rodent activity and mitigation efforts at Whitehorse Elementary School from Orkin.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-09

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

For School Capacity: refer to SP04

For Building Schools - 5 year Capital Plan: refer to SO02

For Modular Classrooms: refer to SO07

For School Growth Planning: refer to SP10

Value:

- School facilities are important spaces that host a variety of activities and support vibrant communities.

Recommended response:

- As Whitehorse continues to see steady population growth, our school facilities need to grow and adapt to meet the needs of the student population.
- The Department of Education routinely gathers data and input from school communities to plan their short, medium and long-term needs.
- The secondary school buildings in Whitehorse are more than large enough to accommodate the number of Grade 8-to-12 students enrolled across the system.
- We recognize that enrolment levels are approaching operational capacity in some schools.

Additional response:

- Our schools are built for operational flexibility in terms of a school's grade structures, programs and scheduling, and specialized courses.
- We continue to look at the many factors that impact enrolment pressure across the school system, including out-of-catchment-area enrolment, and how space at schools can be used most efficiently.
- We will continue to have conversations with Yukon school communities and school boards about facility needs as we plan for future school projects.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised in the House, in the media, and from school councils on how the department will deal with schools that are nearing or exceeding their operational capacity.
-

Background:

- Capital planning decisions are made based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs and emerging enrolment trends and pressures.
- Students wishing to attend a secondary school outside their catchment area must complete an out-of-area request.
 - For the 2024-25 school year, these requests are being more carefully considered if the student wants to attend a school experiencing enrolment pressures.
- We are undertaking a holistic catchment analysis of Whitehorse high schools, including out-of-area enrolment at F.H. Collins Secondary School.
- F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed as a high school with the possibility to accommodate a school expansion in the future.
- Currently, this school is at 99 per cent capacity and long-term capital planning will include options for expansion.
- For the 2024-25 school year 12 students from the FH Collins catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at FH Collins when those students attempted to register.
- Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify the need for additional space.
- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan.
- We are working with Highways and Public Works on a multi-year procurement and placement program to place new and replace aging modulars at Yukon schools.
- Schools make daily decisions about how to manage their operational capacity. For

example, schools that are above operational capacity may repurpose spaces in facilities or alter class schedules to optimize use.

School	Enrolment Oct 2024	Operational capacity	Capacity (%)
Christ the King Elementary	354	294	120%
École Whitehorse Elementary School	451	459	99%
Elijah Smith Elementary School	278	330	83%
Golden Horn Elementary School	247	216	114%
Grey Mountain Primary School	86	67	128%
Hidden Valley Elementary School	184	142	130%
Holy Family Elementary School	184	147	125%
Jack Hulland Elementary School	313	351	89%
Selkirk Elementary School	372	302	122%
Takhini Elementary School	156	222	71%
Whistle Bend Elementary School	220	306	71%
École Émilie-Tremblay (K-6)	219	358	61%
CSSC Mercier	159	150	107%
F.H. Collins Secondary School	740	744	99%
Porter Creek Secondary School	570	765	75%
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	464	518	88%

- Operational Capacity of a school is based on the number of classrooms and teaching spaces and the school's grade structure. Class size maximums are part of the YAEP collective agreement.
- The City of Whitehorse's building inspection team has determined that the occupancy capacity of F.H. Collins is 1,630 persons. This contrasts with the school's operational capacity of 744 students. Occupancy capacity is determined by the building and fire codes.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-14

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Privacy Awareness: Refer to DPT13

Value:

- The Department of Education takes protecting the privacy of Yukoners' personal information very seriously.

Recommended response:

- Video surveillance is used in limited situations at schools when it's deemed appropriate to ensure a safe school community.
- This technology serves as an additional tool to help address incidents of concerning behaviour on school grounds, including when there are allegations of crime or vandalism on school property.
- Since 2022, there have been no reports made to the department or the Information and Privacy Commissioner of misuse or mishandling of information gathered by video surveillance technology.

Additional response:

- The department outlined a clear response to the Information and Privacy Commissioner on how we would address the 24 recommendations in their 2022 compliance audit.
- A Privacy Impact Assessment recommended in the audit is being completed.
- The department also has a Video Surveillance Policy that follows privacy regulations and further policies and guidelines for records collection and destruction.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On March 25, 2024, the Yukon Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner tabled their 2022 Annual Report with the Yukon Legislative Assembly. This report featured two stories involving the access and privacy aspects of video surveillance at schools.

Background:

- Video surveillance technology is currently being used at the following schools:
 - operated by Yukon Education:
 - F.H Collins Secondary School
 - St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School
 - Porter Creek Secondary School
 - École Whitehorse Elementary School
 - operated by the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon:
 - Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile Mercier
 - L'École Émilie-Tremblay
 - operated by the First Nation School Board:
 - Ghùch Tlâ Community School (Carcross)
- In 2022, following a complaint, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner conducted an investigation and a compliance audit to evaluate whether the personal information collected through the use of video surveillance technology in schools is adequately protected in accordance with the requirements of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and Regulations.
- Following the compliance audit, the IPC submitted a [Privacy Compliance Audit Report](#) to the Department of Education on June 14, which included recommendations.
- The Department of Education accepted 22 of the 24 Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations, and committed to ensuring that any new video surveillance technology in schools complies with the 24 recommendations.
- We also committed to work expeditiously to implement the recommendations in all current systems, including completing Privacy Impact Assessments for deployed technology, submitting them to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and updating the department's video surveillance policy.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- The Department of Education takes protecting students' privacy and personal information very seriously.

Recommended response:

- Our position is that we have the authority to collect, use, and disclose student's personal information for the purpose of communicating to the broader school community.
- We are currently undertaking a privacy impact assessment to assess the risks of posting students' personal information to internet platforms.
- We have notified staff of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of youth's personal information under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Additional response re: Office of the Information and Privacy

Commissioner investigation into the department's use of social media

- We do not agree with all of the Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations.
- We are working to refine our processes and policies into a comprehensive framework that clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, and oversight with respect to the collection, use, and disclosure of youth personal information on internet platforms.
- We are also reviewing and updating the department's privacy management policy and plan.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- An individual made a complaint to the OIPC regarding collection, use, and disclosure of student images on internet platforms in Yukon schools.

- The OIPC posted the report publicly on their web site on June 12, 2023.
-

Background:

- The department has notified staff of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of youth's personal information under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Further, we have provided direction that there are to be no new social media posts until the risk assessment has been completed, processes and procedures are better defined, and further direction can be provided.
- On May 18, 2023, Minister McLean received a letter from the Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) advising Education that the Commissioner had completed their report on the compliance audit regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of student images on internet platforms that is occurring in some schools in the Yukon.
- On June 9, 2023, the Department of Education responded to the report and recommendations, accepting 4 of the 6 recommendations.
- While the Department is not ceasing the collection and use of, or purging of, stored internet images, we are making many improvements.
- In summary, the department committed to:
 - clearly establish Education's authority to collect, use, and disclose students' personal information on internet platforms for the purpose of communicating the goals and objectives of the Yukon education system as outlined in section 4 of the Education Act – started,
 - revise our media release permission form to indicate intention, clearly outline risk, establish the authority to collect, use, and disclose, as well as who to contact for more information – completed,
 - send the media release permission form home with students annually and provide the ability for students to revoke permission – completed,
 - implement, and train staff, on the use of the permission tracking mechanism within the student information system – started,
 - complete a privacy impact assessment that examines specifically the risk of posting student personal information to internet platforms – started,

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SI10

Fall 2024

Schools use of social media

Education

- revisit all Yukon school's social media sites and ensure the sites have been approved by the school's superintendent or executive director. Approval forms will be kept on file and a spreadsheet inventory of sites will be audited twice annually – started, and
- reinforce, through communication and training, all employees of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of students' personal information under the ATIPPA - started.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools

Education

Value:

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- Yukon schools follow the *Tobacco and Vapour-Free Schools Policy*, which prohibits smoking, including vaping and the use of e-cigarettes, on school property.
- Talking to students about making healthy lifestyle choices is part of the curriculum and should be an ongoing conversation happening both at school and at home.
- A school's response to students who are caught smoking or vaping on school property is guided by its school rules, which are approved by each school council or school board.

Additional response:

- We encourage everyone to talk to the kids in their lives to help them make healthy choices and stay safe; schools and families share responsibility for ensuring students understand the risks of smoking and vaping.
- Schools provide information to help young people to make good choices and keep themselves safe and healthy.
- The Yukon government's Health Promotion Unit helps deliver smoking and vaping prevention information to students upon school request.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- There have been incidents of students smoking and vaping at school.
-

Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools

Education

Background:

- Under the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act* no person shall smoke, vape or use a tobacco product in a school or on school grounds.
- The Department of Education updated the *Tobacco and Vapour Free Schools Policy* in 2019 to include language around vaping devices.
- Under the department's *Substance Abuse Policy*, smoking cannabis is not permitted on school grounds, regardless of whether it is legal.
- There are no designated smoking areas on any school grounds; however, students sometimes smoke off school grounds in areas close to and often within sight of the school, especially at the secondary schools.
- The Department of Education also provides information about the risks of smoking and vaping in Yukon schools as part of the school curriculum.
- Whitehorse high school administrators have been working to improve the consistency of their school-based policies on vaping.
- In spring 2022, F.H. Collins High School partnered with Physical and Health Education Canada (with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada) to engage in a three year-pilot project entitled STOMP. F.H. received a grant of \$2500 for this project. STOMP takes a comprehensive approach to curb tobacco use, including e-cigarettes and vaping, in students from grades 7-12.
- Health Promotion continues to support Yukon educators and students with classroom presentations and resources on tobacco use, vaping and cannabis use.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff in Yukon Schools is our priority.

Recommended response:

- We know that many jurisdictions, including British Columbia have recently announced personal device use restrictions in schools for the 2024-25 school year. The restrictions aim to reduce classroom distractions, promote wellbeing, foster online safety, and ensure consistency.
- You may be interested in the fact that 13 schools across the Yukon have implemented similar policies, each tailored to their community needs. The policies were implemented in collaboration with their school councils and communities, where they established personal device use rules or codes of conduct.
- I'm excited to share that our department plans to develop formal guidance to help schools manage personal device usage. This initiative will foster student well-being, enhance online safety, and reduce classroom distractions while acknowledging technology's potential educational benefits when used appropriately.

Additional response:

- Schools determine the unique requirements to support staff and student wellbeing.
- Rules, guidelines, and lessons about online safety are used to keep students safe in Yukon schools. This includes teaching students about digital citizenship and ethical online behaviour.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Student personal device usage in the Yukon has become a topic of discussion due to concerns about classroom distractions and privacy issues related to technology use, particularly considering similar policies in other provinces.

Background:

- The Department of Education works with external programs and organizations to support students' well-being and teaches about online safety. These include the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board, to talk to students about topics such as online safety, cyberbullying, and bullying in general.
- Teachers get special training to reduce the risk of problems and create a safe physical and virtual environment for students.
- As of August 2024, eight jurisdictions have put policy instruments in place to restrict or limit personal device use in schools. These include Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-10

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The Department of Education believes that support from community partners can play a role in enhancing education programming in Yukon schools.

Recommended response:

- The Every Student, Every Day initiative is dedicated to helping schools and communities support innovative projects that improve results for Yukon students by encouraging school attendance and engagement.
- For the 2024-25 school year, the Every Student, Every Day partnership funded 31 projects in 24 schools across the Yukon for a total of \$400,000.
- These projects range from enhancing curriculum by purchasing Kicksleds and STTEAM resources for experiential learning, to supporting popular school clubs and activities to keep students engaged in the school community.
- The Department of Education signed a new memorandum of understanding with the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society in May 2024.
- As part of the MOU the society will now be distributing the Every Student, Every Day program funds to the recipients, resulting in a decrease in expenditures and recoveries of \$300,000.
- The Department has provided the society with their \$100,000 annual contribution for the Every Student Every Day initiatives.

Additional response:

- The Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society is an independent registered Yukon society, which operates separately from the Victoria Gold Corporation.

- The funding amount available each year is based on the Department of Education's annual contribution (\$100,000) and the fund-raising efforts of the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society.
- Funding for the approved 2024-25 projects is confirmed and I will update on the future of the program beyond 2025-26 when information is available.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Victoria Gold Corporation entered receivership in July 2024. Since then, there have been questions about the future of Every Student, Every Day.

Background:

- Since 2012, the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society, a charitable organization, has partnered with the Government of Yukon and Yukon businesses to support the Every Student, Every Day (ESED) initiative.
- The Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society and the Department of Education signed a new 3-year MOU in May 2024.
- The financial provision of the agreement state that the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society will contribute “an amount raised through fundraising” and that Education will contribute \$100,000 annually to the Every Student, Every Day fund.
- A committee of Department of Education staff and volunteers representing the Society selected the successful projects and the funds will be implemented in the 2024–25 school year.
- To date, ESED has raised and distributed more than \$1,000,000 to support over 230 community-based projects that reduce barriers to school attendance.
- The Government of Yukon increased its annual contribution to ESED in the 2024-25 fiscal year to \$100,000.
- The department’s Corporate Sponsorship and Donation Policy is available on the open government site at <https://open.yukon.ca/information/publications/education-policies>

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SI13

Fall 2024

Every Student, Every Day

Education

- While the recognition of sponsors is permitted, students or department employees must not be subjected to advertising in schools or on department property.
- Sponsorships and donations must support the goals and objectives of the school's curriculum and instruction and must be in line with the policies, beliefs, and practices of the Department of Education.
- Supplementary #1 shows a decrease of \$300,000 related to every student everyday initiative which may trigger questions around the decrease

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-10

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- The Department of Education provides schools with activity buses to support student access to safe transportation to and from extra-curricular activities.

Recommended response

- Yukon Education provides students and user groups with access to safe, dependable transportation so that students and teachers can attend events. Education is aware that there have been problems with bus allocation in the past and that the fleet is getting older.
- At present, Yukon Education has 25 activity buses that can accommodate 8 to 24 passengers each. Collaboration takes place with Fleet Services to ensure that these are serviced regularly and, at times, minimize disruption to use.
- The First Nations School Board recently acquired nine new activity buses. The activity buses previously assigned to FNSB schools have been divided among Yukon Education schools so that every school will have at least one bus, and schools that offer experiential learning programs will have at least two, significantly reducing reliance on Standard Bus for field trip transportation.

Additional response:

- Each activity bus is inspected visually by the driver before each trip and mechanically every six months by a certified mechanic; suspected or identified problems are addressed immediately.
- Education uses its existing departmental vehicle fleet as well as vehicles through the Fleet Vehicle Agency to accommodate school group needs.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The aging buses are more prone to mechanical issues the longer they remain as part of the fleet and may need to be replaced.
-

Background:

- The Department of Education owns 25 activity buses. The type of license required to operate depends on the size of the vehicle. The years of manufacture range from 2011 to 2017.
- Many of the buses are unable to transport an entire class as the listed maximum size for regularly scheduled classes from grade 1 through 12 in the Yukon Association of Education Professionals collective agreement ranges from 22 to 28 students.
- Four buses are located at the Fleet Vehicle Agency and are available to be booked by schools through a shared Outlook calendar managed by the Student Transportation Officer. The remaining 21 buses are allocated to specific schools. In addition, schools can book 15 passenger vans through the Fleet Vehicle Agency Vehicle Request System.
- Schools with allocated buses are considered the key holders and no other school can book those specific buses.
- The buses are owned by Yukon government; therefore, schools only incur variable costs, such as fuel. Maintenance and annual inspections are coordinated through the Fleet Vehicle agency with support and funding from Education. Many of these vehicles are nearing the end of their serviceable life cycle and there have been several mechanical breakdowns in the last few school years.
- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) does not use the central pool and procured their own school bus which resides in a compound at CSSC Mercier.
- The Department of Education has a budget of \$500k in the 5-year capital plan for the replacement of aging vehicles but has not been able to initiate due to other

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO01

Fall 2024

Activity Buses

Education

pressures on major capital projects. This budget is not intended for adding new buses to the fleet, only for replacements. The cost of a new bus is around \$200k.

- All Yukon schools also have access to booking school buses through Standard Bus and have budgets identified for this activity.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-10

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

Education

Burwash – KLUANE Lake School Kêts'ádań Kù – refer to SO03

Modular Classrooms– refer to SO07

School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process – refer to SO10

Whistle Bend School – refer to SO15

Whitehorse Downtown School: refer to HOT15/SO16

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to HOT16/SO17

Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO18

Value:

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable for many years to come.
- We are pleased that work is underway for a new school in Burwash Landing, and planning continues for the replacement of École Whitehorse Elementary School.
- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes Experiential Learning Spaces.
 - In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Experiential Learning Spaces at Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow), Khàtìnas.àxh Community School (Teslin), and Hidden Valley Elementary School (Whitehorse) were completed.
 - The Experiential Learning Space at École Émile Tremblay (Whitehorse) is under construction and is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

Education

Additional response:

- Capital planning decisions are made based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs and emerging enrolment trends and pressures.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Many school communities are advocating and lobbying for capital projects for various reasons (e.g., enrolment increases, facility upgrades, aging buildings).

Background:

- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan. For a list of projects in the 2024-25 five-year capital plan refer to **SO10: School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process**
- Education staff communicate regularly with school principals to identify projects that would enhance programming.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

- Under ICIP schools were not eligible unless they fell under one of the two exceptions:
 - The Covid-19 stream
 - Truth and Reconciliation - Calls to Action
- Under current ICIP guidelines, schools in Whitehorse are not eligible
- Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing) received ICIP funding under the Calls to Action.
- ICIP funding has been fully subscribed to since 2021

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádañ Kù

Education

NOTE: Questions about tendering and building are for HPW.

Value:

- As part of our commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for Yukon schools, we are pleased to be working in partnership with Kluane First Nation on Kêts'ádañ Kù [KEht-sah-dun KOO].

Recommended response:

- Moving the current Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing has been a longstanding request of Kluane First Nation.
- The Governments of Yukon and Kluane First Nation continue to uphold the Memorandum of Understanding, which outlines a shared commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing, to be known as Kêts'ádañ Kù - meaning "House of Learning."
- Kêts'ádañ Kù will support Kluane First Nation citizens to learn and thrive in their community.

Additional response:

- On August 22, 2024, GemMec ALC Inc. was awarded the construction contract for \$26.5 million (M).
- The total cost was \$22.5M at the time of application. The federal contribution was provided at \$10.87M, so this project is listed at a recovery rate of 50%.
- Construction started in September 2024 and stopped at the end of October due to freeze-up. Work will restart in the spring after the ground thaws.
- The construction is expected to be completed for the 2026-2027 school year.

Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádań Kù

Education

- The bipartite oversight committee and the project management team hold regular meetings.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- This project is important to the Kluane First Nation and is a high-profile school project mentioned in the Minister's mandate letter.
-

Background:

- Kluane Lake School has been located in Destruction Bay since 1961. Most of the students reside in or around Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay.
- This project received Implementation Phase Approval for a target cost of \$29.7M in August 2023. However, after all bids exceeded the expected budget, a revised IPA was submitted for approval.
- In August 2024, the project received Implementation Phase Approval, which now has a target cost of \$32.5M.
- The newly revised 2024-25 Main Estimates include a decrease of \$3.155M. The new amount of \$9.87M is to begin construction next year.
- The budget of \$32.5M for the school can be broken down as follows:

Item	Revised Budget Breakdown
Consultant services	\$1,230,000
GY project management	\$485,000
Construction Contracts	\$26,533,000
YACA Direct Award Opportunities: Road and Parking Civil Works, Clearing and Grubbing	\$654,000
YACA Additional Benefits: Outdoor Spaces, Housing Construction	\$944,000
Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment	\$400,000

Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádañ Kù

Education

Contingencies (~7.5%) (Reduced due to tender price received)	\$2,254,000
Total	\$32,500,000

- The school is a priority for renovation or replacement on the government's School's Seismic Mitigation Program.
- On November 13, 2015, the Department of Education and Kluane First Nations (KFN) entered an 'Agreement Respecting the Provision of the Public-School Education Program in Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing' to identify and implement a three-year plan to provide options and planning for the establishment of a school in the community of Burwash Landing.
- In April 2016, the department began working with KFN on planning a new school in Burwash Landing, including site visits to determine suitable locations on non-settlement land.
- In October 2016, the Yukon government (YG) contracted the firm Urban Arts, in consultation with KFN, to develop a Functional Plan for a new school in Burwash Landing. Work to revise this functional plan was undertaken in 2018.
- In January 2019, the Minister of Education met with the Chief to discuss the school's next steps and the budget/project scope. On January 18, 2019, the joint working group, led by the Deputy Minister of Education, met and determined the three options for further exploration: retrofit, lease, and build.
- In November 2019, the Minister met with the Chief to confirm that a school would be built in Burwash Landing. Since then, technical officials have been meeting to move this project forward, including signing an MOU in 2019 outlining a commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing.
- The MOU includes provisions to establish a KFN/YG Oversight Committee to oversee the implementation of the MOU, with a commitment for the Minister of Education and Chief to meet quarterly to ensure the goals are being met and to help move items forward as required.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO03

Fall 2024

Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádań Kù

Education

- In January 2021, a tender for an Owner's Advisor to provide expertise and guidance on this new school project was posted. Taylor Architecture Group (TAG) was the successful proponent.
- In August 2022, KFN provided a submission to YG to name the Burwash School. At the General Assembly in July 2022, Kêts'ádań Kù, meaning "House of Learning", was selected by KFN citizens as the name for the new school. On November 30, 2023, the name was formally approved by Cabinet as per the corporate building naming policy.
- The site selected for the school is KFN settlement land.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Special Needs Transportation: refer to TAB SO13

Value:

- The Department of Education provides school busing, city transit passes, and transportation subsidies to families to support students travelling safely and effectively to and from school.

