



Department of Education

Annual Report 2018


Yukon

Note

This report fulfills the requirement of ss. 5 (h) of the *Education Act*, which requires the Minister of Education to table an annual report on the state of education in Yukon. This report focuses on the activities of the Schools and Student Services Division and related support from other areas of the Department of Education.

It reports on the activities of 2018 and reflects information current as of December 31, 2018.

Student and school performance indicators and statistical data are available online on the Department of Education website: www.education.gov.yk.ca/performance.html.

Information on additional Department of Education programs and services, including the “Labour Market Report” and other reports, is available on the Department of Education website at: www.education.gov.yk.ca/publications.html.



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Public education in Yukon

Under the *Education Act*, the department is responsible for delivering accessible and quality education to Yukon learners. We work closely with our partners in education, including Yukon First Nations, and school communities to develop and improve our programs and practices.

More student and school performance indicators and data are available online on the Department of Education website: www.education.gov.yk.ca/performance.html.



Message from the Minister

I am honoured to present the 2018 Annual Report for the Department of Education. Every day, work continues to serve our citizens' needs and aspirations for a better Yukon. The foundation for all our work is education, because it is through life-long learning that we develop individuals' and communities' capacity to realize their goals.

We are all learners. The Department of Education supports learning from cradle throughout careers, and our staff are dedicated to improving public school, adult learning and labour market outcomes. The department also learns from students, teachers and staff to ensure our decisions on programs and services are made with the best interests of students of all ages in mind.

Partnerships are fundamental to building thriving Yukon communities, recognizing local needs, local interests and local solutions. Over the past year, we have been continuing to strengthen our collaborative relationships with Yukon First Nations, other governments, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, school councils, the Yukon Teachers' Association, Yukon College and community groups. We must all work together as partners to achieve the best for all our learners.

Thank you to each of these partners, and all our staff, who are contributing to this collaboration. Your work makes a difference every day, as reflected in the progress we are making toward bringing our new student-centered curriculum to life, advancing reconciliations with Yukon First Nations, planning for new and renovated facilities, and improving outcomes for learners throughout the territory, at all stages of their lives.

Education is a key part of our government's mandate to support vibrant and sustainable communities and happy, healthy people. Thanks again to all our staff and partners who contribute to lifelong learning.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracy-Anne McPhee'.

Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee
Minister of Education



Message from the Deputy Minister

I'd like to recognize the hard work of our staff and their expertise and collaboration with our partners, stakeholders and each other.

There is big work underway around the world, across Canada and in Yukon to modernize education and ensure today's learners are developing the skills they will need for their careers and their lives.

In response to advances in technology, evolving best practices in teaching and learning for all ages, our commitment to reconciliation with Yukon First Nations, and vital community relationships, our department and schools have been rapidly evolving to ensure we can prepare Yukoners of all ages for careers and continued learning in their communities or any place in the world.

We are a large organization, with over 1,100 staff in locations throughout the territory. To align our work and improve our programs and services, our department is focusing on sustaining internal and external relationships to deliver educational programs that effectively support successful learning outcomes for Yukoners of all ages. We are encouraging the development of growth mindsets, building on strengths and a commitment to continuous learning across our entire organization, from students to staff.

My thanks to the school, program and corporate staff; Yukon Teachers' Association; school councils; Council of Yukon First Nations; First Nations Education Commission; Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon; Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees; Catholic Education Association of Yukon; and to all the families and community volunteers. The success of Yukon's learners is thanks to our work together. Let's continue to build a good trail together to improve learning outcomes for Yukoners.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nicole Morgan".

Nicole Morgan
Deputy Minister
Department of Education

At a glance

Unless noted otherwise, all data is valid as of May 31, 2018.

Public schools	30
Students in K4-12	5,386
Rural	1,103
Whitehorse	4,283
Female	2,548
Male	2,838
First Nations	1,672
First Nations languages	2,089
French Second Language (from October 31, 2017)	2,458
French Immersion	768
French First Language	285
With Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) (On Jan 22, 2018)	566
Teachers deployed, not including CSFY	490.12
Paraprofessionals deployed	243.27
Aboriginal Language Teachers	40.04
Average spending per student in K-12 (actuals from October 31, 2017 student enrolment)	\$20,066
Registered apprentices (total for 2018)	566
Receiving student financial assistance for postsecondary studies	956
Average amount of student financial aid	5,101

*includes Aurora Virtual School and the Individual Learning Centre.

**includes Aboriginal Language Teachers, Aboriginal language speakers, and trainees in the 2017-18 school year.

***includes all direct operation and maintenance costs for Yukon schools, including salaries for school-based staff, materials, supplies, equipment, security, grounds keeping and utilities.

Student and school performance indicators and data are available online on the Department of Education website: www.education.gov.yk.ca/performance.html.

Modernizing learning in Yukon

In the 2017-18 school year, we continued work on modernizing education in Yukon. We work closely with our partners in education, including on the Advisory committee for Yukon education, to support learners from cradle to career. Our work on modernizing education includes implementing the new curriculum with more hands on learning, integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing in all subjects and grade levels, increasing the use of technology to support student learning, updating how we assess students and evaluate teachers, and ensuring that learning at all levels prepares students for future academic growth as well as career and personal goals.

Advisory Committee for Yukon education

The Advisory Committee for Yukon education is one of the ways the Government of Yukon works with partners in education to collaborate and exchange perspectives while continuing to recognize and respect unique relationships, such as government-to-government relationships with Yukon First Nations. We work with the advisory committee to gather advice and perspectives from partners on supporting students of all ages in Yukon.

The membership includes the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Ministers of the Department of Education, school staff and representatives from the Council of Yukon First Nations; the First Nations Education Commission; the Yukon Teachers' Association; the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees; the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon; the Catholic Education Association of Yukon; Yukon College; and the Association of Yukon School Administrators.

Together with the committee, we developed Living in Yukon, Thriving in Life, our collective priorities and goals for education in Yukon, which informs how we modernize learning in Yukon, including what, when and how students learn; the ways we support and assess student learning; and, how we work with our community and system-level partners to ensure our education system is meeting the needs of all students. The Committee also previously reviewed and provided recommendations and guiding principles for implementing the new school curriculum and student assessment and reporting practices.

During the 2017-18 school year, we focused on implementing many of the recommendations from this committee as we introduced the new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9. The advisory committee resumed meeting in September 2018, which included reporting on progress of the implementation of Yukon's modernized school curriculum, how student assessment and reporting practices have changed and next steps for teacher evaluations and school growth planning.



The Department of Education engages in partnership with Yukon First Nations on several levels. The work of the advisory committee does not replace our work with Yukon First Nations, but rather assists us in identifying alignment with joint priorities.

New curriculum

Yukon schools started to introduce changes to the Kindergarten to Grade 9 curriculum during the 2017-18 school year. Yukon schools follow BC's new curriculum and graduation program. In 2018, we confirmed we would continue to follow BC's implementation timeline for the new curriculum and graduation program, introducing the new curriculum for Grade 10 in 2018-19 and Grades 11 and 12 in 2019-20.

The new curriculum for Grade 10 was introduced in August 2018 for the 2018-19 school year. The new curriculum better supports student engagement and learning success by developing the skills students need to be lifelong learners and enabling meaningful integrated learning experiences connected to future career paths.

While Yukon follows BC's new curriculum, Yukon schools use Yukon resources to teach the curriculum and Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing and Yukon content are being incorporated into every grade. Schools are focusing on skills development in literacy, numeracy, communication, critical and creative thinking and personal-social responsibility. Students are learning more local knowledge, trades, hands-on learning, finance and career education.

Technology and learning

Part of modernizing learning in Yukon schools and supporting the implementation of the new curriculum means identifying opportunities to integrate technology and support educators and students with modern learning resources. Access to new technology empowers teachers and students to:

- take their learning beyond the classroom;
- personalize their learning;
- store and access their work at any time or place;
- receive timely support as needed; and
- develop essential skills for the future.

Devices and infrastructure

Our Information Technology and Support Services team supports the use of technology in our schools through upgrading, securing and optimizing network infrastructure, increasing bandwidth in schools and increasing access to mobile and other computing devices.



During the 2017-18 school year, Information Technology and Support Services introduced 500 new computing devices across 10 Yukon schools as part of the final year of a five-year hardware refresh plan. Devices included Apple desktop iMacs, MacBook laptops and iPads. In total, the number of devices across schools increased from 4,100 to 4,300. Moving forward, the department is moving towards an enrolment-based hardware refresh plan that will increase the number of computing devices and mobile computing devices available to students.

Information Technology and Support Services also completed several major projects including: increasing wireless capacity at several schools, including Robert Service School in Dawson City; upgrading and modernizing the network infrastructure at Porter Creek Secondary School and Vanier Secondary School to match the new standard set at the newer F.H. Collins Secondary School; redesigning and reconfiguring several school networks to accommodate more computing devices; increasing internal network bandwidth by optimizing networks and using faster fiber internet links for schools in Riverdale and Porter Creek; and increasing internet bandwidth links to several schools, including Johnson Elementary School and Watson Lake Secondary School in Watson Lake.

In addition to new devices and infrastructure, Information Technology and Support Services also completed several major projects to simplify and increase the use of modern online learning tools. Projects included: reducing the number of usernames and passwords for teachers and students and simplifying access to a suite of online learning programs and tools; upgrading every network file server at all schools to improve network storage; and several support projects to prepare schools for using online tools, such as FreshGrade, Moodle, Google Suite and Microsoft Office 365.

