



FOR RELEASE
January 28, 2015

Classes resuming for some Ross River students as early as today

WHITEHORSE—The Department of Education is moving forward with a plan that will have some students from Ross River return to class as early as today, with others in class by end of the week.

"Our priority has been to minimize the disruption to students and staff and to get them back to class as soon as possible," Minister of Education Doug Graham said. "With input from the community, the Department of Education has developed a plan that ensures students can stay in their community as they resume their studies. Beginning today, students will be returning to class on a phased-in schedule."

Based on the input from Chief and Council, school council, parents and teachers, a plan has been developed to deliver education to students in various locations in Ross River while the school building remains closed.

To accommodate the students in the community, the Hope Centre, the Mackenzie Building and a former teacher's residence will be used and two 12-foot by 48-foot mobile trailers provided by Yukon College will act as temporary classrooms near the community arena. Students will have access to bathroom facilities in the arena. The department is currently arranging for desks, books and other teaching materials, including computers and IT services, to be provided at all the facilities.

To ensure that the facilities are ready for students, the department has established a phased-in return-to-school schedule for students. The following schedule is tentative and dependent on facility preparations in the community:

- Seven students in half-day kindergarten will return to class at a former teacher's residence as early as today;
- 13 students in grades 10 are scheduled to return to class in the Mackenzie Building as early as today;
- Eight students in grades 1, 2, and 3 are scheduled to return to class at the Hope Centre on Thursday, January 29;
- Eight students in grades 4 and 5 are scheduled to return to class in the first mobile classroom on Thursday, January 29;
- Nine students in grade 6 and 7 are scheduled to begin in another designated classroom in the Mackenzie building on Thursday January 29; and
- 10 Students in grades 8 and 9 are scheduled to return to class in a second mobile classroom on Friday, January 30.

The Hope Centre will also act as the main administration office, the Kaska teacher workspace, and a hub for all students who participate in the breakfast and lunch programs. All of the temporary facilities are located close to The Hope Centre.

Yukon College will continue to operate training programs in its mobile trades trailer and at other facilities in the community. The Ross River Dene Cho Ké'endj campus is in the process of identifying a location to act as its main administration space.

"We are grateful to the Chief and Council, school council, school administration, school staff, and the community for their help in developing this plan," Graham added. "I would like to thank Chief Ladue and Council, the principal and school staff for their advice and guidance in helping us to develop these plans and departmental staff for implementing them." Graham noted that the plan is tentative and could be modified to meet the needs of students, teachers and the community.

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