Recommended Response

- For the 2024-2025 school year families were required to submit a registration for the school bus, with a deadline for registrations of June 14, 2024.
- Registrations received up to June 19th were processed and seats assigned for the start of the school year.
- Due to an influx of late registrations and special requests, some families received late notifications of seat assignments.
- Additional notices were issued to inform families of the communication delays due to transportation staff working on addressing these late requests.
- In response to bus capacity limitations, several student transportation routes have been revised. Consequently, some high school students who requested school busing have been given city transit passes.
- Transportation staff strive to accommodate all rider requests to the best of their ability. However, when adjustments to routes are necessary, several factors are considered to ensure fair and efficient service. These factors include:
 - Rider Location: The proximity of the rider's location to the available City Transit.
 - Rider Age: Priority is given to elementary-aged students for school bus accommodations to ensure their transportation needs are met effectively.

- Extenuating circumstances: Any specific reasons or conditions that might prevent the rider from using City Transit, such as medical or accessibility needs, are also considered.
- Transportation staff acknowledge the frustration faced by students due to prolonged bus travel times from Mendenhall Subdivision and the importance for students to arrive at school on time.
 - Education staff are actively exploring strategies to reduce driving times; however, due to multiple transfers and required stops, significant reductions in commute duration remain challenging.
 - Current schedules indicate that students traveling to St. Francis of Assisi in Riverdale are expected to arrive on time for the start of school.
 - Transportation staff will continue working closely with Standard Bus to ensure these schedules are upheld and that all children arrive safely and punctually.

Additional Response

- Standard Bus is responsible for notifying schools and families when there are bus route cancellations. We work with Standard to ensure notifications are sent out as early as possible. In some instances, routes may be cancelled for the day due to extreme weather conditions, unsafe road conditions, or driver shortages.
- We ask families to prepare an alternate plan when inclement weather and poor road conditions limit bus service.
- Efforts will be made to limit any service disruptions in Whitehorse, and we will continue to work with Standard Bus to develop contingency plans, which will include bringing in two out-of-territory drivers and combining routes where possible.

Busing

Education

-
- Standard Bus has confirmed that as of November 1, 2024, all routes are fully staffed, with a pool of backup drivers in place to help prevent cancellations.
 - We acknowledge the impact cancelled bus routes can have on families and are working with Standard Bus to find solutions whenever possible.
-

Context – this may be an issue because:

- Busing is a challenging topic as the department often receives a high volume of late registrations which make it difficult to accommodate. Additionally, routes are sometimes cancelled throughout the school year due to driver shortages, creating challenges for caregivers.
 - Potential concerns may arise with providing students with City Transit passes due to existing capacity and scheduling issues with City Transit.
 - Long commutes for high school students from Mendenhall into Whitehorse area schools.
-

Background:

- In the fall 2024 there was an incident when a child fell asleep on a school bus and missed their drop off. The school bus driver demonstrated exceptional care when they discovered the child, promptly returning them to the school office to ensure the child's safety. The parents expressed appreciation for the driver's calm demeanor and the school's effective safety procedures.
- The Department of Education will continue to work with Standard Bus to ensure safety protocols that include monitoring student boarding and debarking are carried out to ensure all students are dropped at the correct locations.
- Recently the Department of Education was made aware of concerns regarding the Standard Bus decision to suspend school bus services beyond route Km 14 on the Annie Lake Road.
 - The Department's operations team is working with Standard Bus on the recent changes.
 - While discussions are underway, Standard Bus is not travelling past the KM 14 point on Annie Lake Road citing dangerous winter conditions.

- Standard Bus assessed the road conditions and determined that travelling beyond KM 14 poses significant safety risks for bus travel, including: unmaintained roadways, snow/ice on roadways, and unstable road surfaces.
 - The focus is on proactive measures to provide safety for the students and their staff.
 - Families that are impacted by the change in schedule and live 3.2 kilometers away can receive the transportation subsidy to cover travel costs to the KM 14 drop off location.
- In 2024 parents voiced concerns regarding bus safety on Range Road. Standard Bus addressed the concerns which included:
 - A route change to avoid traffic congestion, which impacted one bus stop.
 - The change requires passengers to cross the street at a designated crosswalk and this aligns with the crossing practices of other students in the area.
 - The decision made by Standard Bus was to improve service reliability, especially during cold weather.
 - The parents were informed on November 8, 2024 by email and phone.
- To ensure children's safety, parents are advised to bring their children to the school bus stops, to arrive early, to wait in safe zones, and always stop and look both ways before crossing the road, including at crosswalks.
- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee on matters affecting the delivery of shared bus services.
- There are 43 active bus routes in Whitehorse, and 12 in the communities (including Ross River).
- As of the start of the 2024-2025 school year there were approximately 2,200 registered riders for the school bus in Whitehorse.
- Since the start of the school year the department has received an estimate of about 500 late registrations and/or special requests which impacted our ability to respond in a timely manner.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, Standard Bus reported that all rural community routes will be staffed.

Busing

Education

- Families can sign up for “My School Bus Monitor” to receive email updates. They can also sign up for text notification with Standard Bus.

Transportation subsidy:

- If families live more than 3.2 km from the nearest school bus stop and the student goes to the catchment area school, they may apply for a transportation subsidy to offset the cost of driving.
- We are reviewing the student transportation program and subsidy level to ensure it supports the needs of families and those eligible for transportation allowances.
- We recognize that students with exceptional needs may require additional support, and we make every effort to accommodate students' transportation needs.

Act and Regulations

- The Education Act and the Student Transportation Regulations outline the Department of Education's responsibilities for student transportation.
- Transportation subsidies are mandated under s. 47 of the Education Act.
- If a student's home is more than 3.2 km by the nearest passable road from the school the student attends, the Minister must either provide transportation (i.e., busing) or an 'allowance for transportation and accommodation.'
- The Department of Education supports Yukon students by providing busing services (in all Yukon communities) including families that do not meet the eligibility requirements under the Education Act.
- Under the Student Transportation Regulations (O.I.C. 1991/069) the amount of the transportation allowance (limited to one per family) shall equal the Government of Yukon car mileage rate payable to public servants to a maximum amount prescribed by the Minister.
- Under Ministerial Order 2004/10, the maximum transportation allowance payable is \$13 per day.

Special requests

- In keeping with the Education Act and Student Transportation Regulations, student riders are first assigned a seat for transportation from home to school, and back.

Busing

Education

- Transportation to locations other than home is beyond the criteria for school busing and are considered special requests and are considered at the beginning of the school year based on available space and existing bus routes.
- The Student Transportation Ridership Guidelines outline how we consider accommodating students travelling to locations other than their home, for example to after-school activities or daycare.

Discipline and Behavior Management on Buses:

- The rules of the school apply while on the school bus and school Principals determine if an incident warrants suspension or expulsion from the bus.
- Standard Bus has a process to report incidents to schools when they happen on the bus.
- There may be occasions when drivers decide operationally, for health and safety reasons, to remove a student from the bus prior to leaving the school grounds or on route.
- When behavioral issues persist, schools work with Standard Bus and Education staff to come up with a solution. An example would be to develop a seating plan.
- Any suspensions for behavioral issues on the school bus will be handled and issued by the school Principal in alignment with the school disciplinary policies.

Contract

- Standard Bus was awarded the Student Transportation school bus contracts for both Whitehorse public schools and community public schools for 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27.
 - The 3-year contract total is \$12,685,573.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

HIDDEN VALLEY School Playground

Education

Value

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

Recommended response:

- The Yukon government continues to invest in school infrastructure to ensure that our schools meet the demands of the unique school communities they serve.
- January 24, 2024, a contract was awarded for the new playground equipment. Unfortunately, the contractor did not meet the delivery date, and it has since been cancelled.
- The Department of Education is working to re-tender the playground equipment, recognizing it will not be installed this year.

Additional response:

- A Gaga ball court was installed prior to the start of the 2024-25 school year.
- Hidden Valley Elementary School's playground will feature accessible play equipment, ensuring inclusivity for all students. The tender for the playground equipment includes provisions for additional accessible options.
- Safe outdoor learning and play is an integral component of a child's education, and we are committed to ensuring these opportunities are available for students.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO05

Fall 2024

HIDDEN VALLEY School Playground

Education

- Yukon government performs periodic assessments of all play structures with the most recent being completed in fall 2022.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- A January 2024 contract to install new playground equipment was unfulfilled.
-

Background:

- Two of the three wooden structures at Hidden Valley Elementary School were deemed in need of refurbishment and removed on July 2, 2023.
- The department worked with the school principal and determined that removing the two wooden climbing structures at the front of the school was the best option at the time.
- The superintendent works closely with the principal at Hidden Valley Elementary School to plan capital priorities for the school.
- Over the 2023 Thanksgiving long weekend, the Department of Education installed new playground equipment that the department and school council purchased.
- Work over the summer break in 2023 included procuring a Gaga-ball court for the school grounds and upgrades to the Porcupine Neurodiversity Room to meet programming needs for the school.
- The Gaga ball court was supported by the Every Student, Every Day funding program.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-22

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- For the start of the school year, our top priority is ensuring that every school has access to at least one potable water source that meets the latest drinking water standards for lead.
- Education has contracted a third-party contractor to complete water sampling and testing. The contract commenced on October 7th, 2024.
- Confirmatory water testing will be carried out on all classroom fixtures, drinking fountains and kitchen fixtures to ensure continued compliance with safe drinking water guidelines, with completion expected by the end of December.
- All Yukon schools have access to clearly identified fixtures with potable water.
- Remediation and testing on all critical fixtures will be an ongoing project.
- Education has been working collaboratively with Environmental Health Services and Chief Medical Officer to develop the plan for routine monitoring of school drinking water.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the spring of 2024, levels of lead in some schools exceeded recommended standards.
-

Background:

- On April 23, 2024, the water testing and remediation action plan was shared with the Department of Highway and Public Works, Environmental Health Director and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- A meeting took place on May 27, 2024, where the departments of Education, HPW, and Environmental Health, and Chief Medical Office of Health discussed how Education and Facilities Management will manage to meet the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines.
- Weekly meetings continue to be scheduled with representatives from the EDU, HPW, EHS and the CMOH to ensure work remains on schedule.
- EHS and EDU have identified water sampling strategy including objective.
 - Investigative – No previous data
 - Confirmation – This type of sampling can be performed on fixtures that have already had sampling/work done to verify efficacy
 - Monitoring – Regular schedule and as needed sampling of potable sources
- HPW contracted a third party to install filters at all Elkay water stations, and the work has been completed.
 - An Elkay water filter is a type of filtration system designed to improve the quality of drinking water. These filters typically work to reduce contaminants such as chlorine, lead, and other impurities, ensuring cleaner and better-tasting water.
 - Education has contracted a third-party contractor to complete compliance and monitoring testing in all schools tested in 2018 -2020. This work commenced October 7th with completion expected by the end of the 2024 calendar year.
 - All schools will be tested by the end of 2024.
- A critical fixture is a fixture used for drinking water and food preparation. These fixtures are most likely to be used for consumption. Examples of critical fixtures are hallway drinking fountains, kitchen faucets in staff rooms, home education rooms, cafeteria, classroom sinks.

- Non-critical fixtures include janitor's sinks and bathroom sinks. These fixtures are less likely to be used for consumption. These faucets are not designated for use for drinking or food preparation.
- The initial project timeline, established in May 2024, did not adequately account for the complexity and scope of tasks. Key factors such as the time required to identify human resources, acquire essential materials, navigate the logistical challenges of various school locations, and determining the optimal timing for water testing were underestimated. This resulted in missed milestones and necessitated a revised schedule to align with more realistic timeframes and resource availability.

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-10-21](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- We work with school communities on ways they can organize their building's learning spaces to meet the needs of their students and programs.

Recommended response:

- We monitor all schools to help administrators and school communities plan for enrolment and needs in the short, medium, and long-term.
- Modular classrooms are an option to address enrolment pressure in schools.
- Enrolment pressure is also a key element in the long-term capital planning process.
- We are working with Highways and Public Works on a multi-year procurement and placement program to place new and replace aging modulars at Yukon schools.
- Work is underway to supply and deliver two portable classrooms to the territory with intent of having them ready for occupancy by the start of the 2025-26 school year.
 - The two new modular classrooms will be placed at FH Collins Secondary School, anticipated for the start of the 2025-26 school year.
- Each modular classroom will represent an additional instructional space to accommodate up to 28 students.
- For the 2024-25 there is \$1,200,000 allocated for Modular Classrooms.

Additional response:

- Market conditions can impact the procurement timelines for modulars which, in turn, impact completion timelines.

- Site feasibility studies have also been conducted to confirm the ability to place modulars at schools with emerging enrolment pressures.
- The contract was awarded to PCR Construction a local company and are currently being fabricated.
- Substantial completion of the modulars is expected for early March.
- The Design tender is tracking for November release on bids and tenders.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Several schools have requested modulars in recent years.
-

Background:

- In recent years, new modular classrooms have been placed at:
 - Golden Horn Elementary School (2),
 - Hidden Valley Elementary School,
 - Selkirk Elementary School (2), and
 - Robert Service School in Dawson (a 4-classroom annex to replace aged modulars).
- The Robert Service School annex project started in 2020-21 fiscal. At that time, eligible expenditures were recoverable at 100% through a federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) COVID-19 stream. The total cost of the modular addition was \$6.227M of which \$5.644M was funded by ICIP.
 - Net cost to the Department of Education was \$583k
- In addition to the new modulars, all existing modulars have been assessed for condition.
 - The Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School and Porter Creek Secondary School modulars are at the end of their serviceable lifecycles and need replacement.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO07

Fall 2024

Modular Classrooms

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-14

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The health and safety of students and staff is our first priority.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon's radon management guidelines follow Health Canada's recommended guidelines.
- Testing and remediation was completed at all schools in 2018 with the majority of schools having low radon readings.
- Schools with results that exceeded the recommended range were remediated and monitored until the levels were within the recommended range.
- Unless there is a significant change to the physical structure of a school or Health Canada's recommended levels of radon concentration for acceptable indoor air quality change, there is no requirement or need for retesting.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of radon levels in schools was raised in October 2019.

Background:

- Radon is naturally occurring in Yukon. It does not pose an immediate danger to health and is only a concern if there is prolonged exposure to high concentrations over many years.
- Health Canada's recommended levels of radon concentration for acceptable indoor air quality are as follows: Below 200 Bq/m³ – acceptable; Between 200 Bq/m³ and 600 Bq/m³ – remediate within two years; Above 600 Bq/m³ – remediate within one year.

- All Yukon schools have been tested, and schools that showed results above 200 Bq/m³ have been remediated, with follow-up monitoring until the government is confident levels are within the recommended range.
- All Yukon school communities have been informed about the results and if any remediation is needed at their schools. The majority had low radon readings.
- In 2008, Holy Family Elementary School, Jack Hulland Elementary School, Nelna Bessie John School and Teen Parenting Center tested above the parameters established by Health Canada guidelines.
- In 2009 and 2016, remediation systems were installed at Nelna Bessie John School, and Jack Hulland Elementary School, and long-term testing indicates levels are now below Health Canada guidelines.
- The Teen Parent Centre and Holy Family Elementary School had remediation work in 2018-19. Follow-up testing indicates radon levels are below Health Canada guidelines.
- Post-remediation testing was completed in the 2021/22 school year at Eliza Van Bibber, Christ the King Elementary, the Teen Parent Centre, and Holy Family Elementary School, and results indicate levels are now below Health Canada Guidelines.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- Our government is committed to investing in Yukoners by investing in school infrastructure.

Recommended response:

- The 2020 Long Term School Planning report by Colliers International provides the Yukon government with guidance for prioritizing school replacements, expansions, major renovations, and seismic mitigations.
- The Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable.
- The current capital plan includes the replacement for a rural school, Burwash Landing Kêts'ádań Kù, and for a Whitehorse area school, Ecole Whitehorse Elementary.

Additional response:

- Capital planning decisions are made based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education program needs, and emerging enrolment trends and pressures.
- The Department of Education will continue to have conversations with Yukon school communities and Yukon school boards about facility needs as we plan for future school projects.
- In the 2020 Long Term School Planning report, St Elias Community School in Haines Junction ranked the highest and Khàtinas.àxh Community School in Teslin the second highest for modernization or replacement.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Champagne-Aishihik First Nation has reached out to the Department of Education asking when the St. Elias Community School will be replaced.

- The Teslin Tlingit Council has raised concerns about the need for timely maintenance at Khàtìnas.àxh Community School. The lease for the school is being renegotiated.
-

Background:

- St Elias Community School in Haines Junction is the highest scoring school located outside of Whitehorse in the 2020 Long Term School Planning report.
 - St Elias Community School was built in 1960, and it is recommended that this school be modernized or replaced to address the maintenance, seismic and acoustic issues, and to improve the learning spaces to align with the 21st Century Learning Environment.
- Khàtìnas.àxh Community School in Teslin is ranked #2 for community schools in terms of priority for replacement and is currently not in the five-year capital plan.
 - May 2024, the departments of Highways and Public Works and Education representatives conducted a site visit at Khàtìnas.àxh Community School to meet with Teslin Tlingit Council representatives and the school administrator. The purpose of the visit was to complete a walk-through and to identify maintenance requirements.
 - The roof and siding of the school are in poor condition and need immediate replacement to prolong the building's life.
 - The 5-year renewal term of the lease agreement expired June 30, 2024 while the Yukon Governments and the Teslin Tlingit Council were still in negotiations for a renewal. A one-year bridging agreement has been signed at the same terms as the current lease. Any changes to the lease going forward, including increases to rent, will be effective from the original date of July 1, 2024.
- The Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan includes modernization projects that are ongoing at:
 - Ross River School
 - Selkirk Elementary School
 - Robert Service School

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO09

Fall 2024

Rural School Replacements

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

Value

- The health and safety of students and staff remains our top priority.

Recommended response:

- We will continue to work with school communities on planning their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.
- In spring 2023, the Yukon government conducted a public survey and held open houses to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with school facilities and how to better meet K-12 programming needs.
- The results of this engagement will inform future updates of the Whitehorse school replacement plan, and the work plans for small and medium renovations for Whitehorse schools.
- Capital planning decisions are made based on information and facility assessments, supplemented with educational programming needs.
- The Government's approach to capital spending is driven by its overarching priorities and fiscal responsibility. All departments, including the Department of Education, follow established guidelines to ensure that funding is allocated efficiently and effectively across public services. At this time, all departments are deferring discretionary capital spending until later in the fiscal year, but non-discretionary capital has not been deferred.
- The Department of Education has a structured process for schools and program areas to request discretionary spending. As with any funding request, it requires detailed justification to demonstrate why it is non-discretionary. Each request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure alignment with the government's goals of maintaining essential services while managing public resources responsibly.

School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

Additional response:

- We work to identify projects for maintenance, refurbishment, or replacement, such as:
 - Playground equipment,
 - Experiential learning spaces,
 - Modernizing learning spaces, and
 - Program related capital repairs.
- Upgrades to existing playgrounds and installations of new playgrounds will include accessible equipment. This work is already underway, and recently, we have installed accessibility swings at the following schools: École Whitehorse Elementary School, Grey Mountain Primary School, Holy Family Elementary School and Golden Horn Elementary School.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School, the latest school built, has two playgrounds. One is fully accessible. The plans for the Kêts'ádañ Kų in Burwash Landing will also include accessible features.
- It is important that we ensure the portfolio of schools meets the demands of our growing population and provides modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- Schools are provided a program related capital budget for small scale program related renovations.
- Non-discretionary capital spending, which is necessary to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of students and employees, or to fulfill contractual agreements, remains a priority for schools.
- These decisions are part of the government's broader commitment to meeting both immediate and long-term goals, ensuring that critical needs are addressed while maintaining fiscal sustainability.

School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

- The Director of Finance for the department met with Principals and Vice-Principals on October 10, 2024, to clarify the directive, the process, and answer any questions that they may have. This meeting was well received, and clarification was provided.
- The Department will be reviewing capital spending during the last week of November. Following this, further communication will be sent to school administrators regarding non-discretionary capital spending.
- In the meantime, all school administrators are encouraged to request non-discretionary capital spending through the department's process if deferral is not deemed appropriate.
- There will always be times when governments must evaluate their financial projections and prioritize spending, which may result in slowing down expenditures or deferring discretionary spending.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- School communities have demonstrated an increasing interest in capital planning and infrastructure.
- The timing of some major capital projects in recent years (e.g.: Selkirk Street) has caused disruption to the flow of traffic for students, staff and families accessing the facility.
- Petition No. 24 was tabled on October 9, 2024 advocating for the installation of more accessible playgrounds at schools across Yukon.

Background:

- In the last five years the department has not had to defer or slow down capital spending. The Department of Education is seeking to find the history beyond five years for deferrals of capital spending.
- Highways and Public Works delivers major capital projects for sponsoring departments in addition to building maintenance projects.

School Capital – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

- The Department of Education works with Highways and Public Works to ensure impacts to programming are minimized where possible.
- All efforts are made to implement major projects during school closures.
- Major capital projects for 2024-25 includes work on:
 - Ross River School structural upgrades - \$2.05M.
 - the new Kêts'ádań Kù in Burwash Landing - \$9.87M.
 - substantial completion of Whistle Bend Elementary School - \$2.5M.
 - Whitehorse Replacement School (EWES) - \$2.5M
 - the Selkirk Elementary School parking lot - \$1.55M
 - Experiential Learning Spaces – \$1.2M
- 24/25 Major capital projects will include experiential learning spaces for the following schools. \$1.2M
 - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow)
 - Khàtinas.àxh Community School (Teslin)
 - École Émile Tremblay (Whitehorse)
 - Hidden Valley Elementary School (Whitehorse)
 - Robert Service School (Dawson City)
 - Project has been deferred related to the overall cost of the project being over budget.
- For 2024-25 \$1.2M is allocated for Modular Classrooms.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

School Maintenance – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

Lead in Water: refer to HOT05/SO06

School based capital and repairs budgets frozen: refer to SO10

Value

- The health and safety of our students and staff remains our top priority.