Training and support: connecting devices and online learning tools with the curriculum

Curriculum consultants also provided professional development opportunities and support to educators and schools on how to use devices and online learning tools to connect with the curriculum. Curriculum consultants provide support through scheduled professional development days, learning networks and ongoing visits to schools throughout the school year.

For example, at the 2017 Summer Academy, several technology workshops were offered, including: coding, robotics, iPad 101 & 201, Mac 101 & 201, using digital resources, Microsoft Office 365, Apple Teacher and Introduction to Interactive Whiteboards. Professional development days and ongoing support on these topics continued throughout the school year, with a focus on using technology to draw connections to learning outcomes in the new Applied Design, Skills and Technologies curriculum and using Fresh Grade, an online learning tool teachers are using to create digital student portfolios.

As the focus on technology and modernizing learning environments continues, the Information Technology and Support Services team and curriculum consultants continue to support teachers and schools with their efforts to integrate technology into the classroom by identifying priority schools for upgrades and support to ensure access to technology and digital learning tools at all schools.

Teacher evaluation

Educators are an important part of ensuring students in Yukon are successful in their learning and are key to the successful implementation of the new curriculum in Yukon. The Government of Yukon supports the professional development of teachers through ongoing training and resources. One way we support the continued growth of teachers is through evaluation. Evaluation helps guide the ongoing performance of staff, promoting quality instruction and continuous improvement of professional practice. The Government of Yukon has worked with educators and other partners, including Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Teachers' Association, through the Teacher Evaluation Committee to develop a new model for teacher evaluation in Yukon.

The Teacher Evaluation Committee met a number of times during the 2017-18 school year to develop the new model for teacher evaluation. The committee identified important focus areas for the new evaluation model, including professional growth for teachers, aligning standards and expectations with the new school curriculum, identifying improvement plans for teachers who need support, and identifying processes for Yukon First Nations and school councils to provide input. The new evaluation model is consistent with new approaches to the school curriculum and assessment practices. It outlines four key areas for evaluating educators:

1. planning and preparation;
2. the learning environment;
3. instruction; and
4. professional responsibility.

The new teacher evaluation model is being refined and phased in over the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years.

Assessment for Learning

Like many schools in Canada and globally, Yukon educators are increasingly using assessment for learning approaches when they assess student progress in the development of key skills. Assessment for learning means that teachers look at ongoing evidence of student progress and use it to decide on teaching methods that will support the student in further learning. It also means teacher feedback and the student's own self-assessment are used to guide students toward their learning goals. Assessment for learning measures student achievement at defined points in the school year and provides evidence of student progress toward learning goals.



These ways of using assessment are part of the changes to Yukon's curriculum. The shift to assessment for learning started in 2011 and included ongoing training opportunities for teachers. During the 2017-18 school year, schools started to follow the Interim Guide on Student Assessment, which can be found on the Department of Education website at: www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/schools/Interim_Guide_on_Student_Assessment_2017.pdf. The Interim Guide on Student Assessment was released as part of the curriculum changes in June 2017. The interim guide was developed with recommendations from the Yukon Education Assessment Committee, a group of 40 Yukon educators, including representation from Yukon First Nations and school councils, on how to change the way teachers assess and report on student learning. Schools were given the option to start shifting to Option 1 in the Interim Guide on Student Assessment during the 2017-18, 2018-19 or 2019-20 school years.

Examples of the new way to report student achievement include:

- basing report cards on recent and consistent work to best reflect students' understanding and learning progress;
- teaching students how to self-assess their strengths and areas for improvement for certain skills, noted on the final report card;
- providing performance descriptions instead of letter grades for Grades 4-9, which give more thorough information and show how students are learning to assess their strengths and areas for improvement. Schools are providing parents with a table of matching letter grades.

The main changes to student assessment in the interim guidelines include:

- flexibility to increase parent and student involvement in the learning process using ongoing informal feedback in conversation with parents and students;
- use of examples of student work to show learning progress.

Option 1 in the Interim Guide on Student Assessment enables schools to focus on informal communication about student achievement. It requires schools to provide at least one final written report card and up to five informal reports. Informal reports support ongoing and regular updates from the school to parents about their child's learning, including their work habits and behavior and their progress in meeting the new curriculum's core competencies and learning outcomes. Informal reports may include showing parents examples of school work and learning progress using a student portfolio; it may also include opportunities to attend goal-setting and student-led conferences and other teacher meetings at the school; they may also come as e-mails and phone calls home.

Option 2 enables schools to continue with previous guidelines that requires schools to provide three to four report cards and two informal reports. We will hear feedback from parents, schools and school councils again in spring 2019 before the guidelines are finalized and the changes are fully adopted by the 2019-20 school year.

Schools who are following Option 1 in the 2018-19 school year are: Grey Mountain Primary School, Hidden Valley Elementary School, Jack Hulland Elementary School, Kluane Lake School, Nelna Bessie John School, Takhini Elementary School, Khàtinas.àxh Community School, Watson Lake Secondary School, Johnson Elementary School, Whitehorse Elementary School, École Émilie Tremblay, Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, Christ the King Elementary School, Elijah Smith Elementary School, F.H. Collins Secondary School, Golden Horn Elementary School, Holy Family Elementary School, Porter Creek Secondary School, Robert Service School, Vanier Catholic Secondary School, Tantalus School and Selkirk Elementary School.

Schools who are following Option 2 in the 2018-19 school year are: Del Van Gorder School, Eliza Van Bibber School, Ghùch Tlâ Community School, J.V. Clarke School, Ross River School, and St. Elias Community School.

Yukon Education Assessment Committee nominated for Premier's Award of Excellence, Innovation

In April 2018, the Yukon Education Assessment Committee was nominated for the Premier's Award of Excellence in the category recognizing innovation.

The Yukon Education Assessment Committee is made up of more than 40 educators from different Yukon schools and facilitators from the Curriculum and Assessment unit and Policy and Partnerships branch at the Department of Education. While all staff have been preparing to implement the new school curriculum, this group went above and beyond, taking on additional work and leadership to research and lead these changes to how teachers assess and report on student learning. Their commitment to learn together with Elders and Knowledge Keepers was an inspiring example of authentic reconciliation in action, and resulted in work that has been acknowledged by educators across Canada.

Their thorough research and informed recommendations produced an innovative new resource for Yukon schools – the first iBook for professional learning for Yukon educators. This iBook features interactive tools such as videos of how to apply practices in the classroom. It summarizes guidelines on student assessment and includes on-demand professional learning resources within each chapter on different areas of student-centred assessment, so that teachers can personalize their learning as they shift approaches to evaluating learning and reporting to families.



Graduation Years

Schools in Yukon follow BC's graduation program along with the new curriculum. In the graduation years, from Grades 10-12, school programs prepare students with the skills, knowledge and understanding they will need for their future academic, professional or personal paths. Starting during the 2018-19 school year, students in Grades 10 will use the new curriculum. Students in Grades 11 and 12 will start using the new curriculum in 2019-20, following B.C.'s implementation timeline.

Yukon high schools started transitioning from the 2004 Graduation Program to the 2018 Graduation Program during the 2017-18 school year. In the new 2018 Graduation Program, there are no changes to the number of credits or courses that students are required to take. Students continue to take in-class exams and tests in the different subject areas. The main change in the 2018 Graduation Program is the introduction of new assessments in literacy and numeracy.

Numeracy and Literacy Assessments for graduating students

Students in the graduation years will start writing new numeracy and literacy assessments as the five BC Provincial Exams are replaced. This is part of the new 2018 Graduation Program. In the past, exams were about specific courses that students took in Grades 10-12. These new assessments cover knowledge and skills that students have learned from different subjects and grades, not just one course. Students are required to complete these assessments, and the results will be on their student transcripts as a separate score along with their Grades 10-12 course marks. Universities, colleges and training institutions look at student transcripts, among other information, to consider requirements for their programs.

The new Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment was introduced in Yukon in June 2018. There will be a Grade 10 Literacy Assessment introduced in 2019-20 and a Grade 12 Literacy Assessment introduced in the 2020-21 school year. Students will have the opportunity to take these assessments up to three times throughout their graduating years to help identify areas where they need to improve their learning and increase their focus.

Samples of the Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment are on the BC Ministry of Education website: curriculum.gov.bc.ca/assessment/numeracy-assessment.

As schools transitioned to the new 2018 Graduation Program during 2017-18, they phased out the old 2004 program. For students in the 2018-19 school year, this transition is identified in the chart below.