Recommended response:

- We ensure regular preventative maintenance throughout the school year, with a focus on minimizing disruptions to school activities.
- Maintenance tasks affecting school programs are planned during closure times like winter, spring, and summer breaks whenever feasible.
- Projects for the 2024/25 fiscal year include:
 - Ghùch Tlà Community School - Lighting upgrade, and exterior doors replacement
 - St Elias Community School - Replace PA and clock/bell system
 - Robert Service School - Mechanical upgrades
 - Johnson Elementary School - Mechanical systems upgrade
 - Hidden Valley Elementary School - PA system project, and barrier free access automatic doors
 - Beaver Creek Nelnah Bessie School seismic structural upgrades
 - Selkirk Elementary School - Sidewalk and landscaping, parking lot completion, and partial hallway reflooring and asbestos remediation (from the gym hallways up to the music room)
 - École Émilie Tremblay - Replace PA and clock/bell system
 - Takhini Elementary School – Partial reflooring 2nd floor
 - Jack Hulland Elementary School – Hallway and classroom painting
 - Christ the King Elementary School – Salmon room flooring replacement

School Maintenance – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

- Golden Horn Elementary School – Fire alarm replacement, barrier free access automatic doors, and a feasibility study of the play field upgrade
- Tantalus – Partial flooring upgrade
- Our commitment to the health and safety of students and staff includes ongoing maintenance of all facilities, addressing both routine and emergency needs, regardless of the building's age.

Additional response:

- We work closely with Highways and Public Works and school administrators on identifying areas in need of maintenance.
- Building systems such as HVAC, electrical, and plumbing are maintained at regularly scheduled intervals.
- Assessments of building systems occur periodically to assist in identifying larger projects for maintenance or upgrade.
- Remediation and testing on all critical water fixtures is ongoing into this school year, and Education is developing a plan to routinely monitor drinking water at each school.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some school communities feel there is a lack of investment in the infrastructure in their schools.
 - Emergency maintenance to address issues such as isolated water events or hazard
 - Emergency maintenance to address issues such as isolated water events or hazardous materials remediation can have an impact on programming and can result in disruptions to planned activities.
-

School Maintenance – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

Background:

- The draft play field feasibility study for Golden Horn Elementary School was received; however, consultants have been tasked with revising it to include life cycle costs for the three proposed options.
- An updated draft report was received on November 4, 2024, and is being reviewed. When the report is finalized, Education and HPW staff will review the findings and consider next steps.
- 2023-24 Capital maintenance projects delivered by Highways and Public Works, not including multi-year projects, are:
 - Elijah Smith School - Air Handling Unit
 - Robert Service School - Mechanical Upgrades
 - Ghùch Tlà Community School - PA/Bell/Clock Replacement
 - Jack Hulland School Services Maintenance Shop – Demolition
 - Ross River School - Gym Lighting Replacement.
 - Takhini Elementary School - Partial Classroom Re-flooring
 - Porter Creek Secondary School – Re-flooring Classrooms
 - Golden Horn Elementary School – Re-flooring Partial Corridor
 - St. Elias Community School – Re-flooring Hallway
 - Tantalus School - Exterior Re-paint
- The department makes efforts to minimize disruptions to school programming, and processes are in place to ensure health and safety remains at the forefront.
- When there are programming components to capital maintenance projects, Principals are provided an opportunity to provide feedback during the design process. An example would be the functionality of a PA system and where to place speakers.
- The Yukon government ensures that all Yukon government buildings, including schools, are safe to occupy.

School Maintenance – 2024-25 Projects and Process

Education

- The Department Highways and Public Works maintains all government building ventilation systems to industry standards and performs regular inspections and maintenance.
- All Yukon government schools are equipped with ventilation systems, which provide fresh air supply to classrooms and offices.
- Fresh air supply is based on maximum occupancy and national and international standards for volumes.
- Carbon monoxide monitoring is not a code requirement to monitor air in buildings.
- Schools have access to a work order-generating program, which Highways and Public Works monitors and actions.
 - Work orders are categorized as either "routine" or "emergency". Anything identified as "emergency", such as Health and Safety items or critical systems requests, takes precedence and is prioritized.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The safety of people accessing Yukon schools is a priority to the Government of Yukon, as such we work to proactively address safety issues.

Recommended response:

- We ensure our schools undergo regular inspections, and if any structural issues are identified, precautionary action is taken, and mitigation work is prioritized based on a risk assessment.
- Every school was built to the standard of the day and inspected to ensure they met all relevant codes at the time of construction.
- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Education are reviewing all Yukon school facilities and planning for the future of those facilities.

Additional response:

- Seismic mitigation is one of the many factors considered in new school design.
- The Government of Yukon continues to perform seismic and structural assessments on Yukon schools as required, to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- We have undertaken several mitigation measures, by addressing structural issues identified during assessments – for example, repairs on roofs, floors, and walls – and many non-structural issues such as duct work, furniture upgrades and shelving.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public is interested in seismic mitigation in Yukon schools.
-

Background:

- The Yukon's last major seismic event was in 2017 and the mitigations we had in place proved effective during that event.
- Yukon schools were built to the building code in place at the time of construction and modern building code requirements contain increasingly stringent structural requirements.
- The type and severity of seismic issues varies from building to building and can be categorized into:
 - structural components - roof, floors, walls, foundations; or
 - non-structural components - suspended ceilings, water piping, ductwork, furniture upgrades and shelving units.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Department of Highways
and Public Works

Date approved

Busing—General: refer to SO03

Value:

- The Department of Education provides support to ensure students with special needs can travel safely to and from school.

Recommended response:

- The safety and wellbeing of students is a top priority, and we expect the same from contractors operating on behalf of the Government of Yukon.
- The Department of Education supports students with special needs by providing transportation through our bus contractor, Standard Bus, and through other means, such as transportation subsidies.

Additional response:

- For some families, transportation challenges can impact student attendance. When students miss school, they miss important learning opportunities.
- We explore all available safe transportation options with families to find the best solution to meet students' needs.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- Taxi safety and accessible vehicles continue to be a high-profile concern in Whitehorse.
-

Background:

- In previous school years, transportation arrangements were made for students with special needs through contracts with local cab companies which has now been discontinued.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO13

Fall 2024

Special Needs Transportation

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Busing – Traffic Safety SO04

Value:

- The health and safety of students and staff remains our top priority.

Recommended response:

- Developing active safety transportation plans is a key government priority.
- We understand the importance infrastructure plays in ensuring students and school community members can navigate campuses safely.
- Throughout the design stages for new schools, traffic impact assessments are conducted which inform how the campus and traffic infrastructure is developed.
- Many of the on-campus recommendations from the 2018 School Mobility Review, as well as additional identified projects, have been implemented.
- In August 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of pedestrian lights in Whistle Bend.

Additional response:

- The Yukon government continues to invest in infrastructure to enhance safety, including new parking lots, additional signage, and better lighting.
- The Department of Education works closely with Highways and Public Works Transport Services on public awareness campaigns to enhance the safety of students as they commute to school.

- The Department initiated a follow up report to the 2018 School Mobility Review to evaluate the work done and identify any potential opportunities to further enhance safety and traffic flows.
 - We worked with the Road Safety Branch of Highways and Public Works to:
 - develop a safety activity booklet for students,
 - develop a school-specific parent handout that will include information on how to navigate the campus safely, and
 - develop and deliver back to school bus safety ad campaigns.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some of the themes we heard in the spring 2023 public engagement centered around active transportation and safe links to school campuses, as well as accessible parking and safe student drop off areas.
 - The Golden Horn school council has voiced displeasure with the design and functionality of their recently upgraded parking lot which includes a parent drop off and bus loop.
-

Background:

- When concerns are raised about crosswalk safety the Department of Education works with the City of Whitehorse on efforts to mitigate risk and address concerns.
- In August 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of pedestrian lights in Whistle Bend.
- In partnership with the RCMP, educational materials were distributed and presented in all rural schools throughout the 2023-24 school year. Plans are underway to extend this initiative to schools in the Whitehorse area during the 2024-25 school year. This program is funded through existing budgets.

- In 2018, we worked with the City of Whitehorse on a School Mobility Review of infrastructure surrounding Whitehorse schools and to identify projects that could enhance safety.
- Stantec was hired for the review and visited sites from May 28 to 31, 2018, placing focus on 6 priority sites which included Christ the King, Jack Hulland, Elijah Smith, Whitehorse Elementary, Holy Family, and Selkirk. They identified some on-campus and off-campus opportunities for improved safety.
- Many of the on-campus recommendations from the 2018 School Mobility Review, as well as additional projects identified, have been implemented. These include:
 - New parking lots and parent drop-off areas at Christ the King, Golden Horn, Holy Family and Hidden Valley schools.
 - Bus loop and parent drop-off at the north side of Selkirk Elementary School.
 - Enhanced crosswalks on 12th avenue and additional signage on Pine and Fir streets.
- School communities have expressed concerns with adjacent infrastructure and requested upgrades in the past (example: 12th avenue in Porter Creek crosswalks)
- During each site design process school communities are consulted.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Questions about tendering and build are for HPW

School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP04

Value:

- Modern learning environments support thriving and growing communities.

Recommended response:

- I am very pleased and excited to have opened the first new Whitehorse elementary school in over twenty years in the neighbourhood of Whistle Bend in Whitehorse.
- Whistle Bend Elementary opened its doors to students in August 2024, and the Government of Yukon is dedicated to making sure this is a smooth first year for students, families, and staff.
- Initial enrolment at the school has surpassed projections, but we are ensuring the school is adequately staffed.

Additional response:

- At this time, no school other than Jack Hulland Elementary School has been impacted by reduced staffing numbers due to lower enrolment.
- Prior to opening, the new principal, the superintendent, and Student Supports Services worked with the school council on design issues they raised and made updates to the location of the sensory/neurodiverse spaces.
- In the spring of 2024, Student Support Services purchased additional equipment specifically for the sensory room at the school.
- The 2024-25 budget contains \$2.5 million to complete the Whistle Bend Elementary School.

- In August 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of pedestrian lights in Whistle Bend.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The school council raised many concerns with the design, specifically as it pertains to sensory/neurodiverse spaces, bathroom amenities, accessibility, parking, and perimeter fencing.
 - Throughout this project, questions have been raised about overall project delays and budget increases.
-

Background:

- A new Whistle Bend Elementary School attendance area was created based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, plus portions of the previous Takhini Elementary School area.
- The principal was hired in January 2024 and successfully recruited the vice-principal and all teacher positions.
- The school has been allocated 17.5 FTEs for this school year.
- On May 29, 2024, the community was invited to celebrate the opening of the new school, over 500 people visited the school.
- New traffic zones around the school and four crossing guards are in place: starting on August 27, 2024, until October 31, 2024.
- In August 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of pedestrian lights in Whistle Bend.

School Design

- Education established a Project Advisory Committee which met regularly throughout the design phase of the project.
 - Members included: Whistle Bend Community Association, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and City of Whitehorse, and Yukon government representatives from Education, Community Services, and Highways and Public Works.

- The committee was co-chaired by a Department of Education representative and a nominated representative of the Project Advisory Committee.
- The design-build contract was awarded to Ketza Construction Corporation.
- The 2023-24 Main Estimates included \$20.3 million for construction of the school, with a total capital requirement budgeted at \$52.8 million.
- As with all new schools, throughout the design process traffic impact assessments were conducted which informed how the campus and traffic infrastructure was developed.
- Parking (on and off campus) was approved by the City of Whitehorse as part of the issuance of the development permit for the project.
- Safety features were built into the school's design, and a school safety plan is in place.
- The school has two play structures installed along with a swing set, an outdoor basketball court and a multipurpose field.
- Bike racks are installed at all major entrances for a total of 96 stalls.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School has nine accessible washrooms, including all-gender and barrier-free washrooms.
 - There are four barrier-free washrooms downstairs with change tables, adjustable change beds, and benches. The change tables are rated for up to 250 pounds.
 - Barrier-free washrooms focus on physical accessibility for people with disabilities, while inclusive washrooms prioritize gender identity and expression by providing gender-neutral or single-stall restrooms.
- School Councils are the lead on playground equipment for their respective schools.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School features accessible playground equipment across two playgrounds. Currently, one playground is fully compliant with accessibility standards, while the second requires modifications, which are underway to ensure full accessibility.
- Accessible playgrounds are designed to remove barriers that prevent children with disabilities from using playground equipment. Accessible playgrounds ensure that

spaces are user-friendly for children with disabilities, such as those who are blind, deaf, or physically limited.

- Inclusive design focuses on providing a user-friendly experience for everyone where a wide range of factors such as age, culture, economic situation, education, gender, and geographic location.
- Accessibility and inclusion are important for creating playground/school designs that ensure equal access for everyone.
- A work order has been placed through the Archibus system: a bracket needs to be fabricated for the installation of the Bubble Tube to be secure and safe for the use by students.
- The estimated time for the completion of this job will be December 2024.
- Ketzia Construction Corporation was granted substantial performance on April 17, 2024.
 - The warranty period will end on April 17, 2025, except for components with extended warranties (such as the roof) and landscaping, which was only completed this past spring/summer.
- The building's design, largely influenced by the Project Advisory Committee, meets barrier-free access requirements as set out by the Building Code and applicable regulations.
- Ketzia Construction is aiming for a Gold Certification through the Rick Hansen Foundation.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: See HOT16/SO17

Value:

- School facilities are important spaces that host valuable community activities and support vibrant communities.

Recommended response:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location, age and condition presents challenges and limitations that make it the top candidate for Whitehorse school replacement.
- Due to capital project timelines and considerations, it is not possible to locate the replacement school downtown, we recognize that many people feel an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse is essential and we will continue to work with residents, stakeholders and the City of Whitehorse so that future planning for a new downtown school can occur.

Additional response:

- Our government is committed to ongoing consultation and long-term planning to ensure the educational needs of Yukoner's are met.
- With prospective development and densification in the downtown core, the future of downtown Whitehorse may include an elementary school, and we have begun initial planning to this end.
- Our government is exploring options to build a new school in a downtown Whitehorse area, and we are engaging with partners, stakeholders, and community to understand future needs and working to identify potential school locations.

- As part of the due diligence of this work, all existing parcels of land will be explored to determine their feasibility.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since the announcement that École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated from the downtown core to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve there has been increasing public pressure on the government, including in a motion passed by Whitehorse City Council, to ensure that there continues to be an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse.

Background:

- In April 2024, the Minister of Community Services asked Whitehorse mayor and council to work with the Government of Yukon to identify land within the downtown core larger than École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location, for an educational reserve, and that the City of Whitehorse make the appropriate changes to the Official Community Plan.
- Current downtown schools include École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School.
- While École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated to a new school on the Takhini Educational Reserve Land, the other learning centres will currently remain in the downtown core.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO18

Value:

- Our government is proud to be investing in school infrastructure to meet the needs of our growing community and École Whitehorse Elementary School has been identified as a priority for replacement with a new, modern facility.

Recommended response:

- In August 2023, through a public tender, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd. was awarded the prime consultant contract for the École Whitehorse Elementary School replacement project.
 - A site analysis and test fit assessment to determine suitable locations has been completed.
 - A news conference was recently held to announce the new school's chosen location and provide a progress update.
 - The consultant is in pre-design, phase two of seven. This includes a traffic study to analyze the major intersections around Takhini that the new school may impact. The draft traffic study is expected in December 2024.
 - The analysis will consider the impact of a new school on traffic during the first five years.
 - It will provide recommendations for site parking, access, and the general site layout, focusing on pedestrian safety and efficient traffic flow for entering and exiting the site.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- The project will require a YESAA assessment to evaluate potential impacts and provide recommendations. It is too early in the project to engage with YESAB.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude having another downtown school in future.

Additional response:

- Government of Yukon representatives met with the Takhini Neighborhood Association on October 18, 2024. The meeting allowed us to better understand the communities' key concerns. It was highlighted that there is a need for a traffic study and ongoing community engagement.
- Education and Highways and Public Works are working together on the traffic study to ensure alignment of objectives. Further updates will be provided moving forward.
- The *Choosing the future site for École Whitehorse Elementary School* report was updated at Yukon.ca as of October 28, 2024.
- The Department of Education will continue to engage with Takhini Neighborhood Association as planning proceeds.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large, serviced parcel of land that provides a central location that has better access to green space desired for modern learning.
- Of the three options identified for the new school's location, Option 1 is the only option that would require rezoning. As we work towards the conceptual design phase, we will begin discussions with the necessary officials at the City of Whitehorse to discuss the rezoning.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- This is a tremendous opportunity to enhance French immersion programming with a new, modern learning environment.
- We will also provide future opportunities for partners and stakeholders to have conversations about the project.

Additional response - Site options:

- Some trees on the site are unhealthy or unsafe due to damage from annual spring flooding. In Option 1, the option that was ultimately chosen, these trees will be removed to make room for the new multi-sport field. The design team worked closely with a landscape architect to identify which trees are healthy and which pose risks.
- The trees that will be removed make up a small portion of the existing trees on the land reserve. The majority of the existing forested area will remain, ensuring that the impact on the natural environment is minimized.
- The First Nation School Board has been a part of these conversations and has committed to providing input on the final decision.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- MLAs have been vocal about the need to keep a school in the downtown core. The Minister met with concerned downtown residents on October 21, 2022.
- Softball Yukon is concerned about the impact to ball diamonds located on the Takhini education reserve.
- Department officials have met with Softball and Sport Yukon and a commitment was made to ensure they remain informed as the project progresses.
- Takhini residents have been vocal on social media about their concerns over the removal of trees in the location of the future multi-sport field.
- The École Whitehorse Elementary School Council wrote to the Minister of Education on October 29, 2024, emphasizing the importance of building a modern and safe educational facility.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- There have been requests for costing for this project, including expenditures to date and whether this project would be eligible for any federal funding, such as Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).
 - The School Council expressed support for the Government of Yukon's commitment to building a new École Whitehorse Elementary School and willingness to continue working with stakeholders and the Project Advisory Committee.
-

Background:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The current facility is not able to meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders, and the Government of Yukon. Meetings were held on:
 1. October 3, 2022
 2. November 10, 2022
 3. May 15, 2023
 4. August 28, 2023
 5. November 23, 2023
 6. January 11, 2024
 7. April 18, 2024
 8. October 17, 2024
 9. November 14, 2024
- On November 23, 2023, a representative of the Takhini Neighborhood Association joined the Project Advisory Committee.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
 - Whitehorse Elementary School Council
 - Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
 - City of Whitehorse

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- Government of Yukon
 - Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
 - Kwanlin Dün First Nation
 - Takhini Neighbourhood Association
- The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- There are currently other schools located downtown – the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.
- There have been issues raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed build code upgrades and overall accessibility.
- Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate build.
- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations and the general public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key milestones in the project's design.
- In March 2024, various partners and stakeholders were invited to a meeting to review the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit report, subsequent meetings were with the EWES school council (April 15, 2024).
- As requested by the Takhini Neighborhood Association, Department of Education Operations staff met with Takhini residents on April 24, 2024, to share the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit Report.
- The meeting with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association was attended by a number of residents, including MLA Kate White.

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

- On October 2, 2024, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd., the consulting firm responsible for designing the new EWES, organized site visits to five modern schools in Vancouver. These visits provided the project team with valuable insights. Participants included representatives from Highway and Public Works, Education, and two members of the Project Advisory Committee. The tours highlighted contemporary educational environments that emphasize innovative design, revealing effective strategies for enhancing student learning and support, which will inform the development of the new EWES school.
- On October 17, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee convened for a meeting where the Kobayashi + Zedda Architects team presented insights on 21st Century schools. They also provided an update on the recent Vancouver school tour, sharing key takeaways that could inform the planning of the new school.
- On November 14, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee held a meeting during which the EWES school principal and her staff shared their insights and suggestions for the new EWES school. They provided several recommendations regarding the design of the new school.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve:
 - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
 - There are not a lot of other sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school; there is not a lot of vacant land in general that is centrally located.
 - To look at a different site would entail having to go through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.
 - Work to identify suitable land for educational purposes for future school builds is in the preliminary stages.
- The consultant is currently in phase two of seven. These phases include:
 1. Site analysis and test fit
 2. Pre-design
 3. Conceptual design options
 4. Schematic design

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

5. Detailed Design and Specifications
6. Contractor procurement
7. Construction administration and warranty

Takhini Neighborhood Association, survey between Oct. 13 – 17, 2024

- The Takhini Neighborhood association ran an online survey between October 13 and 17, 2024 and received 144 unique responses.
- The survey asked three questions, focused on 1. key messages for the Minister for the relocation project, 2. Support of the relocation of WES to the Takhini Educational Reserve and 3. Reasons for support or lack thereof.
- Question 1 - What's the most important message that the Minister of Education needs to hear regarding the WES relocation project?
 - Traffic concerns
 - The need for consultation
 - The lack of transparency in the decision-making process
- Question 2/3 - Do you support the relocation of WES to Takhini?
 - Maybe: 21% - Traffic concerns, green space, softball fields, downtown needs school.
 - Yes: 19% - respondents were excited for a French immersion school in the neighbourhood, believed that it would be good to have a new school in the neighbourhood that is walkable, looked at the school situation in Whitehorse as a whole.
 - No: 60% - Traffic concerns, loss of green space, lack of consultation, question why two schools would be next to each other.

Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

- Under ICIP schools were not eligible unless they fell under one of the two exceptions:
 - The Covid-19 stream
 - Truth and Reconciliation - Calls to Action
- **Under current ICIP guidelines, schools in Whitehorse are not eligible**
- Kêts'ádań Kù (Burwash Landing) received ICIP funding under the Calls to Action.
- ICIP funding has been fully subscribed since 2021

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT16/SO17

Fall 2024

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project

Education

Project Expenditures to Date

- As of November 18, 2024 the actuals spent to date is \$461,917 and can be broken out are as follows:
 - 2022-23 \$28,118
 - 2023-24 \$290,505
 - 2024-25 \$143,294 as of November 18, 2024 in Education's actuals

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning

Education

Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to HOT16/SO17

Value:

- Our government is investing in Yukoners by investing in school infrastructure.

Recommended response:

- It's important that we ensure our schools meet the demands of our growing population and provide modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- The Yukon government recognizes the fundamental role of schools in healthy, thriving communities.
- The results of the 2023 school facilities engagement are informing the development of an updated Whitehorse school replacement plan, and a work plan for small and medium renovations for Whitehorse schools.

Additional response:

- We will continue working closely with the two Yukon school boards, the First Nation School Board, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, on their vision for education and capital needs.
- As part of the school facilities engagement, we also had conversations with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- We continue to invest in all our schools across the territory and conversations about capital projects in rural schools will continue at the community level.

Context—this may be an issue because:

Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning

Education

- There is considerable public attention around school replacements and locations in Whitehorse and a public engagement was completed in 2023.
-

Background:

- In spring 2023 the Yukon government opened a public survey and conducted open houses to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with their school facilities and how to better meet the K-12 programming needs.
- In addition to the survey and open houses, the department hosted focus groups for educators, learning stewards, and students.
- The purpose of the engagement was to:
 - Build relationships with school communities.
 - Inform Yukoners about the school capital planning and development process; and
 - Collect stakeholder feedback on their ideas and considerations for a 21st century learning environment.
- The department reached out to many educational partners, organizations, and community groups that have ideas and experiences to share to inform them of the engagement and how to participate.
- Approximately 1,000 Yukoners participated in this engagement and a What We Heard Report was published in November 2023, available on Yukon.ca.
- The department published the engagement's What We Heard report and shared the report with the First Nations Education Council and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee, recognizing that students from communities may attend school in Whitehorse.
- The following groups were engaged as part of the engagement process:
 - Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees
 - Catholic Education Association of Yukon
 - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
 - Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee

Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning

Education

- Yukon Association of Education Professionals
 - Yukon Employee's Union
 - Yukon University
 - City of Whitehorse
 - Child Youth and Advocate Office
 - Softball Yukon
 - Association franco-yukonnaise
 - LDAY Centre for Learning
 - Autism Yukon
 - Child Development Centre
 - Yukon Literacy Coalition
 - Yukon Learn
 - Whitehorse Downtown Resident's Association
 - Whitehorse-area community associations
- Overall, participants in the engagement emphasized the importance of:
 - Connecting with the outdoors and outside spaces for learning or social time, including the ability to access surrounding green spaces or trail networks for active transportation.
 - Creating culturally inclusive and accessible spaces, including meeting the needs of neuro-divergent students and those living with hearing, visual or physical disabilities.
 - Creating modern learning environments by applying technology in learning, spaces for collaboration and spaces for spiritual, cultural, and mental health related activities and programming; and,
 - Fully integrating schools within neighbourhoods based on populations and growth projections with sufficient access for school buses and trails for active commuters.
- The Whistle Bend Elementary School was completed and opened for the 2024-25 school year.
- Short-term measures such as portables have been added to several Whitehorse schools to alleviate enrolment pressures.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SO18

Fall 2024

Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Public Announcement Systems in Schools

Education

School Maintenance – 2024-25 Projects and Process: refer to SO11

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our priority.

Recommended response:

- Effective communication during emergencies and regular activities is crucial for our school staff.
- As systems age and technology changes, public announcement systems can become difficult to update and maintain, but repairs and replacements occur regularly.
- The Department of Education works with schools that are having issues with their P.A. systems on modifying their school emergency plans to ensure there are additional methods for communicating in the school.

Additional response:

- P.A. systems are complex networks and take time to install and connect with phones and the internet.
- P.A. systems are a priority, and the Department of Education has maintenance contracts in place to address and repair any reported issues.
- Going forward, designs and requirements for new P.A. systems will be standardized for efficiency in daily operation, maintenance, and repairs.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Party raised the issue of ongoing school public announcement (P.A.) system problems in a news release in September 2024.

Public Announcement Systems in Schools

Education

- School Councils and school administrators regularly raise concerns about non-functioning P.A. systems.
-

Background:

- Schools with P.A. systems use them to make announcements to the entire school, make calls between school rooms, play signal bells and more, and sometimes as part of staff communication protocols.
 - For example, they may use them to communicate emergency codes to all staff and students at once or make calls from a classroom to request support from other staff.
- If a school's P.A. system is not available/functional, schools make alternative plans to communicate, such as deploying two-way radios to teachers, using megaphones or using cell phones in the interim.
- Replacement of broken or aging P.A. systems is managed and prioritized in the capital planning process. For example, broken P.A. systems would take priority over ageing but functional systems.
- There is limited availability of local contractors who can address P.A. system needs.
- On April 1, 2024, a maintenance contract was established for the 2024/25 fiscal year to address immediate or pressing issues, ensuring timely responses and effective solutions.
- In 2023-2024, we worked to address system concerns and source necessary P.A. system parts for Elijah Smith Elementary, Porter Creek Secondary, Selkirk Elementary, Saint Francis of Assisi, and Christ the King Elementary School.
- P.A. system projects for the 2024-2025 fiscal year include:
 - Hidden Valley Elementary School
 - École Émilie Tremblay
- P.A. systems at the following schools are scheduled for replacement:
 - Selkirk Elementary School: 2025-2026
 - Tantalus Community School: 2026-2027
 - Watson Lake Secondary School: 2027-2028

Public Announcement Systems in Schools

Education

- Eliza Van Bibber: 2028-2029
- We have completed upgrades on P.A. systems at:
 - Elijah Smith Elementary School: 2018-2019
 - Grey Mountain Primary, St. Francis of Assisi Secondary, and Porter Creek Secondary School: 2019-2020.
 - Holy Family School and Khàttinas.àxh Community School: 2021-2022
 - Del Van Gorder School: 2022-23
 - Ghùch Tlà Community School: 2023-24
- École Selkirk Elementary School council sent letters on April 9, 2023, and June 2, 2024 with concerns regarding P.A. systems. Responses sent communicated that a new project has been identified to replace the whole Public Address System at École Selkirk Elementary in the 2025-2026 School year.
- On October 28, 2024, the FH Collins School Council sent a letter to the Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, and members of the department of education voicing their concerns regarding the malfunctioning PA system at the school. The council shared that they had raised this issue with several Education department members and they are looking for a resolution.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Transportation Safety Plans: refer to SO14

Value:

- The health, safety, and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority.

Recommended response:

- School buses are one of the safest modes of transportation available.
- In our current contract with Standard Bus, we have additional safety features such as strobes on the top of the vehicles and dash cameras on some vehicles.
- The Government of Yukon participates in a Transport Canada National Task Force on School Bus Safety, as Yukon's school buses must meet all the Transport Canada requirements for buses.
- At this time, installing seat belts on buses is not recommended or required by the task force.
- The contractor ensures that evacuation drills are practiced twice per school year.

Additional response:

- We work with Standard Bus, the RCMP, and communities to promote safe driving near school buses and to reduce risks along bus routes.
- In an emergency on a bus, the first priority is to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Information is shared with families as soon as it is safe to do so.
- If parents have any concerns, they can contact their school, the Student Transportation Officer, or Standard Bus.

Additional response

Transportation Safety Plans:

- Infrastructure and parking lot access points are an important factor in ensuring students and school community members can navigate school campuses safely.
- We are working with Highways and Public Works' Road Safety Unit on a Transportation Safety Plan initiative.
- We have made many on-campus improvements to student safety around traffic. Some of these improvements come from recommendations outlined in the 2018 Whitehorse School Mobility Report.
- The department hired a contractor to do a follow up assessment to the 2018 report and will be working to implement any further improvements that are recommended.
- The department has been working with Highways and Public Works to develop safety materials for students and parents.
- The rollout of materials is complete in rural schools, led by the RCMP, with plans underway for distribution to participating schools in the Whitehorse area.
- I would like to remind drivers that you are required under the law to stop when a school bus is letting children on and off the buses. Please make sure you do this for the safety of our children.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There has been media attention, public discussion, MLA correspondence and debate in the Legislature about school bus safety.

Background:

- The regulations for physical safety requirements on school buses, including school bus seating, are set by the Government of Canada. Yukon school buses are required to meet national standards.
- All bus routes and stops are assessed on an ongoing basis.
- The Government of Yukon increased fines and demerit points for infractions, and the department is piloting the use of dashboard cameras on certain bus routes.
- The Departments of Education, Justice, Highways and Public Works, RCMP, Standard Bus and school communities have worked, and continue to work, to address concerns about bus safety on the highways.
- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee to address issues that affect shared busing services in Whitehorse.
- The RCMP continues to pay close attention to areas of concern, including the Alaska Highway.

Motion 332 and 2020 Report from the Task Force

- Motion 332 was passed in October 2019: THAT this House urges the Minister of Education, in partnership with all appropriate stakeholders, to participate in the recently announced Transport Canada assessment of seatbelt safety and continue to review school busing in Yukon, including but not limited to: (1) bus capacity and assigned seating; (2) whether the wearing of seat belts by passengers should be mandatory; (3) registration process; (4) behavioral and disciplinary policies; (5) emergency procedures; and (6) service areas and standards.
- In June 2019, the federal Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities published a report on bus passenger safety, which noted that buses - particularly school buses - are among the safest modes of transportation available.
- The Government of Yukon is part of a national committee (Task Force) to identify measures to further improve school bus safety in Canada.
 - The HPW Director of Transport Services has been part of the national Task Force and updates the EDU Director of Operations periodically.
 - The February 2020 report from the Task Force recommended 4 additional safety measures, but did not recommend 3-point seat belts in buses for passengers. The 4 recommendations are:
 - i. Infraction Cameras, to help prevent dangerous incidents caused by passing motorists;

- ii. Extended Stop Arms, to further deter motorists from passing while children are entering or leaving the bus; (Transport Canada proposed this regulation which would apply only to newly manufactured/imported buses)
- iii. Exterior 360° Cameras, as a means of better detecting and protecting children and other vulnerable road users around the exterior of the bus; and
- iv. Automatic Emergency Braking, to help reduce the severity of a collision or avoid it entirely. (As of February 2023, Transport Canada continues to conduct research and testing of automatic emergency braking to inform a proposed regulatory package.)
 - o The task force is working with partners in BC and Ontario to carry out school bus seatbelt projects.

Operational procedures

- Following incidents, the bus drivers first work with the RCMP on scene, and submit company incident reports, which are then shared with the department.
- The department and Standard Bus then work together on specific responses such as outreach with the RCMP.
- The department coordinates with the school, Standard Bus, and RCMP to ensure the safety of students and to share current information with parents as it becomes available.
- School buses regularly stop on highways to pick up and drop off students at designated locations. By stopping on the highway, other drivers can see the bus and flashing red lights from a distance, and all vehicles are required to stop. This allows the bus to take control of the roadway, stopping vehicles in both directions so it is safe for children to cross the road.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-10

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process: refer to HOT03/HR03

Value:

- Working with our partners to ensure all voices are heard is an imperative step towards making sure all students are included and supported to meet their potential.

Recommended response:

- We began reviewing how we allocated educational assistants in the fall of 2023 and heard from many partners on how EAs were allocated.
- We met with every school in the 2023/24 school year to review each Educational Assistant request. During this time, we gathered feedback from schools on the process.
 - Schools continue to provide feedback to Student Support Services on processes and EA supports.
- On April 25, 2024, department staff met with partners to hear concerns regarding an update to the EA allocation process,
- Formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals on EA allocation process began in the spring of 2024.
- For the 2025/26 school year, we will continue consulting with our partners and, for now, maintain the current allocation process. However, the data we request will be refined to more accurately and transparently reflect student needs.
- Our intent is an EA allocation process that is transparent, consistently applied, and objectively considering the many unique needs of learners in our current population.
- We appreciate change can be challenging, and we believe these changes are moving us towards a more equitable and effective process for EA allocation.

EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

- We will continue to collaborate with our partners to continue to hear their concerns and ensure that we co-create an open and transparent allocation process that meets the needs of Yukon learners, in the context of all the support we must and will have available.

Additional response - Fall 2023/Spring 2024 work and ongoing process improvement:

- Partners asked us to take urgent action to implement the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education agenda and this included conducting a review of the current EA allocation process.
- EnGauge Consulting was contracted to facilitate and gather diverse perspectives about the current EA allocation process, which included individual, confidential interviews with approximately 30 individuals, including educators, administrators and YAEP representatives.
- The consultants also hosted a two-day session and information gathering process in fall 2023, where many partners, including the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals, provided their perspectives on the overall EA allocations and offered concrete solutions.
- The final report based on these conversations was shared with stakeholders and the public in April 2024 and is helping guide our next steps with partners.
- We have paused this work over the summer to respect our partners' schedules.

Additional response – YAEP Consultation:

- We are currently in a formal consultation process with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

- The department is collaborating with the Public Services Commission to determine appropriate timelines for this consultation as we go forward.
 - We will review and consider any recommendations received through consultation with the EA allocation process.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of updates to the EA allocation process was raised numerous times in the Spring 2024 session, in the media and by education partners.
-

Background:

- Interested parties involved in these discussions and engagements have included: Educational assistants, administrators (principals and vice principals), YAEP, LATs, classroom teachers, Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees, superintendents, Executive Director of the First Nations School Board, Executive Director of the CSFY, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, the Child Development Centre, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office, and partners within the department of Education, Autism Yukon, the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon.
- A community of inquiry examined better ways to align funding models and staffing allocations with student needs. Draft recommendations have been submitted to the department.
- In the fall of 2023, Student Support Services contracted an external consultant to interview stakeholders on the current EA allocation process. Through this work recommendations have been put forward on possible changes to the process. Engagement may continue over the 2024-25 School Year or post bargaining.
- The Public Service Commission received a grievance from YAEP in spring 2024. Consultation timelines may be impacted as the department works through the grievance process.
- The EnGauge Consultants report was shared with stakeholders on, and publicly released in April 2024. The EnGauge Consultants report was also requested

EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

through an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy request before its public release. The report itself contains short, medium, and long-term goals. Part of the work that we will do with our partners includes analyzing and considering these recommendations.

- On April 25, 2024, we met with partners to hear concerns about the update to the allocation process. We will continue to collaborate with partners over the coming year.
- The procurement of the out of territory consultants who led the fall 2023 work was in line with procurement policies. The consultants were chosen based on a proven track record of working in the Yukon.
- The updates to the process that were initially sent out in February 2024 were based on work with the consultants, input from partners and research into best practices. These updates included:
 - Better sharing of information with educators and administrators, including increased transparency in the EA allocation form by clearly noting how the wholistic needs of the students are being considered. This includes the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, and socio-emotional skills.
 - Updates to the base calculation.
- On April 25, 2024, a facilitated conversation with education partners was held to understand and discuss concerns, and to collectively discuss a path forward.
- This fall, Student Support Services will review the feedback gathered during the consultation process. In December 2024, schools will be sent a package which contains a rubric to fill out. This rubric is an information tool to understand the needs of each student. In January/February 2025, the scores of these rubrics will be totaled, and a final school need calculated. After March break, Student Support Services staff meet to discuss the results with school administrators and learning assistance teachers.
- Often the calculated need is higher than the amount of full-time EAs available, and difficult decisions must be made. In May 2025, the results should be communicated to schools.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS01

Fall 2024

EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-02

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Our goal is to provide students with educational programs that meet their learning needs.

Recommended response:

- Individualized Education Plans, Student Support Plans, also known as Student Learning Plans, and Behaviour Support Plans are all available to respond to student needs.
- Regardless of the type of learning plan a student has, educators are aware of the plan, as well as the supports and strategies that the student requires.
- If school staff require assistance to implement the strategies, they can seek help from the school administration, School-Based Team, and/or the Student Support Services branch.
- At any time, parents and guardians are encouraged to bring forward concerns to their school to ensure a student is being effectively supported.
- An Individual Education Plan, or IEP, can be created for any student who requires special education, as outlined in the *Education Act*.
- Students on an IEP may graduate with a full Dogwood high school diploma if they earn all the credits required to graduate.

Additional Response—RISE:

- We are reviewing the services and supports for inclusive and special education, including the development and delivery of learning plans.
- The department has received the recommendations of a Community of Inquiry, made up of education partners and department staff, which specifically looked at IEPs. The recommendations will be reviewed

with our partners through a sub-committee on Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.

Additional response - Types of learning plans:

- There are three types of learning plans available in the Yukon: Individualized Education Plans, Student Support Plans, also known as Student Learning Plans, and Behaviour Support Plans.
- All learning plans are designed to provide the learning supports individual students need to be successful in school.
- The type of learning plans a student has does not limit the type of learning supports that are available to the student.
- We will provide all students in need of special education with the option of an IEP.
- Information about supports for students with diverse abilities or special needs, and how they are provided, is available on Yukon.ca.
- We are working with our partners to create a booklet to share information and increase understanding about different assessments and learning plans.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions about IEPs were received during the Standing Committee on Public Accounts hearing in January 2022 and it was suggested regular meetings with families and plan updates were not happening. Since this time the Department of Education has effectively addressed the backlog of IEP and assessment requests.
 - One of the CASA commitments is to ensure that all students in need of special education are provided with the option of an IEP.
-

Background:

Student Support Plans (SSPs) and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)

- These plans typically are for students who need 'adaptations' to their education programs to meet the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum.
- These adaptations are designed to 'level the playing field' for a student so that the student can successfully access the prescribed curriculum.
- Student Support Plans (formerly known as Student Learning Plans) were created to support students who benefit from accommodations to achieve the curricular goals and do not need, or want to have an IEP. Student Support Plan is the name used in Aspen, Yukon's Student Information System.
- Behaviour Support Plans (BSP) set out the adaptations required for students who demonstrate behaviors that are not expected in the school environment. BSPs can also include Safety Plans.
- The support and adaptations that are put in place through Student Support Plans and Behaviour Support Plans depend on the specific needs of the student. Examples include allowing additional time to complete tasks, allowing the use of a calculator in math to support numeracy, providing access to audio books to support literacy, or behaviour supports such as scheduled breaks throughout the day to help self-regulate.
- Students on these plans may access other support such as assistive technology or speech therapy, depending on what they need.
- Students with SSPs and/or BSPs have their plan documented in the Student Information System (ASPEN) and their progress is reported.
- Students with SSPs and BSPs are generally expected to be able to graduate with a Dogwood diploma.

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- IEPs are typically used for students determined to have special educational needs as outlined in the *Education Act*.
- Although a formal psychological assessment is not required for the creation of an IEP, an assessment should inform which supports are required.

- IEPs state how the student will be supported and set out the student's goals. They can include modified or adapted approaches to the curriculum.
- Having an IEPs does not automatically mean a student will be assigned an Educational Assistant (EA). There is a separate process to request EA support.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring the learning goals of IEPs are being met, and that the plans are evaluated and updated at least three times a year.
- The Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT) case manages IEPs within the school, and tracks IEP progress as a student moves between different grade levels and teachers.
- Students with IEPs and their learning goals are tracked in the student information system.
- Teachers are responsible for the implementation of an IEP's goals and objectives and the supports and interventions.
- The central administration staff are monitoring that IEPs are being updated by each school. We are currently focused on using the data from the Student Information System to produce more relevant and meaningful reports on IEPs to help to monitor these updates.
- We continue to support and train teachers, LATs and administrators on how to communicate student learning for those students who are on an IEP.
- Each student is unique. Some students with an IEP are eligible to graduate with a Dogwood diploma, while others may receive another certificate.
- Communication with students and their parents/caregivers is key in determining graduation planning.
- Number of Learning Plans:

Learning Plans	
Individual Education Plans (all school authorities)	383 as of June 19, 2024
Student Support Plans (formerly Student Learning Plans)	938* As of January 31, 2024
Behaviour Support Plans	58* As of January 31, 2024
Safety Plans	31* As of January 31, 2024

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS02

Fall 2024

Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)

Education

**The department is working with schools to make sure that they are accurately reporting this data. January information is the most recent.*

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students

Education

Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to RI01

CASA - Wellness Specialists: refer to HOT02/CAS09

CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth: refer to CAS04

Ready to Learn Schools: refer to RI03

Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of staff and students is our first priority. Supporting employee and student wellbeing is a crucial part of our work towards creating an engaging and inclusive educational environment.

Recommended response:

- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility in how we approach a range of needs.
- This can include raising awareness of mental wellbeing for all students through inclusive, culturally appropriate programs, to targeted services for acute mental health challenges.
- We are continuing to work with School Boards and Councils, First Nation governments and other education partners, including youth, to determine how best to:
 - coordinate student supports and access to services,
 - provide additional training for school counsellors,
 - enhance student outreach and awareness; and
 - offer training and supports to school staff in developmentally responsive approaches to mental wellness and awareness of mental wellness needs.

Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students

Education

Additional response—Students:

- We are working to help students and staff learn more about mental health, through increased awareness, our curriculum, and developmental supports. This includes teaching them the language to talk about it and where to seek support.
- School counsellors support students in achieving their academic development and their career potential as well as connecting with students to meet their social/emotional needs.
- We are working to implement two new roles through the Confidence and Supply Agreement that will help support the mental wellbeing of the school community. These positions will be served by two specific roles:
 - a School Wellness Specialist – the minimum requirement is a Bachelor of Social Work; and,
 - a First Nation government-led wellness support, which we are developing in collaboration with First Nation governments – this could be an Elder, traditional knowledge keeper, or a traditional healer.
- We are working to develop a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach for students that:
 - Includes prevention as well as developmental, cultural, and clinical responses,
 - Creates connections to mental health and wellbeing activities provided by partners and stakeholders; and
 - Aligns with the Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy.

Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students

Education

- Through the Yukon's school curriculum, students learn about social-emotional skills, decision-making about their health and safety, and strategies to strengthen their resilience and wellbeing.
- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community - including clinical counselling services.

Additional response – Staff:

- Ongoing training and supports are available for administrators and school staff to help recognize and respond appropriately when individuals or colleagues may be struggling with their mental health.
- We offer all employees and their families a range of confidential and expert help and well-being services through the Employee and Family Assistance Program and through their extended health benefits as employees of the Yukon government.
- The Employee and Family Assistance Program provides counseling and critical incident services, as well as nutritional, financial and wellbeing services to get support to deal with life's challenging situations.
- When school staff are dealing with critical events, we work with LifeSpeak to help deploy counselling resources for support and debriefing of staff.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is constant public conversation and demand for more mental health supports – especially for youth – in light of the pandemic and the opioid crisis.
 - There have been calls to staff clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.
-

Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students

Education

Background:

- Education is working on initiatives that are focused on both prevention and intervention measures to support students and staff.
- According to the 2018 *Health Behaviours of School-Aged Children Survey*, a significant proportion of Yukon students are feeling depressed or low at least once a week.
- The report on the results of the 2018 *Health Behaviour of School Aged Children Survey* was released to the public in Winter 2022 by the Department of Health and Social Services.
- The 2021 *Third survey on student learning during COVID-19* found almost half of student respondents said the pandemic had very negatively or negatively impacted their mental health and wellness.
- There is growing recognition within Canada of the critical nature of improving the mental health of young Canadians with a particular emphasis on building positive mental health, in contrast to historically focusing on mental illness.
- The Yukon is a member of the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium of School Health, a partnership of 25 Ministries of Health and Education across Canada working to promote a Comprehensive School Health approach to student wellness/wellbeing and achievement/success for all children and youth.
- The Department of Health and Social Services 10-year strategy titled “Forward together: Yukon Mental Wellness Strategy 2016-2026” was released in 2016 and provides over-arching direction for the various mental health services across the territory.
- We are anticipating having our Department of Education draft Mental Health Approach document ready to share with partners in Winter/Spring 2024/25

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to DPT11

Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP03

Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: Refer to DPT03

Ready to Learn Schools: Refer to RI03

Value:

- It is a top priority to support healthy, active, safe and caring learning environments in all Yukon schools.

Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- Our ongoing work on the Safer Schools Action Plan has identified additional work that we need to complete to ensure our schools are safe and inclusive.
- Proactively addressing student-to-student harm is crucial. This includes serious consideration of all incidents and reviewing our policies, protocols, and procedures to better support victims and plan for school safety.
- In case of serious incidents, we adhere to emergency plans and response protocols, collaborating with the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), RCMP and other agencies, and offering support to affected students and families with their consent.
- We have developed communication guidance to assist school administrators in providing clear and consistent information to families.

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

- We've worked with Victim Services to create guidelines and support plans, helping victims of harm feel secure at school. Implementation and training for school staff is being developed.

Additional response:

- School staff, with consent of students who are victims of harm, work collaboratively with families and community supports to develop safety plans and provide on-going support.
- School staff promote respectful and positive behaviours by providing welcoming and positive spaces for teaching and learning.
- Except in the rarest of cases, students do not come to school intending to be disruptive or harmful to others.
- It is up to the adults in the school to be sensitive to the signs that a student may become dysregulated and demonstrate escalated behaviours.
- The Ready-to-Learn Schools initiative is an approach that supports positive social change and wellbeing for all students and staff.
- Staff use Violence Threat Risk Assessment training to recognize signs and respond appropriately.

Resources and Supports:

- We are focusing on training and onboarding to:
 - support staff in building connection with students.
 - identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours; and

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

- respond with effective supports and redirecting behaviours.
- We share resources with staff and students and families about restorative practices to strengthen school communities.
- The wellbeing and safety of our children in the digital age is a priority for the Yukon government; we recognize the challenges posed by online threats such as cyberbullying and sextortion and are committed to equipping our students with the necessary skills to navigate these challenges.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Dysregulated behaviour, violence and threats occurring in schools is an issue of concern.
- This matter has been brought up in the Legislative Assembly with the example of students who are sexually assaulted outside of school settings having to face the person who harmed them when they come to school.

Background:

- The Department of Education promotes respectful and safe school environments in the following ways:
 - Working closely with government and non-government partners to promote safe schools and response to concerns of safety.
 - Safe and Caring Schools Policy (effective September 1, 2018).
 - Student Protection Policy (effective September 29, 2022).
 - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy (updated August 15, 2023).
 - Annual and ongoing training and supports for school staff to uphold the policies and procedures for student safety and inclusion.
 - Non-violent Crisis Intervention training and Violence Threat Risk Assessment Training; and
 - Prescribed curricular content that teaches students internet and social media safety and cyberbullying resources and presentations with guest speakers.

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Training and supports for staff

- The department supports school staff after incidents through consultation with School Community Consultant; Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP, or short-term counseling); and support and collaboration from the RCMP and other medical and other government and non-government agencies.
- The department has a Safe and Caring Schools Support Plan that outlines the training offered to school staff to support them.
- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training is an example of effective industry-standard training that is widely available to school-based staff to prevent and respond to students who are demonstrating escalated behaviours.
- Training in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) is offered by the Department of Education every two years. Two level-one VTRA training sessions were held in early April 2024, with space for up to 60 people in each session. The Department of Education extended invitations to school staff, First Nation partners; other government departments including Justice and Health and Social Services; and the RCMP.
- Training for school VTRA teams was held at the end of March 2021 via virtual means from the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NATCAR).
- Through the collective agreement, we work with YAEP at the *Positive Behaviour Intervention Support and Classroom Diversity Committee* to develop these supports for Yukon schools.

Process for dealing with incidents of concern

- The department has a Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure in place for dealing with incidents that occur which indicate that a student's actions may be a risk to staff or other students.
- Under the procedure, such incidents are first reported to the school principal, who investigates the incident using the Workplace Risk Assessment.
- If it is determined that the incident involved a serious threat such as a threat to harm or kill, the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol is used to coordinate the response and supports to address the incident. This activates the involvement

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

of community partners to deal with the issue, including the RCMP, the Departments of Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Yukon University.

- Resources and supports within the legislation and mandates of these community partners and can include but are not limited to SART, Victim Services, restorative supports and programming from the Youth Achievement Centre.
- If the principal determines that there is otherwise a risk of injury to staff or other students then the Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure is followed, and the appropriate plans and resources are put in place to support the school, staff, and students to address and deal with the issue.

Cyberbullying

- In Yukon schools, there are rules, guidelines and lessons about online safety to keep students safe.
 - From kindergarten to grade 9, teachers talk to students about online safety as part of the Applied Design, Skills and Technologies curriculum.
 - For older students in grades 10 to 12, there are special classes that teach students about digital citizenship, being responsible and ethical online.
 - Students and parents sign Technology Use Guidelines about the rules and appropriate use of technology in schools each year.
 - The Department of Education works with external programs and organizations to support students' wellbeing and teach about online safety.
 - Experts, such as the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board are invited to talk to students about topics including online safety, cyberbullying, and bullying in general.
 - Teachers get special training to reduce the risk of problems and create a safe physical and virtual environment for students.
 - We encourage families to get involved in conversations with kids about online safety. Schools' efforts are most effective when complemented by family involvement.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT13/SSS04

Fall 2024

Student to Student Harm in Schools

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Supports for Students Living with Autism

Education

Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education: refer to RI04

Value:

- Our goal is to provide students with educational programs that meet their learning needs.

Recommended response:

- There is a growing need for specialized programming support for students on the autism spectrum across the territory.
- We are working with our partners to be responsive to the growing number of Yukon students who are being diagnosed through the Child Development Centre (Pre-school Diagnostic Clinic) and Health and Social Services, Disability Services (School-aged Diagnostic Clinic).
- The Public Health Agency of Canada will be releasing the national framework on autism spectrum disorder in fall 2024, as part of the implementation of the *Federal Framework on Autism Spectrum Disorder Act*. The department will continue participating in important national conversations and initiatives such as this to ensure the voice, experiences and unique perspectives of Yukoners is included.

Additional response:

- We work with parents and partners – such as Autism Yukon – to help us in the development and implementation of neurodiverse programming to better support educators to increase inclusive practice.
- At Hidden Valley Elementary School, we are working on a draft evaluation framework of the neurodiverse classroom. This will help us evaluate successes, understand what is working and outline how a neurodiverse classroom can be set up.

Supports for Students Living with Autism

Education

- This is a new and creative programming approach in providing support in line with the recommendations from the final report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Child and Youth Advocate, MLAs, and families at Hidden Valley Elementary School (HVES) previously called for more EAs and specialized programming support.
- Autism Yukon has raised concerns about the under reporting of the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in the territory based on the National Survey Report published in 2018.

Background:

- It is estimated that approximately 2% of Canadian children and youth between 1 and 17 years old have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- The department continues to offer ongoing training for educators on Supporting Students with ASD.
- Starting in the 2022-23 school year, Hidden Valley Elementary School hired a Learning Assistance Teacher that supported the development and implementation of programming for students on the spectrum, as well as students with other neurodiverse needs. This position has continued in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years and is out for hiring as the incumbent has recently taken another job.
- The department has representation on the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Autism.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- The health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is working with Health and Social Services and the T1D Support Network on several of the recommendations from the draft Yukon Type 1 Diabetes Strategy. This year we have advanced:
 - Training for education staff on Type 1 Diabetes. Training was provided at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, from the Chronic Conditions Program. Training will be ongoing and can be requested by schools at anytime
 - Worked with Health and Social Services to finalize a new Type 1 Diabetes support care plan. This plan will help families share essential information specific to Type 1 Diabetes with schools.
- We have worked with the T1D Support Network to review the existing *Administration of Medication to Students Policy* and procedures and to identify and remedy any gaps, specifically for students with Type 1 Diabetes.
- All Yukon schools will follow this policy which requires planned care and support for students with various medical conditions, including diabetes.
- Education has successfully recruited a T1D Support Case Manager, who will start in early 2025. This position will help students, schools and families navigate the complexities of living with Type 1 Diabetes at school.

- We are exploring the role of educational assistants for students with Type 1 Diabetes, with a focus on individualized approaches that support student independence, safety and access to education.
- We look forward to formally implementing Education's action items once the T1D strategy has officially launched and have been moving towards implementation of these actions prior to launch.

Additional response:

- The Department of Education has met with the Yukon T1D Support Network numerous times over the last few years on how best to approach supporting kids living with Type 1 Diabetes in the school setting.
- The Department of Education thanks the Type 1 Diabetes Support Network for its ongoing advocacy and efforts to ensure that students with Type 1 Diabetes receive the right supports in school.
- We remain committed to ensuring that both staff and students are supported in schools and are taking the steps to do this properly in collaboration with the T1D Support Network and the Department of Health and Social services.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion in fall 2021 for the development of a Yukon diabetes strategy

Background:

- Education and Health and Social Services met with the T1D Support Network on several occasions during 2023-2024:
 - April 5, 2023 (with Director of RISE and Student Support Services)
 - October 18, 2023 (with ADM Student Wellbeing and Inclusion)

- February 1, 2024 (Deputy Minister of Education and Health and Social Services, ADMs at Education and Health and Social Services)
- February 28, 2024 (Minister of Health and Social Services, Deputy Ministers of Education and Health and Social Services, ADM Education)
- April 3, 2024 (ADM Education and Education policy)
- May 7, 2024 (ADM Education and Director of HR, Education, Policy representative)
- September 24, 2024 (ADM of Health and Social Services and Education)
- School staff have a duty of care to students who are at risk from medical conditions and require up-to-date information and guidance about their specific condition.
- These students require and receive planned care and support at school, on field trips, and while being transported to and from school to ensure their health and safety.
- Department of Education has worked with the Type 1 Diabetes Support Network as part of the implementation of the draft Yukon Type 1 Diabetes Strategy. This includes:
 - Updated the Administration of Medication in Schools policy and procedures (will be released pending consultation with YAEP post bargaining).
 - Work with Health and Social Services on appropriate storage of Glucagon in schools.
 - Created a health care plan based on T1D specific information with input from the T1D Support Network and Health and Social Services.
 - Education has created a position that supports students with T1D, new T1D Case Manager will begin in January 2025.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-20

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We are dedicated to creating an inclusive, equitable and effective learning environment for all students, including students with diverse backgrounds and learning needs.

Recommended response:

- February 5, 2024, the Department of Education provided a letter of support for the Therapeutic Farm School's program application to the Arctic Inspiration Prize.
- In May 2024, the Therapeutic Farm School program was successful in their application and received \$500,000.00 for advancement of their program.
- On October 3, 2024, department representatives will meet with the organization to explore opportunities moving forward.

Additional response:

- The department recognizes the considerable effort invested in preparing the program and looks forward to discussing next steps.
- Department staff requested to meet with the organization during the summer months and received no response.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the letter to the Premier, TFSP claims that they have successfully set up an agreement with First Nations School Board regarding providing support and programming for students enrolled in FNSB schools. As of September 2024, this claim has not been verified by the Department of Education.

Background:

- The Therapeutic Farm School Program (TFSP) has been developed as an alternative, holistic learning environment designed to support students with neurodiversity and other exceptionalities.

- This initiative aligns with the Department of Education's Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education Initiative (RISE) and aims to address existing gaps in support for these students.
- June 25, 2024, letter from department was sent to TFSP outlining next steps to set up a meeting over the summer months to discuss questions outlined in the communication. No meeting time was established prior to now.
- August 14, 2024, TFSP sent an email to Premier that was then forwarded to the Department of Education on September 10, 2024.
- TFSP has written communications to the Premier attempting to secure in kind donations of materials and is requesting that they be provided financial assistance through a contribution agreement.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-02

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- The Apprenticeship Program provides flexible support and training opportunities for Yukoners pursuing in-demand, diverse and meaningful careers in skilled trades and technology.

Recommended response

- Our apprenticeship program continues to see new apprentices signing up. As of November 19, 2024, we had 513 active apprentices. 114 of those apprentices identify as Indigenous and 67 as women.
- In 2023, we issued 56 journey person certificates. As of November 19, 2024, we have already issued 67 journey person certificates.
- On September 12th, I was delighted to attend our latest Apprenticeship Excellence Awards. We celebrated 50 apprentices with outstanding achievements and honoured 44 apprentices with completion awards.
- The Department of Education budgets over \$2.5 million toward supporting apprentices annually.
- The Yukon Apprenticeship program continues to support registered Yukon apprentices to complete their program requirements in partnership with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship.
- I encourage anyone interested in pursuing training and careers in the trades, or employers who are interested in working with an apprentice to contact the Training Program Branch.

Additional response: Regulations and board

- The Yukon apprenticeship staff are moving forward with implementing recommendations made by the Apprenticeship Advisory Board, work which began in 2019.

- I wish to acknowledge the important role of the board and welcome their advice in respect to the delivery of Yukon's apprenticeship program.
- Specifically, I want to thank the board for their valuable input on the interim level evaluation process.

Additional response: new interim level evaluation process

- To support apprentices on their learning path, while also upholding high standards in the trades, a new interim level evaluation process was introduced in September 2023.
- The interim change is needed because many of the level exams the Yukon uses include outdated questions connected to practices no longer taught. It is important to provide some consideration for this while exams are updated.
- Test scores above 60% will now be considered, alongside technical in-school training marks and workplace performance, to determine if an apprentice will advance to the next level.
- Apprentices can ask for a re-evaluation of exam marks back to January 1, 2022. As of November 12, 2024, 55 apprentices have advanced levels under this new process.

Additional response – Apprentices working for YG:

- Most Yukon apprentices are employed by Yukon's private sector, with 5 apprentices employed by Yukon government as of November 12th, 2024.
- While the Yukon government employs journeypersons in various trades, sometimes the positions available within the Yukon

government may not offer the scope of work required for apprentices to meet the training requirements for certification.

Additional response – Apprentices not eligible for Yukon Grant:

- While apprentices are not eligible for the Yukon Grant, Yukon apprentices have access to a robust and comprehensive support program. These supports include:
 - Covered tuition and seat fees through Yukon government's agreements with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship.
 - Funding supports through Yukon government's Working Up program to cover the costs not eligible under Employment Insurance while taking technical training, which may include funding for travel, books, commuting, a second residence, living allowance and daycare costs.
 - Eligibility for Employment Insurance through the Government of Canada.
 - While the Government of Canada is sunsetting their Incentive and Completion Grants for apprentices on March 31, 2025, interest free loans will still be available to support all stages of the apprenticeship journey.
 - In addition to the financial support, Yukon apprentices have access to the Virtual Learning Strategy program to support their diverse learning needs, tutoring and exam preparation.

Additional response – Dual Credit:

- The Department of Education has a Dual Credit program, where high school students can take post-secondary courses and receive credit for them.

- This helps create more options for high school students to partake in pre-apprenticeship and other apprenticeship programs to advance their careers at an earlier age.
 - High school students also have opportunities to take trades courses at school and participate in exploratory programs offered by partners such as Skills Canada Yukon.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There has been an interest in what supports are available to apprentices and adult learners and how many apprentices YG employs.
 - A new interim process for evaluating Yukon apprentices was introduced in September 2023.
-

Background:

- As of October 15th, 2024, there were 86 Yukon apprentices registered for training at Yukon University, another 69 registered in various institutions in Alberta and 3 attending institutions in other areas of Canada for the 2024-25 academic year.
- As of November 19, 2024, Yukon has 513 active registered apprentices. The program area completed a file review last year and identified 105 inactive apprentices (inactive for more than 2 years). Communication went out to apprentices to verify their status. Files can be reactivated at any time.
- As of November 19, 2024, First Nation apprentices make up 114 of the 513 apprentices and there are now 67 apprentices that identify as a woman.
- A total of 56 journeyperson certificates were issued in the 2023 calendar year. As of November 19, 2024, 67 journeyperson certificates have been issued this year.
- In late July 2024, the federal government announced the sunset of their Incentive and Completion Grants as of March 31, 2025.

Dual credit high school program

- Yukon students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to receive credits through the dual credit program.

- The dual credit program allows students to enroll in a university course that leads to a post-secondary credential and receive credits for both high school and university.

Apprenticeship new interim level evaluation process:

- The new interim level evaluation process (until 2026) applies to apprentices who attend school in the Yukon and Alberta. If a student attends school outside Yukon or Alberta, they will continue to be evaluated using the process that is used by that jurisdiction.
- The new interim level evaluation process supports apprentices working to achieve their Red Seal; allows more input from employers; and provides more emphasis on the importance of good marks in the technical in-school training.
 - Process snapshot: If an apprentice does not achieve 70% on a level exam (previously required), but scores between 60-69%, they will be further evaluated. Consideration for the following will determine if an apprentice moves to the next level:
 - level exam mark,
 - technical in-classroom training (school) grades, and
 - whether the employer recommends they pass the level (this may involve a conversation with Yukon Apprenticeship, the employer, and apprentice. This is appropriate as 80% of an apprentice's learning is on-the-job).
 - The Director of Training Programs will make the final decision based on the above factors, with the employer's recommendation having significant bearing.
 - An apprentice can appeal this decision to the Apprenticeship Advisory Board.
 - Yukon Apprenticeship will apply this new process back to January 1, 2022, to retroactively re-evaluate apprentices that were not able to move on to their next level.
- Since September 2023, 55 apprentices have advanced levels under the interim level evaluation process.

- Alberta resumed level exams in fall 2023 and activities to update curriculum, exams, and other apprenticeship-related products after suspending both activities during the pandemic. Yukon is participating in this process.

Boards and Committees

- This past year, a new Territorial Trades and Technology Committee was formed to identify and address gaps in the support system for apprentices. This group is a partnership between Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Skills Canada, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, Yukon University, and the Apprenticeship Unit at the Department of Education.
- The Apprenticeship Advisory Board meets a minimum of 4 times per year. An application intake occurred in fall of 2023 and reappointment process for members is complete.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs

Education

Value:

- The Government of Yukon's student financial assistance programs are supporting students to attend post-secondary education institutions in the Yukon and beyond.

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Grant is available for students attending eligible full-time post-secondary programs in the Yukon and outside. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and regulations.
- The Training Programs Branch also administers the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program. This program is available to eligible Yukon post-secondary students.
- The Student Training Allowance is available for students attending eligible training and skills-development programs at a designated Yukon institution. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the *Occupational Training Act* and regulations.

Additional response:

- There are some programs and courses offered at Yukon University that may not meet the criteria for the Yukon Grant, the Student Training Allowance, or Canada Student Loans and Grants Program.
- If a student or adult learner does not qualify for these funding streams, they may be eligible for funding support through the Working Up program.
- Students are encouraged to contact our Training Programs staff who would be happy to assist them in navigating available funding options.

Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs

Education

- Department officials continue to work with Yukon University to ensure students are aware of other funding sources that may be available to them for non-traditional programs.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised in the Legislature because certain Yukon University programs are not eligible for the Yukon Grant since they are not ‘full-time’ within the context of the *Student Financial Assistance Act*.
- There has been a rise in available continuing education and training, particularly through private training institutions or career colleges, which often do not meet the eligibility criteria for Yukon’s Student Financial Assistance.