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Students who entered Grade 9 in 2018-19:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the 2018 Graduation Program requirements (80 credits). Write the Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment and the Grade 10 Graduation Literacy Assessment in their Grade 10 year. Write the Grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessment in their Grade 12 year.
Students who entered Grade 10 in 2018-19:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the 2018 Graduation Program requirements (80 credits). Write the Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment this year or in their Grade 11 year. Write the Grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessment in their Grade 12 year
Students who entered Grade 11 in 2018-19:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the 2018 Graduation Program requirements (80 credits). Meet Math 10, English Language Arts 10, Science 10 and will meet Social Studies 11 requirements, or their equivalents, with in-class tests/exams instead of provincial exams. Write the Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment this year or next year (if not already written.)
Students who entered Grade 12 in 2018-19:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the 2018 Graduation Program requirements (80 credits). Meet Math 10, English Language Arts 10, Science 10 and Social Studies 11 requirements, or their equivalents, with in-class tests/exams instead of provincial exams. Take English Language Arts 12 (or equivalent) and write the associated provincial exam. Write the Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment (if not already written and Math 10 provincial exam not written)

Agencies in the Schools

The new school curriculum is flexible and encourages hands-on, personalized, place-based and community-based learning opportunities for students. One way the department is supporting schools in connecting with community-based learning opportunities is through the Agencies in the Schools program. Superintendents and the Director of Curriculum and Assessment meet with different agencies in our communities who are interested in providing learning opportunities for students. They review the learning opportunities and programs that community agencies can provide to ensure they connect students to the learning outcomes in the new curriculum. One example of an agency that has been working with our school is the Invasive Species Council, which runs workshops on the various invasive species students may encounter in Yukon. The workshops address learning outcomes for students in Grades 10-12 science courses. They focus on the effects invasive species can have on biological systems and biodiversity. The workshops give students the advantage of learning about the environment they live in from a working professional in their community. Curriculum consultants work together with Yukon schools to recommend different agencies and workshops that can benefit students.

Career and Personal Learning

With the curriculum changes, career education will happen in all grades beginning in Kindergarten with students exploring skills and interests and gradually shifting toward a focus on personal paths and greater self-awareness, including the role of volunteerism. During the Graduation Years, students are required to complete 8 credits in Career Education courses. Yukon high schools offer courses for career and personal learning. In Grade 8, students take Career Education as part of the new school curriculum. This helps them understand themselves as lifelong learners and explore career options.

As part of the 2018 Graduation Program, Planning 10 and Graduation Transitions courses will be phased out through the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years and replaced with Career Life Education and Career Life Connections. These courses will continue to focus on developing a range of career and life skills to prepare for post-secondary education and work.

Training and professional development for educators

In 2017-18, we provided a variety of professional development and learning opportunities to school staff to deepen their understanding of modern and culturally inclusive approaches to learning and implementing the new curriculum.

Summer Academy

At the start of the 2017-18 school year, Yukon educators gathered for Summer Academy, a two-day professional development conference in Whitehorse. Educators and community leaders led sessions to help prepare educators for the implementation of the new curriculum and to support Yukon students throughout their learning.

Administrators and teachers heard from keynote speakers on teaching for all learners and on lifelong learning in Yukon. They also participated in a variety of workshops and breakout sessions on the following topics:

- New curriculum
- Classroom assessment
- Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing
- Technology
- Flexible and personalized learning
- Pulling it all together/sample units

Educational assistants and remedial tutors heard from keynote speakers on reconciliation in education, on trauma and attachment issues in educational settings, and on healing historic trauma through a restorative approach. They also participated in workshops and breakout sessions on the following topics:

- Self-regulation
- Behaviour is communication
- Vicarious trauma and self-care
- Executive function

School-based professional development for the new curriculum

Throughout the year, school-based professional development days gave educators time to learn together. In 2017-18, professional development days focused on supporting educators and learners through the implementation of the new curriculum. School staff led their own professional development activities as well as worked with Department of Education consultants.

Topics that educators learned about during professional development days included:

- Embedding the assessment of core competencies into classroom instruction
- Balanced literacy and the core competencies in classroom instruction
- Developing units for the new curriculum
- Exploring connections between curriculum and school growth plans
- Supporting student self-assessment and reporting of core competencies
- Culturally relevant assessment tools based on First Nations principles
- Documenting learning experiences with portfolios
- Language learning strategies (neurolinguistics approach)
- Teaching the English First Peoples course
- Applied design, skills and technologies workshops
- Balanced literacy support for educational assistants
- Teaching about sexual health and understanding the sexual health learning standards
- Communicating student learning: Informal reporting and formal reporting
- Instructional design: Integration of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing into cross-curricular units
- Using Department of Education supported apps as assessment tools
- Connecting new curriculum resources to meaningful professional learning
- Digital portfolios using Fresh Grade
- Blanket exercises to learn about First Nations history in Canada
- Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing: What do teachers need to know, do and understand?
- Informal reporting: goal setting and student-led conferencing
- Social studies 10 - Indian Residential School Training
- Embedding Core Competencies in a trapping experience
- First Nations land-based experiences and options
- Training for Yukon Foundation Skills Assessment numeracy and literacy marking
- Decolonizing the classroom
- Big ideas in science – introduction to inquiry
- Part of the Water: embedded First Nations ways of knowing and doing
- Meeting the diverse needs of learners: supporting English language learners

Applied Design, Skills and Technology Learning Network:

The department hosted an Applied Design, Skills and Technologies Learning Network during the 2017-18 school year, led by one of our curriculum consultants. This learning network provided teachers across schools the opportunity to connect and explore different ways to use technology in the classroom to support learning. Teachers from Chief Zzeh Gittlit School in Old Crow provide an excellent example of using modern technology to explore the local Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation traditional ways of knowing and doing and language. They worked closely with Vuntut Gwitchin Elders and Education Support Workers from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to explore and map the regions near Old Crow using traditional mapping and engaging students by having them build and design the maps on computing devices using the building video game, Minecraft.



Learning networks

During the 2017-18 school year, Yukon educators worked collaboratively in learning networks to seek ways to improve their students' learning. They led their own learning by identifying an area of professional inquiry they would like to focus on to improve student outcomes.

In 2017-18, the learning intentions were to:

- Empower participants to engage others in an inquiry-based professional learning group at the school level
- Deepen understanding of the new K-9 curriculum and the draft 10-12 curriculum
- Build the capacity of teachers to embed competency assessment experiences into classroom instruction, guide students in the self-assessment of competencies and transition to reporting by learning standards
- Use assessment to build relationships.

The year's work culminated in two Celebration of Learning events, where educators shared the results of their learning networks with their peers. There were a total of 19 presentations that touched on the following topics:

- Meeting the needs of 21st century learners
- Strengthening students' inquiry skills
- Student goal setting, self-management and communication of learning
- Building social skills through applied design, skills and technologies
- Engaging students through identity
- Supporting inclusion and growth mindset strategies
- Improving students' self-monitoring behaviours during reading
- Embedding Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing across the curriculum
- Fostering school-based learning networks

Four educators also shared their learning at the Network of Inquiry and Innovation Symposium in Vancouver in May 2018. A total of 16 Yukon educators attended this symposium to learn from other education leaders in Canada and brought their learning back into their classrooms and schools.

First Nations education

We work with all 14 Yukon First Nations governments, the Chiefs' Committee on Education, as well as the Council of Yukon First Nations and the First Nations Education Commission on joint priorities for Yukon's education system.

We are also working with Yukon First Nations on modernizing education in Yukon. This includes working in partnership on creating more culturally inclusive schools and implementing a place-based, culturally responsive curriculum, and providing cultural awareness training to staff. Together, we work to support First Nations learners and to educate all Yukon students about Yukon First Nations people and the importance of reconciliation.

Education agreements with Yukon First Nations

Yukon First Nations are essential partners in supporting First Nations students and in teaching all Yukon students about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing.

The Government of Yukon currently has active education agreements with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the following five Yukon First Nations governments:

- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- Selkirk First Nation;
- Kluane First Nation;
- the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun; and
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation.

We also continue to discuss the development of education agreements with other Yukon First Nations governments.

These agreements reflect our government-to-government relationships and our commitment to reconciliation. They identify the unique educational needs and priorities of each of these First Nations. We are working with each government to develop an implementation plan to support the school and improve educational outcomes for the citizens of their Traditional Territory.

Through these agreements and other initiatives like Yukon's new curriculum, we are building and delivering school programs that embed Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing, cultures, history and languages in all grades. Yukon schools and department staff will continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments to support the success of their students, and all Yukon students.

Khàtinas.àxh Community School new name for Teslin Community School

In September 2018, the Teslin Tlingit Council, the Teslin School Council, students, parents and Teslin residents celebrated the school's renaming. The new name is Khàtinas.àxh (pronounced "Kaw keen ah sa") Community School, honouring the late Billy Fox, a respected and beloved member of the community who was a proponent of a school in Teslin. The name was Billy Fox's Tlingit name. It is a Kookhittaàn Clan name, which means, "A raven that can be heard a long time after he is gone. He still makes noise like an echo." Renaming the school honours the language and culture of the people of Teslin and the history of the community.



Yukon First Nations language programs

Yukon First Nations have identified the restoration and revitalization of their languages as a critical priority.

We offer school-based First Nations language programs for students of all ages. We also work with and support the Council of Yukon First Nations' Yukon Native Language Centre to train Yukon First Nations language teachers and trainees and collaborate with the centre to support language programs in Yukon schools.

Yukon First Nations languages are endangered. These programs are possible because of the work of Yukon's Aboriginal Language Teachers and the Elders who have mentored them, sharing their knowledge of their languages with the next generation of speakers. Thanks to their dedication to preserving and revitalizing their languages, Yukon students have the opportunity to learn Gwich'in, Hän, Kaska, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Tlingit and Upper Tanana in their schools and communities.

First Nations language programs in Yukon schools

In 2017-18, we offered Yukon First Nations language programs in the following schools:

Language	School
Gwich'in	Chief Zzeh Gittlit School
	F.H. Collins Secondary School
	Porter Creek Secondary
Hän	Robert Service School
Kaska	Johnson Elementary School
	Watson Lake Secondary School
	Ross River School
Northern Tutchone	Eliza Van Bibber School
	J.V. Clark School
	Tantalus School
Southern Tutchone	Elijah Smith Elementary School
	Hidden Valley Elementary School
	Jack Hulland Elementary School
	Porter Creek Secondary School
	Selkirk Elementary School
	Takhini Elementary School
	Whitehorse Elementary School
	Kluane Lake School
	St. Elias Community School
Tlingit	Ghùch Tlâ Community School
	Khàtinas.àxh Community School
	F.H. Collins Secondary School
Upper Tanana	Nelna Bessie John School

In the 2017-18 school year, 2,089 students took a Yukon First Nations language class, which is about 39% of Yukon students. These programs are well established and well attended in elementary and middle school; however, enrolment and retention are lower at the high school level.



Yukon Native Language Centre

Revitalizing Yukon First Nation languages and restoring First Nations' control over and responsibility for their languages is an essential part of the Government of Yukon's work toward reconciliation.

The Yukon Native Language Centre provides key services in training and certifying new First Nations language teachers, preserving and documenting Yukon First Nations languages, and developing curriculum and other learning resources.

In the past, responsibility for the centre was shared between the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Department of Education. In January 2018, the Government of Yukon transferred full responsibility and administration of all of the centre's resources and programs to the Council of Yukon First Nations. This change will help the centre become more responsive to Yukon First Nations' needs and aspirations, and be better able to support Yukon First Nations community-based language programs.

Currently the centre is developing a work plan that will include the provision of training for Aboriginal Language Teachers and Trainees. As more communities, such as the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, begin to develop their own adult language training programs, we are also discussing the role of the centre, the existing school-based resources and funding and ways we can collaborate in providing Aboriginal language instruction to students.

We will continue to provide funding to support the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Native Language Centre for the important work of Yukon First Nations language revitalization. We will also continue to invest in training of Yukon First Nations language teachers and trainees that can teach Yukon students Yukon First Nations languages.

Reconciliation in education

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and advance reconciliation in Canada. This report included calls to action for elementary and secondary education.

Call to Action #62 calls upon the territorial government, along with federal and provincial governments, and in consultation and collaboration with survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, a mandatory requirement for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students.

Since the 2014-15 school year, Social Studies 10 classes in Yukon schools have included a mandatory unit about the history and impacts of residential schools in Yukon and in Canada. Every year, educators new to teaching this unit participate in a mandatory, two-day training. In spring 2018, we began developing an age-appropriate curriculum unit on residential schools for students in Grade 5 with educators and Yukon First Nations partners.

Beyond this, the new curriculum contains age-appropriate content related to Indigenous peoples' history, which includes residential school history. Students of all ages learn about Yukon First Nations history, culture, languages and ways of knowing and doing throughout their education. We are working to localize the big ideas, curricular competencies and content of the new curriculum to make it more relevant to Yukon context and students' communities and experiences.

Joint Education Action Plan

The Joint Education Action Plan 2014-2024 is a 10-year agreement that resulted from a Tripartite Education Partnership agreement between Yukon, Canada, all 14 Yukon First Nations Governments and the Council of Yukon First Nations.

It focuses on ways to improve educational outcomes for First Nations students in Yukon by developing and promoting culturally inclusive schools, First Nations community priorities and capacity building, collaboration on protocols and evaluation, and foundational supports to improve educational achievement.

In the 2017-18 school year, work under this plan included:

- Delivering mandatory Yukon First Nations cultural awareness training for department staff, including school staff (Yukon First Nations 101);
- Rolling out the new cultural inclusion standards developed by the First Nations Education Commission, to be used in school growth planning;
- Increasing opportunities and supports to promote First Nations language fluency and language and cultural activities;
- Developing a process to collaborate on reporting on the performance of First Nations students each year; and
- Encouraging parents to actively participate in school communities at all levels, from volunteering to school councils to school reviews and growth planning.

Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing

Yukon schools have been evolving to better support First Nations students. There are many exciting initiatives taking place across Yukon schools to support the integration of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing into classrooms and school communities, including:

- Collaborative development, with First Nations language teachers, of culturally inclusive lessons around common themes.
- Development of lessons around culturally significant events such as the 45th anniversary celebration of Together Today for our Children Tomorrow on February 14, 2018.
- School cultural events that highlight Yukon First Nations culture (hand games, drumming, etc.)
- Use of circles, a traditional First Nations practice, for student check-ins, debriefs, building respectful and positive relationships, allowing all student voices to be heard and as a restorative practice.

As we continue to implement the new Yukon curriculum, we are working with Yukon First Nations to develop adaptations that reflect Yukon's local context.

Yukon First Nations curriculum

During the 2017-18 school year, the First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit, in collaboration with the Yukon First Nations Curriculum Working Group, Curriculum and Assessment consultants and Yukon educators, worked on modernizing Yukon's curriculum with Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing and Yukon content incorporated into every grade.

This work provides additional supports for educators as they embed Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing into their programming while following the new curriculum. Teachers enrich student learning opportunities from the new curriculum with Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing using Yukon resources. For example, the draft curriculum resource provides Yukon-specific definitions, explanations, and grade-level appropriate examples to use when teaching the curriculum.

The draft resources for the K-9 Math, Social Studies, Science, and English Language Arts curriculums were completed in spring 2018. We are now working with Yukon First Nations to review these resources.

Traditional medicines in schools

Schools have taken steps to ensure they are inclusive and culturally responsive by integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing into school planning and programming in partnership with the school community. This includes welcoming all students to learn about Yukon First Nations traditions.

Schools are working to share Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing with their staff, students and community to foster an atmosphere of respect, understanding and inclusivity. Many schools offer learning experiences about Yukon First Nations languages and cultures. Traditional medicine is one of the most commonly shared experiences in Yukon First Nations culture.

In 2017-18, to support the use of traditional medicines in schools in a respectful and culturally appropriate way, the First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit worked with outdoor experiential educators and Yukon First Nations partners to develop guidelines for schools on the use of traditional medicines.

These guidelines can be found on the Department of Education's website: www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/policies/use-traditional-medicines-guidelines.pdf.

Cultural inclusion standards

To help Yukon schools be more culturally inclusive, the First Nations Education Commission developed Cultural Inclusion Standards. They outline actions that Yukon schools should take to ensure that local First Nations culture is included in the school community and that schools meet the learning needs of First Nations students in a culturally responsive way.

With these Cultural Inclusion Standards, the First Nations Education Commission aims to address systemic racism and the legacy of residential schools, to celebrate culture, pedagogies and the unique gifts of every child, to revitalize Yukon First Nations languages, and to instill a sense of respect based on Yukon First Nations values.

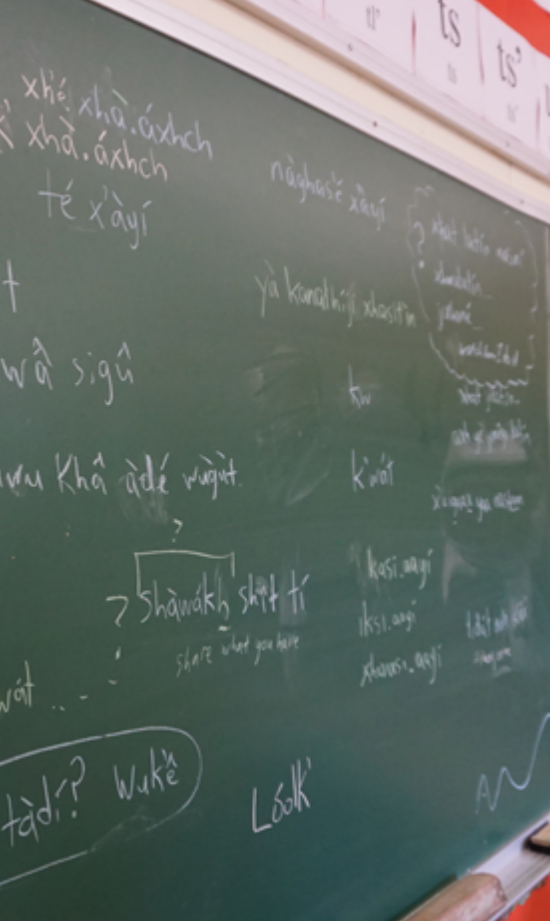
Yukon schools are now implementing these standards into their schools and they report on their work through their School Growth Plans.

For example, during the 2017-18 school year at Grey Mountain Primary School, educators focused on building their cultural awareness. They worked with Yukon College to learn about decolonizing the classroom. Staff who received training on Restorative Justice practices also shared their learning with their peers, and the school uses restorative circles for problem solving when appropriate.

At Tantalus School in Carmacks, educators worked closely with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation to encourage and create opportunities to integrate Yukon First Nations culture into the school throughout the year. Students have many opportunities to learn on the land and in the classroom from Elders and Knowledge Keepers, through activities such as fishing camps, drumming and dance circles, berry picking, archery, snowshoeing and visits to trap lines.

Yukon First Nations training

Providing educators with the training and knowledge to bring Yukon First Nations perspectives into their teaching practice is an important part of modernizing education in Yukon schools by being more culturally inclusive.



Yukon First Nations New Teacher Orientation

At the start of the 2017-18 school year, new teachers and principals took part in a Yukon First Nations orientation session. They met at Yukon College to learn about Yukon First Nations' culture, how to integrate Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing in the classroom, and to begin developing strong, lasting and meaningful relationships with First Nations.

Led by consultants from the First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit and the Curriculum and Assessment unit, the educators learned from Elders and Knowledge Keepers from many Yukon First Nations.