Background:

- The criteria for post-secondary student eligibility for financial assistance is established in legislation. The Yukon Grant is set out in the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and regulations, and the Student Training Allowance is set out in the *Occupational Training Act* and regulations.
- To be eligible for the Student Training Allowance, a student must attend a program at Yukon University or Alkan Air that is three or more consecutive weeks in duration.
- To be eligible for the Yukon Grant, a student’s program of study must be at least 12 weeks in duration within a timeframe of 15 weeks, and each study period must be no less than six consecutive weeks and no more than 52 consecutive weeks. In cases where a student is enrolled in a program with courses that are less than six weeks in duration, a student may still be eligible for the Yukon Grant if those courses make up an essential element in a program of study which is at least 12 weeks long and takes place within a time frame of 15 consecutive weeks.
- Registered Yukon apprentices receive support through the Working Up program for the duration of the 8–12-week technical training portion for each level of their apprenticeship. These supports include payment of tuition costs and seat fees, funding for travel, commuting, second residence, supplies, and daycare costs.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SF02

Fall 2024

Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We are committed to encouraging academic achievement in grades 10 to 12 and helping students pursue post-secondary education or training.

Recommended response:

- Students eligible to receive funding for academic achievement for the end of the 2023-24 school year will be notified by letter in fall 2024.
- We are pleased to announce that students can apply to redeem their awards and submit receipts for tuition and books through the new streamlined online student financial assistance portal.
- The Training Programs Branch is available to answer any questions related to Yukon Excellence Awards.

Additional response:

- We are advancing work to modernize the Yukon Excellence Awards and review eligibility criteria.
- This work will create better alignment of the awards with Yukon's school curriculum, as well as recognition of students' skill development, achievement, and learning outcomes.
- The awards are intended to support students attending Yukon secondary schools, to encourage learning about Yukon's unique social, cultural, and economic context, and align with reconciliation priorities.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about eligibility for Yukon excellence awards and when students will be notified.
-

Background:

- Yukon Excellence Awards are currently awarded to students who receive 80% or higher in 10 qualifying grade 10 to 12 courses.
- The awards help offset post-secondary tuition and/or book costs.
- Yukon residents who choose to attend secondary school outside of the Yukon are not eligible for these awards.
- Eligibility criteria include being a Yukon resident and legally entitled to remain in Canada. Therefore, a student attending high school without permanent residency can accrue the awards on their student record but must demonstrate they have become a permanent resident to redeem the awards.
- The eligibility criteria for the Yukon Excellence Awards Program have changed several times over its history to reflect changing graduation requirements.
- Work will resume with the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education as well as the First Nation Education Commission to propose changes to modernize the Yukon Excellence Awards.
- The intent will be to recognize both academic achievers, and to allow for school-based awards for achievement or improvement in a student's chosen area of interest or strength (learner outcomes).
- Since the mid-1990s, Education has been accruing awards earned by students. The department holds the awards for 10 years after a student's date of graduation.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-09-03

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Privacy Awareness: refer to DPT13

Adult Learners Supports: refer to AE02

Value:

- We support eligible students with several legislated funding opportunities to pursue post-secondary education.

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Grant continues to be a significant and meaningful funding program supporting Yukon students to study at Yukon University and designated institutions anywhere in the world.
- As of November 19, 2024, the department has received 1387 applications for one or more funding streams for the 2024-25 academic year. 829 of those applications are for the Yukon Grant.
- In 2016 the Student Financial Assistance Act and Regulations were updated to include a base rate per week of study. This rate is legislated to increase annually based on the previous year's Consumer Price Index amount.
- The Consumer Price Index has increased substantially over the past few years and has led to a healthy increase to the weekly rate of the Yukon Grant.
- Due to this indexing factor, we have an increase of \$1.2M identified in the supplementary budget to continue supporting Yukon postsecondary students this fiscal year.

Additional response:

- Yukon Grant amounts are legislated to increase along with the Consumer Price Index. This allows for increases to Yukon Grant amounts to support the higher cost of living.
- This 2024/25 academic year, students eligible for the Yukon Grant will receive \$178/week of study. This is an increase of \$11/week as compared to last year.
- Every student's situation is unique, and eligibility for funding and amounts are determined by their specific situation.
- Student Financial Assistance Officers are available to assist students with their Yukon Grant applications, required documentation, and inquiries.
- In addition to the Yukon Grant, Yukon students can also apply for the Canada Student Financial Assistance Loan and Grant program through the student portal.
- If a student is not approved for the Yukon Grant, they have the right to appeal. The Student Financial Assistance Committee meets to hear appeals as needed.
- Eligibility requirements and how to apply are available on Yukon.ca.
- Yukon residents studying at Yukon University can receive either the Yukon Grant, for students who attended high school in the Yukon, or the Student Training Allowance, for students who have established residency and lived in the Yukon for at least 2 years.
- If a student meets the criteria for both legislated programs, the Student Financial Assistance Office will work with them to determine which

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SF04

Fall 2024

Yukon Grant

Education

funding program provides the best support based on each student's circumstances.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- We have had to ask for an increase of \$1.2M to be able to provide students with Yukon Grant this academic year.

Background:

Yukon Grant *(and Student Training Allowance)* recipients for the past 3 years

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
Budget	\$4,268,000	\$4,268,000	\$4,268,000
Actual	\$4,857,679	\$4,061,610	\$3,984,665
# of students that received Yukon Grant	763	687	740
# of Yukon Grant recipients at Yukon University	101	115	156
# of STA recipients at Yukon University	98	100	117
Weekly Yukon Grant rate* (affected by CPI)	\$167	\$154	\$145
CPI Increase from 2017 **	21.05%	12.80%	8.10%

*2024/25 - weekly Yukon Grant amount is \$178

**CPI Increase for 2024/25 from 2017 is \$25.59%

- As of November 19, 2024, the department has received 1387 applications for one or more funding streams for the 2024-25 academic year. We typically see around 1,400 applications submitted over a full academic year (August-July).
- Processing times for the 2024-25 academic year have been expedited with the fully functioning student portal and administration system.

- As of November 19, 2024, students can expect an initial response within 13 days of submitting their application. Prior to 2023, and our new Student Portal computer system, this response timeline exceeded 8 weeks.

Yukoners currently attending Yukon University – Yukon Grant

- As of September 30, 2024, there are 142 Yukon students attending Yukon University who are receiving Student Financial Assistance from our office.
- 70 students are receiving the Yukon Grant, 60 are receiving Student Training Allowance, and 12 are not receiving Yukon government funding but are being funded through Federal Canada Student Financial Assistance which is administered through our Student Finance office.

Financial Supports - Yukon Grant

- Students can receive up to 170 weeks of funding over their lifetime if they meet the eligibility requirements at the time of application.
- Yukon Grant is calculated on a weekly basis of \$178/week and paid out in 2 lump-sum payments.
 - For a full academic school year – September to April (34 weeks) a student will receive approximately \$6,052 (in 2 payments).
 - If attending school outside of the territory, a student may be eligible for travel amount of \$1,500. Students from Yukon communities may also be eligible for an extra travel amount.
- Students receive payments by direct deposit. This was implemented in response to the pandemic.
- Yukon residents studying at Yukon University can receive either the Yukon Grant (for students who attended high school in the Yukon) or the Student Training Allowance (for students who have established residency and lived in the Yukon for at least 2 years). If a student meets the criteria for both legislated programs, the Student Financial Assistance Office will work with them to determine which funding program provides the best support based on each student's circumstances.
- Students applying for financial aid are required to provide confirmation of full-time, post-secondary enrolment prior to each funding disbursement (e.g., September and

Session Briefing Note

Tab# SF04

Fall 2024

Yukon Grant

Education

January). Reminders are sent to students to send in the required Program Information Form, which verifies their full-time enrollment in post-secondary studies.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Adult Graduation Diploma (High School)

Education

Value:

- Adults have options to attain a high school diploma in the Yukon.

Recommended response:

- We are aware that as of March 31, 2024, Canada's General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency tests are no longer available.
- Adult learners in Yukon (18+) can still achieve their high school diploma. There are two paths to consider depending on how old a learner is.
- An adult learner aged 18-20 can earn a regular B.C. Dogwood graduation diploma by taking courses at: Aurora Virtual School, the Individual Learning Centre, Yukon University, or a different learning institution.
- An adult learner over 21 years of age, can earn a B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma (Adult Dogwood) through courses at the same institutions.
- To get started, adult learners can either contact their previous high school guidance counsellor or contact a curriculum consultant at the Department of Education.
- Yukon University, Aurora Virtual School, and the Individual Learning Centre offer programs to help adult learners prepare for post-secondary academic studies or take courses towards attaining an Adult or regular Dogwood Graduation Diploma.

Additional response:

- Yukon adult learners, aged 18 to 21, looking to upgrade their skills for better employment opportunities and life options can access online

Adult Graduation Diploma (High School)

Education

courses through the Aurora Virtual School or at the Individual Learning Centre in Whitehorse.

- The Access Pathways program at Yukon University is also an option for adult learners to upgrade their skills for employment opportunities or to access post-secondary academic studies.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is a lack of awareness of how Yukon adults can access a high school diploma outside of a regular public school, and the federal cancellation of General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency tests may raise concerns.

Background:

- Adult learners under the age of 21 have the right to attend public school and work towards a Dogwood graduation diploma.
- Adults over the age of 21, who wish to continue learning, may request permission from the Department to attend regular public school, or take courses from a different institution that offers online options or Yukon University.
- All adult learners are encouraged to contact either their previous high school guidance counsellor or a curriculum consultant at the Department of Education to help them create a path forward.
- The Adult Dogwood diploma program combines public secondary and post-secondary courses. To graduate, adults (21+) need:
 - Language Arts 12
 - Math 11 or 12
 - Three additional Grade 12 electives (or Grade 11 Social Studies and two Grade 12 electives)
- At least three courses must be completed after enrolling in the Adult Dogwood Graduation Program.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# AE01

Fall 2024

Adult Graduation Diploma (High School)

Education

- Adult Dogwood learners are not required to complete the Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments that high school students obtaining a Dogwood diploma are required to complete to graduate.
- The B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma was introduced in the 1960's under B.C.'s Adult Basic Education program.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-31

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We continue to help adult learners and post-secondary students to access financial support, advance in their apprenticeships, and find summer employment opportunities.

Recommended response:

- We provide individual adult learners with flexible support to best meet their needs.
- We recognize that every individual's journey and needs are different and encourage interested Yukoners to connect with the Training Programs team to discuss the supports available to them.
- Students applying for the Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance and Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans and Grants can now apply through the new and streamlined online student financial assistance portal.

Additional response:

- We are aware that the 2024 federal budget resulted in \$625 million in cuts to Provincial and Territorial Labour Market Transfer Agreement funding in Canada. We are determining how this will impact Yukon.
- We will continue to work with adult students, Yukon First Nations governments, Economic Development, and other partners to adapt and develop initiatives to support the needs of Yukon post-secondary students and adult learners.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions around funding support for adult learners, federal cuts to the Labour Market funding, and the status of the online portal implementation.
-

Background:

2024 federal budget cuts to Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA)

- The LMTA supports various organizations and individuals to advance Yukon's labour market goals, such as:
 - Yukon University seat fees for trades training,
 - Alberta seat fees for trades training,
 - individual funding to apprentices attending training, and
 - funding to individuals who need support entering the labour market
- We are working with Economic Development to determine the impact the budget cuts will have on our programs.

Funding application processing challenges and successes

- For the Fall 2024 intake, the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) Portal is fully functioning. Students can submit their applications and receive funding approvals in record turnaround times. As of September 30, 2024, the SFA Office had received over 1103 funding applications. Emails are being responded to within 2-3 days, and new applications are being reviewed within 7 business days.
- In the fall of 2023, contractor and system development challenges temporarily impacted assessment timelines for processing Yukon Grant and Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans and Grants.
- Prior to 2023, it was common for students to wait 6-8 weeks for a response after submitting their funding application.

Labour Market transfer to Economic Development

- On April 1, 2022, the labour market component of the Post-Secondary Labour Market Unit moved from Education to Economic Development. Individual adult learner support remained with the Department of Education.
- 7 FTEs moved from Education to Economic Development, including one director, five labour market development officers and one admin staff.
- Education retained the administration of apprenticeship, training and student financial assistance, and \$3,876,044 of O&M in 2022-23 budget to deliver the programs.

Session Briefing Note

Tab# AE02

Fall 2024

Adult Learners - Supports

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-01

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value

- International students are an important part of Yukon's diverse social and economic fabric, and we will continue to support our Designated Learning Institutions who offer quality learning opportunities.

Recommended response:

- Yukon University and Alkan Air Flight School, currently Yukon's two Designated Learning Institutions, offer high-quality opportunities for international students to study.
- We have finalized the process to meet the new operational requirements under the federal International Student Program in collaboration with both organizations.
- As of September 30, 2024, the Department of Education has issued 92 attestation letters. These letters are sent to the applicant's Designated Learning Institution, who then provide the letter directly to the student.
- Yukon's allocation meets our international student objectives and positions the territory for sustainable growth, with a balanced student population of Yukoners, out-of-territory, and international learners.

Additional response: Attestation letters and ongoing process

- Taking a client-centered approach, the Department of Education issues the required attestation letters to Yukon University and Alkan Air Flight Academy on behalf of students. We are the primary intermediary between the Government of Canada and these two Institutions in respect to reporting requirements.
- To ensure the safety of any additional personal information collected throughout this new process, a Privacy Impact Assessment has been completed and Information Sharing Agreements between the

Department of Education and the Designated Learning Institutions have been signed.

- Education continues to participate in meetings with provincial and territorial counterparts as the new requirements are implemented, ensuring Yukon's unique interests are brought forward.
- We are aware of the September 18, 2024 Government of Canada announcement to further reduce study permits for international students in 2025 by an additional 10%.
- The provincial and territorial quotas have not yet been released so I am unable to comment on potential impacts in the Yukon.
- I will be able to share more information as it becomes available.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about Yukon's allocation under the federal International Student Program allotments and potential impacts on Yukon's international students.

Background:

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced changes on January 22, 2024, to the International Student Program (ISP) that would cap the number of international student permits issued to provinces and territories for 2024 and 2025 (two-year temporary measure).
- The cap is based on a zero net-growth model. To achieve this target, the national cap on study permit applications was set at approximately 600,000, resulting in about 360,000 study permits approved in 2024, a 35% reduction from 2023, at current approval rates.
- On September 18, 2024, Government of Canada announced a further 10 per cent reduction in study permits for international students in 2025.

International Student Cap (EDU/EcDev)

Education

- The goal of assigning a cap is to help manage volume growth and improve the integrity of the International Student program.
- IRCC originally allocated a portion of the cap to each province and territory based on population. The most recent announcement of the additional 10% cap has not been split into portions for provinces and territories yet.
- In addition to the cap, each study permit application requires an attestation letter from the province or territory in which they will be studying. Provinces and territories were expected to establish a process for issuing these attestation letters and for distributing the allocation among its designated learning institutes (DLIs) by March 31, 2024. Yukon went live with this process on March 28, 2024.
- Canada originally proposed Yukon's allocation target at 417 study permit applications, which may result in up to 250 study permits issued based on current approval rates. This was in addition to those international students exempted from the allocation (K-12, family members of study and work-permit holders, and those studying at the masters or doctoral levels).
- The number of Study Permit Applications for the Yukon received by IRCC and Canada Border Services Agency between January 1 - December 31, 2023, was 135 international students, and therefore our allocation exceeds current enrollment.
- Yukon University as one of Yukon's Designated Learning Institutions maintains international student targets that are below the federal allocation.
- Students apply directly to IRCC for study and work permits. Under the new requirements, a student must provide a letter of acceptance from an institution and a provincial [territorial] attestation letter at the time of

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Fall 2024

International Student Cap (EDU/EcDev)

Education

applying for a study permit thereby confirming they are within the jurisdiction's cap.

- Many international students hold jobs on and off campus, supporting Yukon's local labour market. The new changes in respect to spousal work permits are not anticipated to negatively impact Yukon's workforce as most international students are single.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-01

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- Yukon will continue to ensure quality and enriching post-secondary academic programs and experiences.

Recommended response:

- Institutions that offer training of more than 45 hours in an occupation listed on the National Occupational Classification system can apply to be registered in the Yukon as a private training institution.
- The application and review process is thorough and takes approximately one year to complete.
- A private training institution must be in operation for at least one year and graduate one domestic cohort before being considered for Designated Learning Institution status, which allows a school to host international students.
- To ensure quality and local oversight, a private training institution must be physically located in the Yukon, have a staff person physically located in the Yukon, and provide financial assurance.

Additional response:

- Elements Esthetics Academy was registered as Yukon's newest private training institution at the end of January 2024 and is approved to offer an esthetics diploma program. We wish the institute success.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Government of Canada's messaging around changes to the International Student Program and enrollment cap includes addressing private training institutions or private career colleges in Canada that may prioritize financial gain and immigration pathways over the delivery of quality education.
- Some jurisdictions are increasing the length of time an institution must be in operation before they can apply for Designated Learning Institution status and thereby host international students.

Background:

- Yukon has three registered private training institutions: Alkan Air Flight Academy, Yukon Tourism Education Council and Elements Esthetics Academy.
- Private training institutions or trade schools are governed by the *Trade School Regulation Act* and *Trade School Regulation*. A trade school (or private training institution) must be registered to operate in Yukon.
- The fee to register a private training institution is \$100 per year. The initial payment is due at the time of first registration and annual payments to remain registered are due September 1 of every year thereafter.
- To register, a private training institution must:
 - offer training totaling more than 45 hours in an occupation that is listed on the National Occupational Classification system
 - have the institution physically located in the Yukon
 - have a person physically located in the Yukon while the school is registered
 - provide a bond. The bond is a \$10,000 irrevocable letter of credit. It helps ensure that a school meets its contractual obligations and has the resources to deliver the programs
 - contribute to a Training Completion Trust Fund to ensure students can complete their training elsewhere if a program or course ceases to exist or becomes insolvent

International Students:

- A Private Training Institution must be in operation for at least one year and graduate one domestic cohort before being considered for Designated Learning Institution (DLI) status. A DLI is a school approved to host international students.
- The process to become a DLI is administered by the Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.
- Currently, Yukon has two DLIs: Yukon University and Alkan Air Flight Academy.

Degree granting:

- Should a private training institution or private career college or university wish to operate and offer degree-granting programs in Yukon, approval would be needed by the Commissioner in Executive Council.

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Fall 2024

Private Training Institutions

Education

- Yukon University's degree granting authority is governed by the Yukon University Act.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Value:

- We are committed to supporting and fostering vibrant arts and creative and cultural industries in the Yukon.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education has supported the School of Visual Arts, or SOVA, since its inception in 2007.
- SOVA provides developing artists with industry transferable skills and the foundational arts requirement for academic arts programs in partner universities.
- Education continues to provide \$634,794 in support of SOVA. Funding is provided through the existing transfer payment agreement with Yukon University.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- SOVA's governance council is exploring the creation of an Indigenous Fine Arts program and Yukon University updates the Department of Education on the program's developments.

Background:

- The SOVA governance council includes representatives from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Yukon University and the Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture.
- In 2019-20, the department worked with Yukon University to create a core funding agreement. Funding for SOVA moved from Core Operations to Strategic Initiatives, enabling the department to engage directly with the SOVA governance council members regarding the Indigenous Fine Arts program development.
- In 2023-24, an increase of \$130,000 was provided to reinstate personnel in the SOVA Library (\$60,000), and to ensure ongoing access to funds for maintenance of equipment and technology as well as requisite expendables.
 - There is no anticipated increase for 2024-25 in funding levels for SOVA.

- On October 1, 2021, one-time bridge funding was requested and approved for \$36,794 for fiscal 2021-22.
- Included in a request made on October 1, 2021, was an additional funding request of \$213,069.49 over four years to support a First Nations Community Liaison and Indigenous Arts Program Dialogue.
- Future funding requests will come through the Yukon University Senior Oversight Committee (formerly known as the Joint Agreement Management Committee) rather than directly from SOVA.
- The Senior Oversight Committee meets monthly and includes the following representatives:
 - Yukon University: Vice President of Academic, Vice President of Finance & Administration, Manager of Budgets,
 - For YG: ADM, Corporate Services and Programs, Director of Finance (Education), Director of Training Programs (Education) and a representative from HSS has an open invitation,
 - The parties may designate advisors to attend meetings.
- Strategic Initiative funding requests are developed by the Department of Education and Yukon University officials through the Transfer Payment Agreement negotiation process.
- Strategic Initiatives funds are provided in addition to core funding.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-08-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentices Grants

Education

Value:

- In late July 2024, the Government of Canada informed apprenticeship authorities across Canada they were ending the Incentive and Completion Grants for apprentices as of March 31, 2025.

Recommended response:

- Our Yukon apprenticeship office informed all apprentices of this change via email on September 17th.
- Of the 110 Yukon apprentices presently enrolled in school, 86 are anticipated to still be able to receive federal grant funding prior to the program's termination.
- Yukon apprentices' benefit from a very comprehensive financial support system throughout their apprenticeship journeys.
- While the discontinuation of these supplemental federal grants may be disappointing for some apprentices, it will not impede their progress or completion of their apprenticeship programs.