Activities included workshops and demonstrations on ancestral technology, outdoor cooking, Yukon First Nations art, and more. They learned how to connect this learning with the new curriculum. Participants also completed the Blanket Exercise, an interactive activity where participants take on the role of Indigenous peoples in Canada to explore over 500 years of history. This learning event helps new educators integrate Yukon First Nations' cultures and perspectives into their teaching practice and school.

Yukon First Nations 101

Under the Joint Education Action Plan, the Department of Education committed to deliver Yukon First Nations cultural awareness training to all staff. In partnership with Yukon College and Yukon First Nations, we began rolling out a Yukon First Nations 101 training workshop.

This Yukon First Nations 101 training provides an overview of Yukon First Nations history and culture, including land claims, final and self-government agreements, residential schools, languages, clan systems and traditional governance.

Since 2015, over 100 departmental staff and over 300 school staff have received the training, which includes most of the central building staff and school administrators. We are continuing to offer training to the remainder of department staff and new hires.



French language education

Yukon is home to a growing population of people who speak French as a first or second language. Between 2011 and 2016, the population of French speakers grew from 4,500 to nearly 5,000, according to Statistics Canada censuses. Yukon follows Quebec and New Brunswick with the third-highest percentage of French speakers in Canada. We encourage Yukon students to become fluent in both of Canada's official languages.

We collaborate with the French-speaking community and partners in French instruction when developing French language programs and initiatives, including the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon. For example, through the French Second Language Advisory Committee, partners contribute to decision-making on topics like programming guidelines, courses of study, cultural and community activities for students and training for French teachers.

In 2018, the Government of Yukon maintained a leadership role in national organizations, including as Chair of a Council of Ministers of Education Canada's committee that tackles issues in French Second Language and French First Language education that are shared across Canada.

Territorial and provincial jurisdictions began negotiations with the federal government on the *Protocol & Canada-Yukon bilateral agreement in French Minority Language Education and French as a Second Language Instruction*. This bilateral agreement provides members of the French-language minority in Yukon with the opportunity to be educated in their own language, and provides residents of Yukon with the opportunity to learn French as a second language. With our partners in French First Language education, the department aims to ensure that northern students' unique needs are addressed in this financing agreement.



French First Language

In Yukon, French First Language educational programs are offered at École Émilie-Tremblay (K to Grade 6), Académie Parhélie (Grades 7 to 12) and École Nomade (home-schooling for Grades 1 to 12). The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, Yukon's only school board, is responsible for the administration, management and control of these educational programs. We support them and its responsibility to deliver French First Language programming in Yukon. We provide them with an annual operations budget to manage its programming costs.

In 2018, we continued to work with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon to plan for a new French First Language Secondary School with community spaces. The new school and community spaces will provide a place for learning, local events, activities and engagement with the territory's Francophone community. For more details on this project, see the French First Language Secondary School section under Capital planning and facilities on page 43.

For more information about French First Language school programs, please see the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon's annual report:

commissionscolaire.csfy.ca/publications.

French Second Language

Yukon students have access to various French Second Language programs: Core French, French Immersion (early and late), Intensive French, Post-Intensive French and Options Plus French. All programs are designed such that students who complete their French studies to the end of Grade 12 become independent users of the French language.

French learning opportunities for rural students

The French Programs Unit aims to provide all Yukon students with French learning opportunities. In 2018, we received federal funding to develop flexible French Second Language programming options for rural students who want to learn French independently. We know that students want to learn in ways that are meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives, so learning needs to be personalized and reflect the experiences of youth who live in Yukon's rural communities. Through research on best practices, we began to build and adapt existing French Second Language instructional approaches which have been successful in rural, isolated communities.

Sharing best practices in language learning

In spring 2018, for the first time, language educators from both primary and secondary schools offering Core French and Intensive French programs came together to share best practices for learning languages. They also worked to identify ways to strengthen students' learning paths across schools and grades.

During this meeting, the French teachers also met with language teachers from First Nations language programs to collaborate. These teachers came from Whitehorse and rural communities, reflecting the diversity of language learning experiences in Yukon schools. Together they explored topics unique to teaching language, such as how to assess students' language learning through both formative and summative assessments.

Here's what some of the participants had to say:

"Loved the collaboration between French and Native language teachers. Reconciliation in real time."

"Great connection to listen to First Nation language teachers and hear of their successes and challenges."

"Sharing teaching ideas at our table with First Nation and French teachers together – unifying."

"We have so much to share with each other. I wish to come together to talk about sharing methodology again. Pure joy!"

French cultural enrichment

Language and culture are intertwined. Students appreciate and retain French language when they can use it in real life cultural contexts. By enriching classrooms, schools and events with French culture, students gain a deeper understanding of the language. Fourteen French language assistants ("French monitors") from the Odyssey program worked in Yukon schools in 2017-18 to lead games, plays, songs and other French activities for students. Students also share their own cultures with the French monitors and their classmates.

In 2018, secondary students learned about creating francophone theatre from renowned Québécois playwright Luc Boulanger. Students of all ages explored the connection between language and culture with Andrée Levesque-Siouï, a trilingual Huron-Wendat artist and language teacher. These cultural learning events help connect students from different programs together, creating a sense of belonging to a community of French learners.

DEL F Scolaire exams

In 2016, we began offering graduating students who have completed their final French course with the opportunity to earn an internationally recognized language certificate that certifies language proficiency: the *Diplôme d'études en langue française* (DEL F) exam.

In 2017-18, DEL F specialists delivered workshops on the exam to French Second Language students in Grades 10-12. They also led preparatory workshops for students who signed up for a DEL F Scolaire exam. Following this targeted outreach, we increased the number of students who took the exam from 20 students in spring 2017 to over 30 students in spring 2018. In addition, for the first time, we offered DEL F Scolaire exams at Robert Service School in Dawson City, where many students take the Intensive French program.

Supporting Yukon students

Rural programs and supports

Living in rural and remote areas of Yukon can create challenges in terms of equity of access in infrastructure and programming. Students may have access to fewer courses and other education options compared to urban students, which can impact learning.

With this in mind, we work to give rural students more equitable access to unique learning opportunities that meet their local needs and interests. For example, we create opportunities for rural students to work together in larger groups across communities, share resources and staff to study specialized courses and have education consultants who support rural educators.



Rural Experiential Models

Through the Rural Experiential Model (REM), we offer students from rural schools more diverse learning opportunities to support improved learning outcomes. REM brings together students from all rural school communities to participate in hands-on learning. Rural school communities look forward to the Junior and Senior REM events every year: the REMs are a chance to meet new friends and reconnect with old ones, explore something they haven't learned before, build leadership skills and connect with the host community.

At the Junior and Senior REM, we see students excited to learn, rising to meet challenges, embracing Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing, and developing hands-on skills. These deep learning experiences are a success thanks to the leadership of educators, Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge-Keepers, skilled professionals and community members who come together to support student success.

At the Senior REM, students in Grades 10 through 12 and educators from rural schools come together for a week of hands on learning. Students choose from a variety of daytime courses to earn two Fine Art or Applied Skill Credits. In the evenings, they participate in fun, educational activities to explore their personal learning interests. At the REM Finale, students showcase what they've learned and accomplished through the week. The first Senior REM was in 2013, and has been held in Dawson City, the traditional territory of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in; in Watson Lake-Tets'elugé, the Traditional Kaska Territory of the Liard First Nation; and in Haines Junction (Dakwākāda), the Traditional Territory of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. In fall 2018, 100% of participating students received credit.

At the Junior REM, students in Grades 7 and 8 from rural communities come together for a two-and-a-half-day holistic program that integrates traditional and modern 21st century teaching and learning aimed at strengthening their cultural, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing. The first Junior REM was held in May 2016 and they have been hosted in Faro-Tse Zul, the Traditional Kaska Dena Territory of the Ross River Dena Council and in Watson Lake-Tets'elugé, the Traditional Kaska Territory of the Liard First Nation. In May 2018, 103 rural students gathered in Watson Lake for the Junior REM.

What students have to say about REM

"REM is good for all the kids who have no electives at their school. It's nice to be able to choose to learn something they want to do. I chose my night sessions (firefighting and emergency medical services) because when I go to college or university, that's the profession I want to go into. I want to be a medic in the military, or just a paramedic."

- Marissa, Grade 11 student from Del Van Gorder School

"I picked the Robotics course at REM because, over the course of the summer, we went to Skills Canada and we performed really well in robotics. After REM, I'm going to use what I learned in my Robotics course for Skills Canada competitions. I'm going to compete with lots of effort and I'm not going to give up. I'll also take home the heritage I'm learning about. It's nice to be learning from local First Nations people and Elders. It's awesome being here."

- Trent, Grade 10 student from Tantalus Community School



Rural trades and apprenticeship programming

Offering the same variety of trades programming to students in rural Yukon can be a challenge. While some schools, such as Robert Service, St. Elias Community and Watson Lake Secondary provide regular trades programming, other schools have at times struggled to maintain such programming with low student numbers or staff capacity. Given this, we're working on increasing the resources and facilities available for trades education in rural schools, as well as offering alternative ways of delivering these programs.

Trades facilities

In spring 2018, Robert Service School expanded their metal shop thanks to a \$10,000 donation from the Klondike Placer Miners' Association. The school used the funds to purchase materials and equipment for the metal shop, including safety gear, metal works tools and consumable materials such as welding rods, steel and wires. For the first time, Robert Service School is offering metal works in addition to small engine work in the metal shop. Through the expansion of the metal shop program, students in Dawson will have more opportunities to develop skills and explore career paths that are in high demand in local industries.