Additional response:

- The Incentive Grant rewarded an apprentice for successfully completing Level 1 (\$1,000) and Level 2 (\$1,000) of their apprenticeship. This grant began in 2007.
- The Completion Grant rewarded an apprentice with \$2,000 after successfully completing their apprenticeship. This grant began in 2009.
- Yukon government financially supports apprentices with:
 - Free tuition at Yukon University or an Alberta institution,
 - Travel costs,

Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentice Grants

Education

- Child Care Subsidy, and
- Financial supports such as; books, commuting costs, and other eligible living expenses.
- The Yukon government also provides apprentices with a program called Virtual Learning Strategy. This program helps apprentices with different learning options, learning assessments, identifying accommodations, and offers trade specific one-on-one tutoring. This program is free for Yukon apprentices.
- Most apprentices are laid off and collect Employment Insurance while they attend their mandatory schooling.
- Government of Canada's Apprentice Loans are still available. These are interest-free loans of up to \$4,000 per period of technical training.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Apprentices and the trades industry may be upset with the discontinuation of these two grants and ask what Yukon government will do to help.

Background:

- The Government of Canada sent all Canadian Apprenticeship authorities an email on July 22, 2024 informing us they were ending the Incentive and Completion Grants as of March 31, 2025. They also updated their website to reflect this change.
- The Government of Canada asked apprenticeship authorities to inform their apprentices of this change. We have informed all Yukon apprentices of this change.
- The Incentive Grant began in 2007 and provided apprentices with \$1,000 when they completed Level 1 and another \$1,000 when they completed Level 2.

Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentices Grants

Education

- The Completion Grant began in 2009 and rewarded apprentices with \$2,000 when they successfully completed their apprenticeship and became a journey person.
- Yukon apprentices' benefit from a very comprehensive and financially supportive system. They do not have to pay for their tuition costs (whether they go to technical training in Yukon or Alberta). YG reimburses apprentices for their travel to/from Alberta, or to/from Whitehorse if from a community. YG also provides \$20/week for transportation/commuting costs and \$200 per training period for books.
- Eligible apprentices can also receive a living allowance of \$170/week to help offset paying rent in two places while they go to school.
- Yukon's Child Care Subsidy assists apprentices with childcare costs while they work and go to school.
- Most apprentices are laid off and receive Employment Insurance benefits while they attend their technical training.
- The Government of Canada's Apprentice Loan program offers \$4,000 in interest-free loans per period of technical training. No interest will accumulate until after an apprentice completes or leaves their apprenticeship.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

International Student Cap: refer to AE03

Value:

- The Government of Yukon is proud of the collaborative approach that helped establish Yukon University as the first university in northern Canada, and we look forward to working with Yukon University as it continues to grow.

Recommended response:

- Yukon University, as a hybrid institution, provides a broad range of academic and vocational programs to meet the diverse learning needs of Yukon communities. These include degrees, diplomas, certificates, career and trades training, second language support, and upgrading courses.
- Department of Education 2024-25 funding to Yukon University is \$33.4 million.
- We maintain an ongoing collaboration with Yukon University to advance its strategic initiatives. This is achieved through an oversight committee comprising of key members from both the university and the Department of Education.
- We are also working with Yukon University and Yukon First Nations to develop an accountability framework for the university.
- Yukon University provided an initial draft of this framework, and IRP Consulting was hired by the department to support Yukon First Nations consultation on this framework. The plan is to have an approved accountability framework in place for 2025.
- We look forward to continuing to collaborate with Yukon University to help it achieve the commitments outlined in its strategic plan.

International Students:

- Yukon's allocation for international student spaces through Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada will not negatively impact the number of students the Yukon can accept for 2024.
- We worked with Yukon University and finalized a process for tracking international study permits within the Yukon's allocation.
- The number of Study Permit Applications for the Yukon received by IRCC and Canada Border Services Agency between January 1 - December 31, 2023, was 135 international students. This number is lower than our current allocation of 417.

Polaris Building:

- As noted in the 2024-25 budget, the Five-Year Capital Plan includes \$13 million over two years, starting in 2025-26 for the Polaris Building project.
- The departments of HPW and Education will continue to work collaboratively with Yukon University on next steps.

Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination Prevention and Response:

- Yukon University has made it clear that any form of discrimination against specific communities on the university campus will not be tolerated. This includes anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, and discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.
- Yukon University has robust policies that guide and direct their approach to addressing any discrimination and harassment, such as:
 - *Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination Prevention and Response – HR 12.0 (Part of Health and Safety Policy)*
 - *Emergency and Threat Response – SS 11.0 (Part of Safety and Security Policy).*

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon University Act came into force on February 6, 2020, and the University continues to transition from a college.
 - Yukon University released its five-year strategic plan on April 4, 2022.
-

Background:

President/Vice-Chancellor

- Dr. Lesley Brown was appointed President and Vice-Chancellor of Yukon University on August 16, 2021.

Board of Governors

- The university Board of Governors has 17 members and is chaired by David Morrison.
 - Ten members are appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council. Appointments include members with extensive leadership experience:
 - Jamena (James Allen), former Dän Nätthe (Chief) of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
 - Aan Goosh oo Mark Wedge, former Khà Shâde Héni (Chief) of Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
 - Chris Mahar, a former ADM of Finance with Yukon government.
 - Seven members are established through virtue of office and university elections process. Appointments include Jason Bilsky, CEO of Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Funding

- Yukon University O&M and Transition activities are funded through a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Department of Education.
 - Transition funding for Yukon University of \$1.5 million in O&M began in April 2019 and was maintained in the department's 2024-25 budget. This funding is now part of the core funding for the University.
 - \$600,000 has been allocated to the University to support campus upgrades, IT systems and Equipment.

- \$1.0 million in capital has been allocated to further support University Transition since April 1, 2020 (\$100,000 in 2022-23; \$500,000 in 2021-22; \$400,000 in 2020-21).
- Yukon University has two distinct O&M funding streams: core funding and strategic initiatives funding.
- In the 2024-25 budget, the Government of Yukon is providing more than \$33.4 million to Yukon University to support core and strategic initiatives.
- Core funding increases for 2024-25 included:
 - Collective Bargaining Increases of \$1.9 million
- Strategic initiatives are identified by both the University and the Department of Education and are based on priorities.
- Strategic funding for 2024-25 include:
 - Ongoing funding Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining \$1.2M.
 - Ongoing funding for Licensed Practical Nurse Program \$741k.
 - ELCC is funding the Early Learning Program to offer early learning courses in rural communities for a total commitment of \$185k.
 - Up to \$1.04 million for seats for apprentices in Yukon's apprenticeship program.
- The priorities are discussed at a Senior Oversight Committee (formerly called the Joint Agreement Management Team) and agreed upon by both parties.
- The committee works together to provide oversight and accountability around core and strategic initiative funding provided through this agreement. Recently, the team updated the Terms of Reference to enhance strategic collaboration and cooperation.
- Members of the Senior Oversight Committee include:
 - the university Provost and Vice President Academic and Vice President, Finance and Administration from the university; and
 - the Department of Education ADM of Corporate Programs and Services, Director of Finance and Director of Training Programs.

- HSS also has a standing invitation to attend meetings. Representatives and advisors outside core membership from both parties participate in meetings based on agenda items.

Collective Bargaining Agreement between Yukon University Employees Union and the University

- The Collective agreement between Yukon University and Union is for the period covering July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024.
- This is a two-year agreement.
- The agreement has a Letter of Understanding outlined as follows:
 - LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING
 - (n) RE-OPENER – INCREASE

In the event that, prior to the expiry of this Collective Agreement, employees of the Yukon Government receive General Economic Increases that are superior to the General Economic Increases herein and, in the event Yukon University receives the same General Economic Increase from the Government, the parties will invoke Article 68.01 Re-opener to plan the application of this increase. The priority will be given to allocation of such increases to non-faculty staff
- We have previously encouraged employees of Yukon University to work with their Union and the University to advance their interests.
- As the funder of the University, we continue to collaborate with officials to address core funding concerns.

Science (Polaris) building

- In March 2019, the Government of Canada announced \$26 million over the next five years for Yukon University, for a new science building on the Whitehorse campus. A preliminary functional plan has been developed by the government and university.
- In its 2022-23 annual report, the university indicated that planning had continued for the new science building, which will be its first new building as a university.
- As noted in the 2024-25 budget, the Five-Year Capital Plan includes \$13M over two years, starting in 2025-26 for the Polaris Building project.

- The departments of HPW and Education will work with Yukon University to discuss next steps on the Science (Polaris) building, including resolving:
 - Land tenure and ownership/lease,
 - Annual operations & maintenance costs for the facility,
 - Annual operations & maintenance program costs for the facility; and
 - Parking lot considerations.
- The University's intent is to have the first part of the construction tender out for bids by the end of October.
 - The Yukon University Board of Governors has indicated that bids will be evaluated prior to their December meeting.
 - The Yukon University Board of Governors intends to review the tender documents at this meeting.

Degree programs

- The first graduating class of Yukon University included graduates from the first made-in-Yukon degree: the Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Governance Degree.
- Yukon University also now offers a 4-year Bachelor of Business Administration, and a 1-year post-graduate certificate in Climate Change Policy.

Accountability framework

- The *Yukon University Act* provides that the Minister of Education must establish accountability and performance measures for Yukon University, in consultation with each Yukon First Nation and the university.
- The department is coordinating the development of the Yukon University accountability framework.
- Recommendations on the content of the accountability have been received from Yukon University and IRP Consulting; IRP consulting was hired by the department to support Yukon First Nations consultation on the accountability framework.
- This first accountability framework is now in preparation by the department and will inform the first accountability framework for the new university, with approvals in place for 2025.

Campus land and buildings

- The Yukon University Act provides that the government may transfer the ownership of campus lands and buildings (property) to Yukon University.
- A joint working group has been established to consider the issues and options for transferring land and building ownership to Yukon University, recognizing that this is a longer-term project.

Yukon University Strategic Plan – Becoming, 2022-27

- On April 4, 2022, the university released its first strategic plan since transitioning from a college. Key elements of this plan include”
 - “Vision: Yukon University will become a thriving learning and research community leading Canada’s North.”
 - “Mission: We provide inclusive, quality education experiences that equip learners to seize opportunities, make change and positively impact local and global communities.”
 - “Commitments: Over the life of this plan, Yukon University will:
 - Build our identity and nurture our culture as a university.
 - Take our place in advancing reconciliation.
 - Continue to develop our northern expertise.
 - Develop bold thinkers and confident change leaders.
 - Be leaders for the common good.”
- As of October 2024, Yukon University is a member of *Universities Canada*, an “organization providing Canadian universities with a unified voice for higher education, research and innovation.”
 - Yukon University submitted their application in September 2023.
 - Member universities meet strict criteria and adhere to principles of institutional quality assurance.
 - This membership means the university can contribute to national dialogues on post-secondary education and add a voice and perspective from the north.

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Fall 2024

Yukon University

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-10-30

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Yukon University Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement

Education

Value:

- Effective instructors and staff are important factors in a student's success at university.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Education encourages employees of Yukon University to work with their union and the university to advance their interests.
- In the 2024-25 budget, the Government of Yukon is providing more than \$33.3 million to support core and strategic initiatives.
- We are providing \$1.9 million towards collective agreement costs within the 2024-25 university transfer payment agreement.

Additional response:

- In the 2023-24 budget, the Government of Yukon provided more than \$33.5 million to Yukon University to support core and strategic initiatives.
- This included \$1.089 million for collective bargaining increases.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Negotiations on a new Collective Agreement may result in additional costs.
-

Background:

- The current collective agreement, a 2-year agreement between Yukon University and the Yukon University Employees Union covered the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024.

Yukon University Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement

Education

- In 2023-24 Yukon University employees made use of a *Re-Opener-Increase* clause in their collective agreement to re-open the agreement to ask for an increase in wages.
- We encourage employees of Yukon University to work with their Union and the University to address any concerns.
- The University's collective agreement has expired, and the University has entered into negotiations with the Yukon University Employees Union.
- As the parties have started the negotiation process, I will not make specific comments which may affect the party's ability to bargain in good faith.
- As the funder of the University, we continue to collaborate with officials to address core funding concerns.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2024-11-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility

Education

Value:

- The Government of Yukon is proud of its collaboration with Yukon University to support it as Canada's first university north of 60.

Recommended response:

- We look forward to continuing to work with Yukon University on shared priorities as it evolves and grows.
- This includes continuing to review the results of the Yukon University Varsity Sport Feasibility Study publicly released in June 2023.
- The Feasibility Study identified basic readiness criteria to ensure that a local varsity sports program would be set up for success.
- A university-level varsity sport program must be carefully created to bring the fullest value to our students and the Yukon territory.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be raised about the status of the development of varsity sports at Yukon University, as reviewing the feasibility of a program is a mandate commitment.

Background:

Feasibility study background

- Reviewing the feasibility of a varsity sports program at Yukon University is a mandate letter commitment.
- The Departments of Education and Economic Development worked with Yukon University to complete a feasibility study.
- A steering committee for the study was struck in late December 2021 and included representatives from the university, Yukon Aboriginal

Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility

Education

Sport Circle, Sport Yukon, and the departments of Education, and Economic Development.

- A contractor with related expertise conducted the study, which examined factors such as benefits, staffing requirements, O&M costs, a process to scale up a program, and opportunities for Yukon First Nations participation or partnership.
- The contractor delivered a final report to the Steering Committee in November 2022.
- The feasibility study identifies \$1.3M is needed over three years to plan and implement a three-sport pilot project, with ongoing yearly implementation costs of \$1.8-2.5M.

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2024-09-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Recommended response:

- Yukoners continue to face challenges across the housing continuum, which include:
 - Homelessness and a lack of access to housing with services;
 - A lack of affordable rental supply; and
 - High house prices and mortgage rates.
- Exceptionally high building costs and high borrowing costs due to interest rates are creating significant challenges for both Yukon Housing Corporation and partners.
- The corporation's five-year strategic plan, Creating Home, will help transform affordable housing service delivery through the adoption of a more client-centred and collaborative approach that integrates support and leads to better outcomes for Yukoners.

Additional response:

- Across governments, we are working with stakeholders to develop new land parcels, increase housing stock while also responding to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on Housing.
 - We continue to advance projects that provide new housing to meet Yukoners' needs.
-

Context:

- The combination of high rental costs, limited affordable housing options and difficulties in securing mortgages, continues to be a challenge for many Yukoners.
-

Background:

General housing information in the Yukon

Homelessness

- At least 197 people were experiencing homelessness in the 2023 Whitehorse Point-in-Time Count. This included: 58% men; 38 % female; 4% other.

Rental housing

- According to the Census 2021, within the renter population in Whitehorse:
-

- 22.7% of households live in unaffordable housing;¹
- 17.9% live in unsuitable housing; and
- 10.5% live in inadequate housing.

Rents and vacancy rate, Yukon (YBS)

	October 2022	April 2023	October 2023	April 2024
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,325	\$1,350	\$1,420
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%

Housing construction

- Labour shortages contribute to higher construction costs and are leading to lower residential construction output.²

Residential building construction, Yukon (YBS)

	January-June 2023	January-June 2024
# residential permits issued*	518	329 (-35% decrease)
\$ value of new permits*	\$59.4 million	\$47.6 million (-20% decrease)

*In addition to new dwelling units, residential permits include renovations, garages, and additions. The totals do not include permits issued for plumbing or stoves.

House prices

- Yukon Bureau of Statistics reports that there were 84 real estate transactions recorded in Whitehorse in the first quarter of 2024 – a decrease of 35 compared to the first quarter of 2023 (119).
- While average prices for single-detached homes in Q1-2024 had fallen relative to Q1-2022 and Q1-2023, condo prices for Q1-2024 had increased 13% since Q1-2023.

Average House Prices, Whitehorse (YBS)

Residence type	Whitehorse Average House Prices		
	2023 Q1	2024 Q1	% Change
Single-detached house	\$635,000	\$629,500	-0.9%
Condominium	\$403,800	\$456,400	13.0%

¹ Housing costs are considered “unaffordable” when they exceed 30% of household income.

² Northern Housing Report, 2023

Yukon Housing Corporation Approach to Address Housing Issues

Creating Home – YHC’s new strategic plan

- Creating Home draws on a recognized framework intended to re-design and transform health care delivery, called the Quadruple Aim, and adapts it to housing.
- This innovative approach to housing delivery will lead to better outcomes by:
 - Improving the client and provider experiences;
 - Strengthening community wellbeing; and
 - Contributing to a sustainable future.
- Creating Home represents a significant shift in how Yukon Housing Corporation operates and delivers housing services.

Capital builds recently completed by YHC or partners:

- Since 2022, 10 YHC-led projects have been completed, creating a total of 77 new residential units; and
- 8 major partnership projects have been completed through the Housing Initiatives Fund, creating over 276 new units.

YHC projects completed 2022-2024

YHC Project	Construction Start Date	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
401 Jeckell Street, Whitehorse	May 2020	December 2022	47
RHI affordable triplex, Whitehorse	June 2021	June 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Watson Lake	June 2021	March 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Mayo	June 2021	March 2022	3
Accessible duplex, Mayo	July 2022	June 2023	2
Accessible duplex, Carmacks	August 2022	July 2023	2
RRDC staff trailer, Ross River	June 2023	December 2023	3
10-plex*, Old Crow (*Asset owned by HPW and managed by YHC)	Summer 2021	January 2024	10
Accessible duplex, Faro	Summer 2023	Spring 2024	2
Affordable duplex, Dawson City	August 2022	June 2024	2
Total units completed (YHC projects):			77

Major partnership projects completed 2022-2024

Project (Lead)	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
Bringing Citizens Home, Whitehorse (Champagne and Aishihik FN)	Summer 2022	20
Cornerstone multi-use building, Whitehorse (Opportunities Yukon)	July 2022	53
Normandy Living seniors supportive residence, Whitehorse (KBC)	December 2022	84
Boreal Commons apartments, Whitehorse (536754 Yukon Inc)	January 2023	87
Affordable modular housing, Mayo (Na-Cho Nyäk Dun FN)	March 2023	8
Jëje Zho 12-bed men's shelter, Dawson City (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in FN)	July 2023	8
VGFN elders complex, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	January 2024	9
VGFN mobile homes, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	March 2024	7
Total units completed (major partnerships):		276

Underway or upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

YHC – Underway (113 units):

- 10-unit Supported Living Residence in Watson Lake
- 34-unit residential building with 8 accessible units in Dawson (former Korbo Apartments)
- 45-unit residential building, which includes 9 accessible units in Whitehorse (former Ryder Apartments)
- 6 staff units across three duplexes in Burwash Landing
- 18 two-bedroom units – purchase of 190 Olive May Way in Whitehorse

YHC – Upcoming (37+ units):

Community housing	Staff housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 units in Mayo • 6-plex in Teslin • 6-plex in Carcross • 6-plex Haines Junction • Accessible triplex in Whitehorse • Accessible duplex in Ross River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible duplex in Destruction Bay • Accessible duplex in Pelly Crossing

Major partnership projects underway (299 units):

Project	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Safe at Home Society's permanent supportive housing project "The Hearth"	March 2024	Spring 2026	67
Safe at Home Society's temporary housing project at 408 Alexander	May 2024	October 2024	17
DDDC's affordable rental project "Winter Crossing"	Spring 2024	Spring 2026	105
Northern Community Land Trust Society's "Project 1096"	June 2024	December 2025	32
HIF-7 funding recipients	Spring 2024	Fall 2026	78
Total units			299

Rent subsidy programs to make life more affordable for renters and seniors

- July 2023, the corporation acquired an additional 16 units for lease from Normandy, for a total of 26 units to lease to clients through its rent supplement program.
- Since 2020, the corporation has supported over 300 households pay rent through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit. As of September 2024, 170 clients are receiving monthly support.

Support for homeowners

- March 8, the corporation announced the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Homeowner Stream for homeowners in severe core housing need³ with annual household incomes under \$100,000:
 - Clients received a one-time payment of \$1,000.00 for Whitehorse homeowners and \$1,500.00 for homeowners living outside of Whitehorse.
- June 2023, the Yukon government launched an \$8.25 million flood recovery program for residents and businesses affected by flooding in the Klondike Valley.
- April 2023, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the expanded Yukon Home Ownership Program to provide qualified households with mortgages to build or buy their homes across the territory, including Whitehorse.
- The program was recently discontinued due to low uptake and the corporation is currently exploring alternative program options to support homeownership.

³ Severe core housing need is spending 50% or more of a household's income on shelter costs.

- In 2020, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the revised Home Repair Program to support low to moderate-income Yukon homeowners to remain in their homes and age in place by providing funding to address mobility requirements, repairs or core housing needs.

Support for new residential land development

September 2024	<p>As part of the Government of Yukon's ongoing commitment to increase land and housing availability and support business growth, new residential and industrial lots were released in partnership with municipalities and Yukon First Nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> seven residential lots in Haines Junction, Mayo and Watson Lake; and three industrial lots in Teslin and Haines Junction <p>This was the sixth lot release this year and is a direct result of the Government of Yukon's historic investment in land development. Through the lotteries and tenders process, the Government of Yukon has released 685 lots across the territory since 2021 and is on track to release over 1,000 lots by 2026 (TAB #59).</p>
August 2024	<p>As part of its efforts to work in collaboration with municipalities and Yukon First Nations governments to address housing and business space needs across the territory, the Government of Yukon released 33 new residential lots across the Yukon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve lots were made available in Carmacks and Faro 21 country residential lots were made available in the Lone Tree subdivision north of Teslin.
June 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with the Government of Canada and the City of Dawson to develop four new residential lots in Dawson.
February 2023	120 lots, including single family, multi-family and townhouse lots in Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
March 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with Liard First Nation on developing 43 new residential lots on Frances Avenue in Watson Lake.
March 2023	74 residential lots in Logan, Mayo and in Whitehorse's Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
November 2022	Signed a loan agreement with Kwanlin Dün First Nation's arm's-length development corporation, Chu Níkwān Limited Partnership, for a new

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

25-09-24
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Tab# YG02
Fall 2024

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We recognize the urgency of the climate emergency and launched Our Clean Future in September 2020 to map our route forward.
- The Government of Yukon continues to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future.
- In 2023, we announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals, which brings the total number of climate actions to 178.
- These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- We continue to track our progress on goals, targets and actions. Information on our progress was most recently published in [November in the 2023 Our Clean Future Annual Report](#) and on the Our Clean Future website.
- Since releasing Our Clean Future in 2020, the Government of Yukon has completed [68](#) Our Clean Future actions, [105](#) are in progress or ongoing and [5](#) have not yet been started.