Flexible trades programming

In 2017-18, we began offering week-long "deep dives" into popular trades to increase the opportunities for rural students to learn about these fields of work. During these deep dives, skilled trades professionals and teachers travel to deliver week-long courses to students in their own communities and schools.

Deep dives into welding, called the Welding Mind over Metal Camps, were held in Dawson City, Old Crow, Watson Lake and Ross River, giving over 100 students the opportunity to explore welding and metalworking. These sessions were supported through funding from the Canadian Welding Foundation.

Hairdressing Deep Dives were offered in Carcross, Dawson City, Watson Lake and Old Crow. About 8-12 students participated in each session. Students were particularly keen to learn about hairstyling as some communities have a need for local hairdressing services.

In addition, students can choose trades courses offered at the annual REM. For example, at the 2018 Senior REM, courses on hairstyling and welding were offered.



Rural students also get to explore potential careers in the trades through our partnership with Skills Canada Yukon. The organization offers classroom workshops and runs after-school skills clubs that are led by teachers and industry professionals. Through these clubs, students learn new skills and discover new interests through project-based learning. They can put their skills to the test through skills competitions.

Blended learning

Students learn in different ways and some students need more flexible options to engage with their learning and complete their studies. Blended learning gives students more flexibility by combining online instruction with teacher-delivered classroom learning activities. These options are particularly important for students in rural schools, where there are fewer classroom-based course offerings. Blended learning opportunities allow them to access more courses that meet their learning needs and goals.

Content can be delivered in an interactive and engaging style, and students are able to view and replay lessons anytime, anywhere. This method empowers students to have greater control over the time, place, path or pace of their learning, allowing them to work ahead, plan for extended absences or catch up on missed work. In addition, because some learning takes place online, teachers can spend more of their face-to-face time with students working one-on-one, strengthening student-teacher relationships. This face-to-face time is also more centered on the student's learning needs.

Thirty-one percent of Grade 7 to 12 students across 27 schools participated in at least one blended learning course during the 2017-18 school year. Based on feedback from students and teachers, we are helping teachers to balance online and in-person instruction time. We are also helping students to develop their self-directed learning skills.

Student Support Services

Yukon schools are modeled on inclusive education, which is based on the belief that all students can learn together in different ways. The Student Support Services Parent Handbook, a guide for parents of children with special needs, is available in print through the Department of Education, at schools throughout the territory or on our website at www.education.gov.yk.ca/support.html. Parents are always involved when services are provided by the Student Support Services Unit.

In 2016, we began to shift our delivery model for Student Support Services from an assessment driven model to a consultation-based model. This model allows Students Support Services staff to better address student needs through an evidence-based approach and more consistent service delivery to students and staff in Yukon schools

Supporting children during the transition to school

Our Student Support Services team helps students who need additional supports to transition from the Yukon Child Development Centre to school.

In 2018, the Child Development Centre identified 49 urban and 23 rural children who needed support as they moved from the Child Development Centre to Kindergarten. Student Support Services staff attended meetings in April and May with parents, school-based teams and Child Development Centre staff in order to identify and share the needs of these children with school staff and plan for a successful transition into school.

Early Intervention Pilot Project

A significant number of Yukon students entering Kindergarten need support in the areas of oral language and social development to be ready to learn. We worked with the Yukon Teachers' Association to pilot an early intervention project beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

This pilot ran in seven Kindergarten classrooms across four schools. The schools were chosen based on historical data, including Early Years Evaluation and Boehm results. Seven teachers and seven educational assistants received specialized training from speech and language pathologists, an occupational therapist and a social-emotional psychologist so they could assist their students in developing school readiness and communication skills. Emphasis in both training for the teachers and educational assistants and delivering support to students included listening and speaking (oral communication), self-regulation, and executive functioning to support foundational literacy skill development.



During this three-year pilot project, the educational assistants followed their cohort of students from Kindergarten to Grade 2. The pilot project was completed in June 2018, following the students' Grade 2 school year. A review of the third year of the project explored barriers to success identified for students during the project; whether providing an educational assistant over three years improved the short and long-term readiness and literacy skills of students; and whether providing training in early child development and pre-literacy skills for teachers and educational assistants improved short and long-term outcomes of students.

The review found that educational assistants and teachers who participated identified the following as barriers to success for the students they worked with:

- attendance, absenteeism, lateness;
- multiple transitions or frequent changes to school routines;
- lack of sleep;
- food and nutrition; and
- social-emotional development.

The review was unable to conclude whether providing an educational assistant over three years improved the short and long-term readiness and literacy skills of students. However, it noted that there were a number of successes when an educational assistant accompanied a student consistently from Kindergarten to Grade 2. The review also demonstrated, based on staff feedback, that when staff have a deeper background knowledge of their students and work consistently with them year-over-year, there were benefits to their learning, including improvements in oral language and social-emotional development and self-regulation.

Teachers and educational assistants remarked that training in Early Childhood Development benefited students not only in Kindergarten, but also in Grades 1 and 2. Training in literacy approaches from the Student Support Services Speech and Language Pathologists and a Primary Curriculum Consultant was also viewed as beneficial, especially when teachers and educational assistants were able to take the training together. Teachers and educational assistants remarked that there should be a greater focus on literacy training and strategies, as many participants felt they had already received quality training in self-regulation strategies.

At the conclusion of year three of this project, the report suggests the strategies employed at the four participating schools could be employed at other Yukon schools to the benefit of students. Moving forward, we are exploring how similar strategies at other schools may be used to benefit other Yukon students.

Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports

The Government of Yukon and the Yukon Teachers' Association continue to work together on a Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports initiative to proactively address behaviour issues, including training and coaching. Over the past three years, as per the 2015 collective agreement, we have collaborated to provide several training opportunities to increase awareness and develop strategies to enhance student readiness to learn. This initiative will continue under the new collective agreement.

Self-Regulation

The Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports initiative includes options such as self-regulation, which teaches students to observe and manage their thoughts, stress, emotions and actions. It helps all children, including those who may struggle with social-emotional and behavioural control, to be ready to learn in the classroom. Examples of tools include slow starts to the morning, scheduled movement breaks, spin bikes, noise-reducing headphones, snacks, gratitude circles and quiet zones.

Staff in Student Support Services provide training in self-regulation techniques to school staff, and school staff have participated in in-service training and professional development days.

In 2017-18, year two of this initiative, 28 Yukon schools received ongoing training in Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports and support from the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports Coach. Schools are continuing to work through implementation, including consistent staff delivery, school specific behaviour models to define school values and expectations, and using data to track instances of problem behavior and effectively and efficiently address concerns in the school. Schools receive ongoing support from a Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports Coach. In 2018, 11 schools attended a one-day training and networking day led by Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports experts and the Yukon Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports Coach.

Trauma Sensitive Classroom Strategies

In 2017-18, we offered schools professional development on trauma sensitive classroom strategies. This training was designed to help educators and paraprofessionals understand the impacts of trauma on brain and body. Participants learned trauma informed strategies for supporting students who have endured traumatic events, as well as specific techniques to manage vicarious trauma.

Nonviolent crisis intervention

We offered nonviolent crisis intervention training monthly throughout the 2017-18 school year. We provided this training to staff who have been designated within a written safety plan as being part of a response team that works directly with a specified student. This training provides staff with an intervention plan that emphasizes de-escalating a situation and keeps staff and student safety as the first priority.

Watson Lake Secondary School celebrates Pink Shirt Day with Bhangra dancing

Each year, schools celebrate Pink Shirt Day as a way for students and staff to speak out against bullying. The movement began in 2007 in Nova Scotia by high school seniors who witnessed a gay Grade 9 student being bullied for wearing a pink shirt. They intervened in the incident and harnessed social media to mobilize their peers, asking them all to wear pink to school the next day. In response, hundreds of students wore pink to stand in solidarity with the bullied student, turning the school into a "sea of pink." Since then, the pink shirt has become an international symbol during Bullying Awareness Week, Pink Shirt Day and International Day of Pink events.

This year, Watson Lake Secondary School celebrated by inviting Gurdeep Pandher to lead students and staff in joyous Bhangra dancing lessons.

Educational Assistant (EA) Allocation

We established an EA Allocation Advisory Committee in the fall of 2015 to review the current allocation model for paraprofessionals in the territory and evaluate its merits and challenges. In 2016, this committee recommended an improved paraprofessional allocation process that allows schools to make requests for paraprofessionals based on student needs. This process was adopted and implemented during the spring of 2016 and was also used in 2017 and 2018.