Additional response:

- As we continue to address climate change, it is important for us to look back on our progress as we diligently work towards our objectives.
- Under Our Clean Future, the government is focused on ensuring the Yukon is highly resilient to climate change impacts by 2030. [\(See ENV BN #21\)](#)

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Tab# YG02
Fall 2024

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- This year, we:
 - Completed flood maps for the Southern Lakes region, [Teslin](#) and Carmacks. Flood hazard mapping for Old Crow and the City of Dawson and the Klondike Valley are expected to be completed in 2025. [A flood hazard mapping study for Mayo is also underway and will be completed in 2026.](#)
 - Worked with municipalities and First Nations governments to finalize the Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Faro, Haines Junction, Teslin, the [City of Dawson and Whitehorse](#). [Plans for Beaver Creek, Mayo, Old Crow, Watson Lake, Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing are underway.](#)
 - Advanced climate change preparedness by initiating development of a permafrost monitoring system for key public buildings, and guidelines to address climate hazards in major infrastructure projects.
 - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
 - Completed flood risk mapping for all transportation corridors in the Yukon.
- We are committed to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we support Yukoners in the transition to cleaner transportation options and energy efficient homes and buildings.
- This year, we:
 - Began providing rebates for medium-duty electric vehicles.
 - Passed an electric vehicle charging station regulation under the *Public Utilities Act* to allow First Nation governments, private

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Tab# YG02
Fall 2024

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

businesses and municipalities to sell electricity through electric vehicle charging stations.

- o Installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. 19 fast charging stations are now operational throughout the territory, [and one new Level 2 charger in Swift River.](#) (See EMR BN #30)
- Since 2020, we have provided rebates for 518 energy efficient new homes, exceeding our 2030 target of 500.

Third response:

- Existing actions put us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. However, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- [One of the major drivers of emissions is population – more people means more cars on the road and more homes to heat.](#)
- [However, as the population of the Yukon continues to grow, we aren't seeing the rate of emissions increase that we would expect.](#)
- [We are seeing lower emissions per Yukoner than we saw in 2010.](#)
- [This is a promising sign that the emissions intensity of everyday life for Yukoners may be starting to decrease.](#)
- We [passed](#) legislation to set a target of a 45 per cent reduction in mining sector emissions per unit of production by 2035.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Tab# YG02
Fall 2024

Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change and the government's progress in delivering on Our Clean Future commitments is of interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020, and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.
- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Four Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on [November 12, 2024](#) (capturing [2023](#) data).
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows the government's commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

November 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Environment

Date approved

Paul Moore

November 13, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Recommended response:

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$150.1 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$20.7 million in recoveries. The net increase in new O&M spending is forecast at \$129.4 million.
- Capital spending for Supplementary Estimates No. 1 reflects a slight overall gross decrease of \$299,000 in spending and a \$4.2 million decrease in recoveries, resulting in a net increase in spending of \$3.9 million. These adjustments are mainly the result of updated cashflow forecasts for various projects.
- Revenues are projected to decrease by \$8.8 million, primarily due to a revenue forecast update from Canada which revised the projection for Corporate Income Tax downward by \$6.7 million as well as a reduction in royalty payments from Victoria Gold of \$2.5 million. This is partially offset by a \$350,000 increase for driver licenses due to recently increased fees.
- The Yukon government continues to maintain a surplus. As part of the 2024-25 Main Estimates, the Yukon government budgeted for a \$50 million contingency to address emergency pressures. \$50 million of the contingency has been applied towards the pressures identified in the Supplementary Estimates No. 1.
- The use of the contingency fund allows the government to present a revised surplus of \$75.4 million as part of these Supplementary Estimates. Changes in the Supplementary Estimates result in a revised year-end net debt of \$530.4 million

Session Briefing Note

Supplementary Overview

(Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Additional response:

- The Supplementary Estimates reflect an O&M increase mainly for:
 - \$50 million for payments to the Receiver for environmental protection work at the Eagle Gold Mine;
 - \$34 million for pressures in Insured Health reflecting support for the wellbeing of Yukoners;
 - \$21 million for wildland firefighting costs in response to the significant fire season experienced in the territory and which helped ensure the safety of Yukoners; and
 - \$10 million for various Yukon Hospital Corporation funding requirements including the added O&M costs of converting ten beds at the Thompson Centre for Acute Care use.
- For the Supplementary Estimates, updates to the 2024-25 Capital Plan have resulted in a decreased allocation of \$299,000. Notable changes include:
 - \$1.9 million towards the completion of the Mental Wellness Unit at Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - \$1.9 million for long-term and acute care bed optimization at Whistle Bend Place and Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - Decrease of \$3.2 million due to cash flow revisions for the construction of the school in Burwash Landing;
 - Decrease of \$600 thousand for the creation of new campsites aligning costs with the revised project timeline.

**Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)**

Fall 2024

Finance

- There is an increase of 46.6 in FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) for Supplementary Estimates No. 1. These are primarily to hire new long-term care staff in support of additional care beds at Whistle Bend Place, for the Aging with Dignity initiative and new FTEs for schools including teachers, clerical and custodial staff.
- There is also an increase in FTEs related to a transfer in the Capital Planning Office from Highways and Public Works capital budget to Finance in the O&M budget.

Corporate approach to fiscal sustainability:

- We continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- To meet these priorities, departments continue to follow established processes to ensure that funding is distributed efficiently and effectively across public services and programs.
- This means regular financial scrutiny is applied to decision-making and that new requests for funding are approved in a financially sustainable way, while continuing to provide the services that Yukoners expect.
- This coordinated approach to funding ensures that government can respond to new and evolving challenges, while managing resources responsibly.

**Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)**

Fall 2024

Finance

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2024-25 Second Appropriation Act is tabled in the fall session and will be the subject of debate.

Background:

- Supplementary Estimates are used annually by a government to account for unforeseen spending at the time of tabling the annual Budget. It is common to have one or two spending updates throughout the fiscal year.
- They are tabled during the fall and spring sessions, debated and voted on in the legislature and provide departments with increased spending authority for O&M and Capital for the current fiscal year.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date approved

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission
– Update on Calls to Action**

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to share our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, most recently through a progress report and Pathways magazine both released in Fall 2023.
- The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in collaboration with First Nation governments and groups in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- While there is still work to do, targeted investments are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action.
- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes a commitment to working with Yukon First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Background:

- The TRC report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* was released in 2015 and contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 20

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Recommended response:

- Inflation has continued to improve in recent months, but Yukon households continue to see their budgets stretched by elevated prices, with lower-income households often feeling the worst effects.
- The Government of Yukon continues to monitor inflation and its impact on Yukoners, so that we can take steps to ease the burden.
- As inflationary pressures continue to lessen, efforts to make life more affordable for Yukoners and to help industry are shifting from short-term assistance to measures with the potential to provide longer-term benefits, such as actions to improve home affordability.

Additional response:

- The Main Estimates for this year has continued to build on existing supports for Yukoners by making sure they can access essential services at prices they can afford.
- Budget 2024-25 included investments to advance affordable housing projects across the territory. From the Housing First Project in Watson Lake to the recently awarded replacement of the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse, the Yukon government is taking action to build more affordable homes for Yukoners, especially those in vulnerable situations.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

- There is also over \$42 million in continued funding for early learning and childcare. This includes funding for the universal childcare program, which has reduced childcare fees to less than \$10 per day, on average.
- We are also making life more affordable and leading the nation with our Yukon-wide dental program, which has \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2024-25.
- To make sure that more people have the option of staying home when they are sick, the Temporary Paid Sick Leave was extended.
- We also extended the Interim Electrical Rebate, which provides welcome relief from power bills to Yukoners across the territory.
- In addition to items included in the 2024-25 Main Estimates, additional initiatives in many departments are continuing to assist Yukoners with the cost of living.
- The Department of Community Services, for example, is developing a program that will see free transit passes provided to non-governmental organizations, vulnerable populations and youth.
- The Department of Health and Social Services will also provide additional funding of \$777,000 for Safe at Home to provide temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

- These are just a few examples of the many programs and initiatives that continue to support Yukoners.

Third response

- The Government of Yukon has also remained responsive to higher inflation in recent years through its various grants and subsidies, which are indexed to inflation. These include:
 - Subsidies for medical travel
 - The Yukon Child Benefit
 - Social Assistance Payments
 - Student Financial Assistance
 - Seniors' benefits
 - The Pioneer Utility grant
 - The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
 - Residential rent caps
- The Yukon's minimum wage is also responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the previous year.
- After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage increased a further 4.9 per cent to \$17.59 per hour on April 1, 2024.
- The Yukon's minimum wage is the second highest wage in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

- These increases also contribute towards the strong earnings growth we continue to see in the territory, where average weekly earnings grew 6.1 per cent over the first half of 2024. This is the strongest growth in the country.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has fallen from historical highs, but Yukoners are still dealing with higher prices for a variety of goods and services following a lengthy period of elevated inflation.
- The moderation of inflationary pressures that began to take hold late last year has continued into 2024. Growth in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been much lower in every month in 2024, and inflation in recent months has been near or below the historic average of 2 per cent.

Background:

Inflation – Recent performance and outlook

- Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, the Bank of Canada has made three 25 basis point cuts in 2024, with the overnight rate dropping from 5.0 per cent to 4.25 per cent. Expectations of further rate cuts this year and in 2025, could further reduce pressure on shelter prices as mortgage rates decline.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

- Both locally and nationally, price pressures have lessened, and inflation continues to trend towards historic norms. The current outlook for the Whitehorse CPI reflects expectations of a return to 'normal' levels of inflation, with the inflation forecast of 2 per cent in 2024, much improved from 4.9 per cent in 2023 and 6.8 per cent in 2022. Beyond 2024, annual inflation is expected to remain at 2 per cent over the remainder of the five-year forecast.

PROGRAMS AND OTHER MEASURES THAT SUPPORT AFFORDABILITY

Five-Year Capital Plan projects supporting housing affordability (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The **Old Crow 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing** facility is complete and opened in April 2024.
- Construction of the **10-plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake** began in the summer of 2023. It is scheduled to be completed in the fall 2024.
- Construction of the **Faro and Dawson Duplex** projects started in summer 2023 and is now complete.
- Groundwork began at the old **Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse** in September 2024 and we are aiming for completion in spring 2026. When completed, the new complex is anticipated to deliver over 45 new units.

Universal Child Care Program (Education)

- Universal child care is available to all Yukon families using licensed child care spaces. The universal child care program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day, on average, for families across the Yukon.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Dental Care program (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon's Dental Program was launched in 2023 and provides \$1,300 per year in dental benefits to Yukoners without dental coverage. The program will cover dental treatments necessary to relieve pain and infection, prevent disease, treat cavities, and restore chewing and social function. It will also offer full coverage for preventive care, such as routine dental cleaning.

Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

- On April 1, 2023, the Department of Economic Development launched the Paid Sick Leave Rebate. The program runs for two 12-month blocks:
 - April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024; and
 - April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025
- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate is a temporary program that offers up to 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees and self-employed Yukoners that earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94/hour. The program includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program). The program is available to employees regardless of whether their employer offers paid sick leave, though employees must use all paid sick leave available to them through their employer before they are eligible for the Paid Sick Leave Rebate. The program is still in effect and will run until March 31, 2025.

Yukon Child Benefit (Health and Social Services and Finance)

- The Yukon Child Benefit provides monthly payments to modest and low-income households who have children under 18. The maximum benefit per child is now tied to inflation, effective the 2023–24 benefit year.

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Inflation and Affordability

(Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement provides a monthly income supplement for eligible Yukoner senior's receiving Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from the federal government. This amount is adjusted for inflation in October, each year.

Inflation Relief Rebate and Interim Electrical Rebate (Yukon Development Corporation)

- The Inflation Relief Rebate, a \$50 rebate that was automatically applied to electrical customers' bills, was a temporary measure to address inflation. The Inflation Relief Rebate was most recently applied to all ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy bills for November and December 2023 and January 2024.
- The Interim Electrical Rebate continues to provide residential electrical customers with a maximum rebate of \$22.62 per month based on the electricity they consume, up to 1,000 kilowatt hours (up to \$271.44 per year). This affordability measure will continue until March 2025.

Social Assistance Review (Health and Social Services)

- Health and Social Services is undertaking a review of the Yukon's Social Assistance rates to inform options to improve the delivery of the program and ensure it is meeting the needs of program clients.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

Out of Home Childcare Increases (Health and Social Services)

- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, Health and Social Services provided an ongoing 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care in 2023-24, on top of the annual indexed increase.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

- Combined, this amounted to a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers. The new rates are as follows:
 - o Whitehorse: \$46.86 per day
 - o Rural Communities: \$50.16 per day
 - o Old Crow: \$86.40 per day
- Rates are indexed annually to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index, with an increase of 2.4% scheduled to take effect in October 2024.

Supportive Housing (Health and Social Services)

- \$777,000 for Safe at Home will go towards establishing temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Rental Subsidy (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit offers a rental subsidy for low-to-moderate income renters.

Comprehensive Municipal Grant (Community Services)

- The Comprehensive Municipal Grant is how the Government of Yukon directly funds municipal governments. This core funding supplements municipal resources and pays for vital services, like the provision of fresh drinking water, the collection of solid waste and recycling, recreation programming and other services as required under the Municipal Act and other legislation.
- The high inflation seen in 2022 (6.8 per cent) increased the grant payments provided in April 2024. This resulted in a \$2.3 million increase for Yukon municipalities with overall contributions of over \$24.5 million for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Session Briefing Note
Inflation and Affordability
(Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency and offset costs (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- Energy efficiency rebate programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- Between January 1, 2018, and June 30, 2024, 286 high-performance retrofits to residential, commercial and institutional buildings have been completed across the territory.
- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 25, 2024

 Deputy Minister
 Department of Finance

 Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

Recommended response:

- Since its introduction in 2019, the Government of Yukon has been supportive of carbon pricing as a policy to help us reduce emissions and move toward our ambitious climate targets.
- We take a balanced approach to carbon pricing in the territory, one which considers the need to reduce emissions as well as the fair return of carbon pricing revenues to Yukoners.
- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral. We are committed to both reducing carbon emissions in the territory and to returning all the federal government's revenues to Yukoners.
- Returning proceeds to individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations, businesses, and mining operations is a critical part of our approach to carbon pricing in the Yukon.
- We are returning 100 per cent of the federal carbon levy to these five rebate groups who receive more, on average, than they pay in carbon pricing levies.

Additional response:

- The departments of Environment and Finance work together to coordinate with our federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing in the territory and to ensure the needs of the territory are recognized in national policy.
- This includes retaining control over how revenues are distributed back to Yukon individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations and businesses.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

- It also includes excluding the carbon price from electricity generation and aviation, in recognition of the unique constraints of our northern jurisdiction.

Third response:

- Carbon pricing is just one tool in our toolkit to address the climate emergency.
 - We continue to implement Our Clean Future to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and, more broadly, to reduce the impact of the carbon levy on Yukoners.
 - In December of last year, we announced 42 new actions under Our Clean Future as part of the third Our Clean Future annual report outlining the progress we have made on the strategy.
 - Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our target of reducing our emissions by 45 per cent by 2030.
 - Ensuring that we utilize every policy lever at our disposal, including carbon pricing, is essential to meet our goals.
 - Together, we are finding solutions to reduce our emissions while strengthening our economy and supporting our industry partners.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Carbon pricing remains a highly sensitive topic across the country with many provinces and territories voicing their own perspective on how they would like to see this pricing mechanism handled moving forward.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

- In October 2023, the federal government announced a temporary 3-year exemption for home-heating oil from the federal carbon price, with the intention of helping Atlantic Canada in particular.
 - While Atlantic Canada welcomed this change, the exemption has received considerable backlash. Most provincial governments (except for British Columbia) have called for extending the carbon price exemption to all home-heating fuels (including natural gas).
 - Critics also argued that the exemption undermines the credibility of the carbon tax and may weaken the incentives to switch to lower carbon heating options.
-

Background:

- The federal Draft Regulations Amending the Fuel Charge Regulations stipulate that all heating oil will be exempt from the fuel charge starting November 8, 2023, until April 2027.
- This means that light fuel oil consumption in all buildings, including residential, commercial, and institutional, will be exempt from the fuel charge.
- Nearly half (49.2% in 2022) of Yukon homes use oil-based heating.
- In Yukon, individuals, businesses, placer/quartz mining operations, Yukon First Nations governments and municipal governments are all eligible for a rebate for carbon pricing.
- Individuals who live outside of Whitehorse receive a remote supplement, which was recently increased from 10 to 20% (and is now in line with the federal remote supplement for backstop jurisdictions including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Saskatchewan).
- On September 12, 2024, British Columbia's Premier David Eby announced that if the federal government were to remove the carbon pricing backstop, then British Columbia would end the carbon levy in the province.
- British Columbia has had its own carbon pricing system in place since 2008.

Session Briefing Note

Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)

- British Columbia and the Yukon were the remaining supporters of carbon pricing as a climate change policy, with all other provinces publicly opposing the federal system. In late 2023, the newly elected Premier of the Northwest Territories also called for an exemption from the federal carbon levy for the territory.
- To date, Canada has been firm on granting no exception to the backstop.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

October 2, 2024

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Jessica Schultz

October 1, 2024

Deputy Minister of Finance

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

TAB# YG07

Fall 2024

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon recognizes the seriousness of the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine on June 24 and is treating the response as a government priority that reflects the urgency of the situation.
- Our priorities are to ensure the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and to protect the environment.
- An Independent Review Board has been established to investigate the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine. Three highly qualified experts are on the Independent Review Board. The objective of the investigation is to determine the causes of the heap leach facility failure.
- We are committed to working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to develop remediation strategies for the failure. A joint team of technical experts hired by the Government of Yukon and the First Nation meet on a regular basis to inform our actions.
- For the most up to date information on the situation at Eagle Gold Mine and actions we are taking, you can visit Yukon.ca/victoria-gold-updates.

Additional responses:

- On August 14, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was appointed by the court as Receiver of the assets and property of Victoria Gold Corp.

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The Receiver is responsible for overseeing remediation of the heap leach failure and its environmental impacts, including compliance with territorial and federal orders.

- The Government of Yukon is committed to a thorough accounting of events leading up to the failure and the development of recommendations so that a similar event does not happen again in the Yukon.
- Once the causes of the failure are determined by the Independent Review Board, this information will inform the most appropriate subsequent steps and potential investigations, including consideration of a public inquiry.
- As of September 4, 2024, there are 27 liens against Victoria Gold worth over \$58.7 million.

Environmental and health impacts:

- The Department of Health and Social Services is monitoring impacts on human health. This includes ongoing review of any technical information and water sampling results, as well as situational reports, as they become available. Results from surface water samples taken show that the regulated drinking water system serving the area continues to meet the guidelines for drinking water quality.
- Water is sampled both at the site and downstream of Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Mine. Water samples are collected regularly at select sites to monitor water quality. The results of the testing will let us know the

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impacts and inform next steps.

- Technical experts from the Government of Yukon, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans are working closely together to monitor the fish and wildlife in the surrounding areas of the Eagle Gold Mine.

Economic and labour market impacts:

- Operations ceased at Eagle Gold Mine after the heap leach failure occurred. This situation has changed the outlook for mineral production in the Yukon and resulted in a notable downward revision in the medium-term outlook for the Yukon's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The 2024-25 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update released in early October includes the latest forecasts for real GDP.
- At the close of 2023, Victoria Gold had 471 direct hires and another 134 on contract.
- Of the more than 600 employed, the company reported that about 34 per cent were local, amounting to approximately 200 local workers. This represents about 0.8 per cent of the territorial labour force.
- Any possible negative impacts on the labour market are expected to be short-lived, as many displaced workers are likely to be reabsorbed into what is currently a tight labour market. The Yukon's unemployment rate is about half the national figure and the local job vacancy rate has been among the highest in the country throughout

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- Monitoring of labour market data, such as the number of unemployed and the number of Employment Insurance claimants, for potential impacts of the mine closure is ongoing.
- As the Eagle Gold situation continues to unfold, we should have a better understanding if there may be longer-term impacts for the local economy.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The June 24, 2024 heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine affects the environmental and socio-economic wellbeing of Yukoners – from an environmental and business perspective.

Background:

- On June 24, 2024, a failure occurred at the heap leach facility of the Eagle Gold Mine operated by Victoria Gold Corporation.
- On July 30, 2024, the Premier provided remarks to the Council of Yukon First Nations' General Assembly on a variety of topics including mining and the incident at Eagle Gold Mine
- On August 5, 2024, the Premier provided a statement on mining activity in the Traditional Territory of First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 14, 2024, the Government of Yukon with First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, submitted an application for receivership of Eagle Gold Mine.
- On August 16, 2024, the receivership was granted. It was appointed to PricewaterhouseCoopers. Implementing a receiver is an established process under federal bankruptcy legislation. Decision making and responsibility has

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shifted from Victoria Gold to PricewaterhouseCoopers, with direction from the Yukon government.

- As of September 20, 2024, the Government of Yukon has done 10 technical briefings to continue to keep Yukoners informed with up-to-date information.
- The Yukon.ca website is updated on a regular basis along with weekly information bulletins to inform the public on the Victoria Gold heap leach failure's current situation.

Approved by:

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October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

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October 9, 2024

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October 9, 2024

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