Educational Assistant Allocations to Each School, 2015-16 to 2017-18			
School	2015 - 2016 End of Year	2016 - 2017 End of Year	2017 - 2018 End of Year
Chief Zzeh Gittlit (Old Crow)	2.5	3	4
Christ the King	12	15	14
Del Van Gorder (Faro)	2.25	3	3.75
Elijah Smith	17.25	17	16.7
Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly)	5	5	6
Emilie-Tremblay	8	9	9.5
FH Collins	12	13.5	15.75
Ghuch Tla (Carcross)	4.25	4.5	3.5
Golden Horn	5	4	3
Grey Mountain	8	5	5
Hidden Valley	5	4.5	6.37
Holy Family	10.75	10	9
Individual Learning Centre (ILC)	1.5	2	1.5
Jack Hulland	18	18	21.75
Johnson Elementary (Watson Lake)	7	7	6.5
JV Clark (Mayo)	3	4	3.5
Kluane Lake (Destruction Bay/ Burwash)	1	1	1
Nelna Bessie John (Beaver Creek)	1	1	1
Porter Creek	11	12.75	15.5
Robert Service (Dawson)	9	11	12
Ross River	6.75	5	6
Selkirk	11	12	14
St. Elias Community (Haines Junction)	6	7.5	11
Takhini	10	11	14.25
Tantalus (Carmacks)	5.5	7	9.5

Educational Assistant Allocations to Each School, 2015-16 to 2017-18

School	2015 - 2016 End of Year	2016 - 2017 End of Year	2017 - 2018 End of Year
Khàtìnas.àxh Community School (Teslin)	3.5	4	5
Teen Parent Centre (TPC)	1.5	2	1
Vanier	12	14	12
Watson Lake Secondary	4	4.5	3.75
Whitehorse Elementary	8.5	10	10
Student Support Services	4.91	4.91	4.91
Total	217.16	232.16	250.73

Student engagement and attendance

Student attendance is one of the most important factors for student success. Students who attend school regularly tend to get better grades and develop important work habits that can benefit them throughout their lives.

Students may miss school due to illness, cultural events, family obligations, lack of transportation, work, disengagement from school and a variety of other factors. When a student misses school, they are missing the learning opportunities of that day and the social benefits of learning with their peers and teachers. Regular attendance helps to develop time management, social-emotional skills, work ethic and personal motivation. Student attendance is one way of seeing how engaged a student is in their learning.

Every Student, Every Day is an initiative of the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society to fund school-based projects each year that encourage student engagement and attendance. For the 2018-19 school year, Every Student, Every Day awarded \$67,500 to 19 projects. Since it was established in fall 2012, Every Student, Every Day has distributed over \$360,000 to more than 70 student attendance projects.

The Government of Yukon matches up to \$25,000 annually for the society's fundraising and sponsorship. Department staff administer the funding program in partnership with society staff. Work includes promoting the project, reviewing proposals, awarding funds and reviewing project reports. In collaboration with community partners, school-based staff also support and deliver projects under this initiative.

More information on the Victoria Gold Student Encouragement Society attendance initiative can be found at www.education.gov.yk.ca/attendance.html and www.everystudenteveryday.ca.

Health and Safety

Safety is a responsibility shared among all department and school staff, educators, students and clients. Staff who see a hazard or unsafe condition in the workplace have a responsibility to address and report it. We encourage staff, students and community members to report any and all health and safety concerns to their supervisor or school.

Reporting incidents

School staff document and address incidents of concern involving students and staff through the Workplace Risk Assessment procedure, which determines the level of concern about a student's behaviours and provides an appropriate intervention to address the behaviours and the needs of any affected student(s) and/or staff.

Through the Safe and Caring Schools Support Plan, we provide training to teachers to manage inappropriate or abusive behaviour. The training includes Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports and the Violent Threat Risk Assessment.

If an incident does occur that impacts a school, Student Support Services supports school staff and students through critical incident debriefs, restorative approaches to address harm and build relationships, and support and collaboration with the RCMP, medical and other government and non-government agencies. School staff also have the resources of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), through which school staff can receive short-term counselling and assistance.

In 2017-18 there were 241 reported incidents, with 218 Workplace Risk Assessments and 23 Violence Threat Risk Assessments, compared with 342 reported incidents in 2016-17 (324 Workplace Risk Assessments and 18 Violence Threat Risk Assessments).

Radon monitoring

Radon is a colourless, odourless, naturally occurring gas found many places in Canada, including in Yukon. It can enter buildings through cracks and unsealed openings in basements and foundations from the soil.

In spring 2018, we tested radon levels in Yukon schools for a minimum of three months according to the Government of Yukon's Radon Management Guideline. Testing involved installing equipment for a minimum of three months in every single room on the lowest level of a school being used for more than four hours a day. Testing took place during the winter heating season from October to April while windows were closed. Results of the testing can be found on the Department of Education website:

www.education.gov.yk.ca/radon-monitoring.html.

According to Health Canada's Guidelines for Indoor Air Quality, results for Christ the King Elementary, Eliza Van Bibber and Holy Family Elementary were slightly above Health Canada's recommended levels for radon.

We are working with school staff and planning for additional mitigation work at Christ the King Elementary and Eliza Van Bibber within two years as per the Radon Management Guideline. The details of this remediation work are currently being determined.

In 2016-17, Holy Family Elementary was found to have radon levels that were close to being above Health Canada's recommended levels, and we completed remediation work at the school in early 2018. However, the remediation system at Holy Family Elementary was not ready until the end of the testing period. We will test the school again during the 2018-19 heating season to ensure radon levels at the school are now within the recommended levels.

The Teen Parent Centre was also previously found to have radon levels above recommended levels, but remediation was not completed until after the 2017-18 heating season. As result, testing was not completed. We will test the Teen Parent Centre in the 2018-19 heating season to ensure radon levels are now within recommended levels.

We will continue to ensure school communities are informed as we test radon levels at schools and plan to complete additional remediation work.

We will also continue to ensure radon levels at Yukon schools remain within levels recommended by Health Canada. We will retest schools if:

- There is work done on a school exterior, foundation or basement;
- Seismic activity affects the school building;
- The ground or basement floors are renovated; or
- Radon remediation work has been done on a school.



Water testing

At the advice of Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Government of Yukon tested all water fixtures at schools built before 1990 in summer 2018 to check for lead leaching. Lead was commonly used in plumbing materials (including drinking fountains and sink taps) before 1988, when national building standards changed to reduce the use of lead. As a result, schools built before 1990 may have water fixtures and plumbing materials that contain lead. Lead from the water fixtures and plumbing materials can leach into the water when it sits in the water system for longer periods.

National standards are based on exposure to lead over a lifetime. The Chief Medical Officer of Health has assured us that there is no short-term risk to health and that occasional consumption of water from these fixtures would not significantly affect the health of students or staff.

Schools built before 1990 were tested in phase 1 due to the higher likelihood of containing lead in the plumbing materials. To ensure that all schools are tested, schools built after 1990 will be tested in summer 2019 in phase 2 of the government water fixture testing in schools.

Schools that were tested in Summer 2018 were:

- Christ the King Elementary School
- Eliza Van Bibber School
- Golden Horn Elementary School
- Ghùch Tlâ Community School
- Grey Mountain Primary School
- Jack Hulland Elementary School
- Johnson Elementary School
- Khàtìnas.àxh (Teslin) Community School
- Kluane Lake School
- Nelnah Bessie John School
- Porter Creek Secondary
- Robert Service School
- Selkirk Elementary School
- St. Elias Community School
- Takhini Elementary School
- Vanier Catholic Secondary School
- Whitehorse Elementary School
- Wood Street Centre

The results of the tests showed that all schools, with the exception of Kluane Lake School, did have water fixtures that tested above the recommended levels for lead. The Government of Yukon began mitigation work in September 2018 to address these issues. Mitigation work included decommissioning any water fountains that tested above the recommended levels for lead; placing signs at other water fixtures, such as bathroom and classroom sinks, to identify them as safe for washing but not for drinking; and replacing all water fixtures that tested high with new water fixtures that meet Health Canada's guidelines for lead. The replacement of water fixtures continued into 2019.

All schools continue to have access to safe drinking water. The full test results and status of mitigation work can be viewed online on the Department of Education website: www.education.gov.yk.ca/water-testing.html.

Cannabis and Fentanyl Education

We work with the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice to ensure we are providing information to school staff and students on cannabis, fentanyl and other substances that is up-to-date and relevant to student learning in the classroom. Drug education, including about cannabis and fentanyl, continues to be part of Yukon's school curriculum and we work with students, staff and families to share information about the risks of drugs and alcohol.

The curriculum has grade-appropriate learning outcomes from Kindergarten to Grade 12 related to the consumption of harmful substances such as poisons, prescription medications, alcohol and cannabis, as well as fentanyl and other illicit drugs. Education on psychoactive substances, such as cannabis, and illegal drugs such as fentanyl starts in Grade 5. Teachers focus lessons in physical and health education, and in other subjects, on issues and topics that are relevant to their local community, as cannabis and fentanyl are right now.

School counselors are available at schools and provide students with guidance and advice around healthy decision making and avoiding risky and unsafe situations. We also work with Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services to make alcohol and drug services counselors available in schools.

If you suspect your child is having problems with drugs or alcohol, you can talk with your school about getting help. You can also talk with Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services at 867-456-3838 to get help for your child or to learn more about cannabis or other substances.

For more information on drug education in schools can be found on the Department of Education website:
www.education.gov.yk.ca/drug_education.html.

Cannabis

Cannabis became legal in Canada on October 17, 2018. The Government of Yukon has developed its own legal framework based on research, analysis and feedback received from Yukoners through various engagement activities. The legal age to use, possess, cultivate or purchase cannabis is 19 years of age. The use of cannabis continues to be prohibited on school grounds.

In fall 2018, we shared information and resources through schools to school staff, parents and students to help them learn and understand more about cannabis. There is also ongoing collaboration between the departments of Education and Health and Social Services to develop activities and lessons to engage students in learning about healthy decision making and cannabis health effects, laws and how to keep themselves safe if they do choose to use cannabis. Education consultants partnered with health experts from Health and Social Services and started to visit schools to deliver specific presentations on cannabis in fall 2018.

More information on what the government is doing about cannabis can be found on the Government of Yukon website: yukon.ca/cannabis.

Fentanyl

In winter and fall 2018, the government shared information through the schools about how to talk to kids about fentanyl and its risks. The Department of Health and Social Services distributed information sheets, posters and business cards in silicone card holders to students in Grades 10-12. The cards can be stuck to phones and wallets and help students make safe choices during graduation and the end-of-school-year party season. These bilingual cards give tips for partying safely, with the signs and symptoms of drug-related overdoses. Schools also hosted specific presentations on fentanyl for parents and students during the 2017-18 school year. Presentations were held at F.H. Collins Secondary School for students and parents, and at Porter Creek Secondary School for students.

The Department of Health and Social Services released its Opioid Action Plan in November 2018. The Department of Education will support the implementation of the Opioid Action Plan by continuing to work with the Department of Health and Social Services to provide information and resources to school staff, parents and students about the dangers of fentanyl. More information on the Opioid Action Plan can be found on the Government of Yukon website at: yukon.ca/en/yukons-opioid-action-plan.

Naloxone training and kits were made available to principals as of spring 2017. Training for school staff continued in 2018 and on an ongoing basis. We are ensuring there are naloxone kits and trained staff at all schools in the event of an overdose at school. These kits can help save lives if someone is overdosing on fentanyl.

Student Transportation

Every day, many families rely on school buses to get their children safely to and from their schools. In 2017-18, over 2,000 students in Yukon rode the school bus to arrive at school safe and on time each school day.

Throughout the school year, we hear feedback, review and adjust busing services to ensure we are meeting the needs of families in Yukon. We also work with our school bus service provider, our schools, school councils, parents and the RCMP to ensure we are providing a safe and effective bus service to Yukon students.

We currently work with Standard Bus to provide school bus service to Yukon students.



School bus registration

Every year, we work in partnership with Standard Bus, our schools and parents of students to register students for the bus and set busing routes. The bus routes and the number of buses to take students to school depends on the number of students registered to take the school bus.

Each of our students has a bus number and a bus route for which they are registered. Students must take the bus they are registered for so we can ensure that our buses remain safely within capacity.

The Government of Canada sets safety regulations for school buses, including the number of students who can safely ride a school bus. These regulations require that no more than three elementary students or two high school students can be in each bus seat. When we set the school bus routes and the number of buses, we ensure that our buses align with the national standards. The number of students on a bus cannot exceed the limit and seating capacity that our buses are able to transport.

Bus route planning

Bus routes are planned with the goal of bringing students safely and efficiently to their schools. We consider many factors when planning bus routes, including:

- school attendance areas;
- school bell schedules;
- student and neighborhood populations;
- bus safety and capacity;
- safe pick-up and drop-off locations; and
- safe access to roadways.

The Government of Yukon's *Student Transportation Regulations* outline the requirements to ensure students are safely dropped off at home and at school. According to the regulations, students are to be dropped off at designated drop-off points. These are set in safe and accessible locations, to ensure students are only dropped off in safe areas.

We establish our bus routes with the goal of limiting the riding time to no more than 90 minutes. We also establish our routes with the goal of bringing students to school using safe, accessible and well-maintained roadways. Keeping bus routes to major roadways means that they:

- can be reliably accessed due to regular maintenance and snow plowing in the winter;
- are more direct and ensure timely transportation of students to school; and
- ensure easy access for emergency vehicles in the event of an emergency, such as an accident, a broken down bus or a health emergency.

Currently in Whitehorse, 41 bus routes bring students to 14 different schools. Within Whitehorse, we plan our bus routes to ensure students from the many different neighborhoods in and outside of the city have access to transportation to get to their school.

There are some families living in areas outside of Whitehorse where bus routes may be more limited. In some cases, students who live further outside of Whitehorse may need to transfer school buses to get to their school in town. At these stations, students transfer from the bus that picked them up to a bus heading to their school inside of the city. This is the most efficient means of ensuring students from the various neighborhoods outside of the city can still make it safely and on time to their school.

We share school bus routes with schools at the beginning of each school year on the Government of Yukon website at yukon.ca/school-bus-schedules, outlining times, stops, routes and school destinations so parents can access this information at any time.

Bus safety and emergency procedures

We all share responsibility for keeping students and bus drivers safe when they are on the road. We work with Standard Bus, the RCMP and school communities to promote safe driving around school buses and to reduce risks along bus routes.

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. 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.

Some families may live on roadways that are less used or accessed. We work with Standard Bus to assess if these roadways are safe for a school bus to access. On a daily basis, bus drivers also assess the driving conditions and determine whether a given route is safe to drive.

Any school bus incidents are reviewed to consider whether the proper process was followed and whether any changes are needed to respond to any risks to student health and safety. Bus drivers are specifically trained to address disruptions and distractions on the bus. We have protocols to respond to any issue on the bus, and, if there is an issue, the bus driver would pull over the bus where it is safe and address the disruption.

In the event of an emergency involving a school bus, the department's first priority is to ensure the safety of students. The Student Transportation Unit at the Department of Education and Standard Busing each have a list of emergency telephone numbers so we can share current information with parents as it becomes available. In any of these events, the well-trained staff that drive our buses, that work in our schools and coordinate at the Department of Education are prepared to respond immediately to ensure students are safe.

The Government of Yukon has also agreed to participate in Transport Canada's assessment of seatbelt safety on school buses. We work with Standard Bus to ensure school buses meet all national safety standards. We will continue to work with them to ensure that school buses are upgraded to align with any changes to these standards.

We encourage people to report incidents of unsafe driving to the RCMP. If parents or students have any concerns about bus safety, or any issue with school buses, they can contact their school, the Student Transportation Officer or Standard Bus and we will work together to address the issue and answer any questions they may have.

Additional student transportation options

We ensure all families have support to transport students to school, by offering school bus service, transportation subsidies and city transit passes.

For students who live more than 3.2 kilometers from the nearest school bus stop, we offer an allowance to offset the cost of driving students to a school bus pick-up location. In 2017-18, we provided over \$76,000 to 45 families for the student transportation allowance.

High school students can opt out of school busing and register instead for a free transit pass from the City of Whitehorse. This option increases their access to transportation not just to school, but to after-school activities, work and community events. The number of City Transit riders varies each month. In 2018-19, we had an average of 750 students register for a free City of Whitehorse transit pass.



School governance and planning for effective schools

School Planning

The 2009 Auditor General of Canada's report recommended that the department create a policy for individual school plans, including a process for planning, updating, evaluating and reporting.

School Growth Planning

School Growth planning is a process by which school growth planning teams, which are made up of staff, school councils, or trustees, parents, students and Yukon First Nations, work together to develop a plan to make improvements at their school over a period of time using evidence-based decision making.

School growth plans are developed based on observations, student achievement data and the recommendations made in school reviews. The plans contain the school's context, educational goals, priorities and evaluation procedures for the current school year. They are the road maps to improvement for schools.

School growth plans are public documents and shared with the school superintendent and on school websites. School growth plans chart one to three years of goals depending on the scope of the plan.

During the 2017-18 school year, we started exploring changes to the school growth planning process to ensure school plans align with the changes to new curriculum and assessment practices.

In fall 2017 and spring 2018, we invited education consultants from British Columbia to Yukon to work with our school principals on introducing an inquiry-based model into their School Growth Plans. An inquiry-based model for school growth planning asks schools to reflect on and ask key questions about how their students are doing and the direction they are going so they can identify areas of focus for learning and improvement. In spring 2018, we developed a new School Growth Planning template with schools, which emphasizes an inquiry-based model and aligns with new curriculum and assessment practices. Moving forward into the 2018-19 school year, we are considering best practices for reviewing and evaluating School Growth Plans.



Signs of successful school growth planning

During the 2017-18 school year, Jack Hulland Elementary School focused on using assessment for learning practices across all curriculum areas at their school. Assessment for learning practices explore evidence of student learning so teaching practices and methods can be adjusted to further support student learning with a goal of improving outcomes for students.

The school put several strategies in place to improve their work in the area of assessment for learning. Teachers had more opportunity to learn specific skills related to assessment for learning, such as using data collection from school assessments to adjust teaching methods. Teachers and school staff also focused on identifying individualized supports for students and working with them to set goals to improve learning. As the school year progressed, evidence of student learning was shared with parents to demonstrate where students were starting to see improvements.

Johnson Elementary School in Watson Lake reviewed its progress and data from the 2016-17 school year, including from student assessments like the Early Years Evaluation, School Wide Writes and the District Assessment of Reading Team. The school decided to continue its path toward improving academic achievement by focusing on literacy skills across the different curriculum areas. Johnson Elementary School outlined six strategies to improve academic achievement and literacy amongst its students:

1. integrating technology into the classroom;
2. following a balanced literacy approach, where literacy goals reflect student's individual strengths and areas for improvement;
3. professional development for teachers to support the school's balanced literacy approach;
4. aligning the school's goals in literacy with the new curriculum;
5. using new assessment for learning practices and assessing data to determine areas of focus to support improved outcomes for students; and
6. Integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing into regular school programming and partnering with Liard First Nation to ensure local traditions and culture are reflected in the school.

The school outlined dates for monitoring progress and a communications plan for keeping parents informed about their child's learning progress at school. Johnson Elementary School is reviewing their progress and updating their School Growth Plan in the 2018-19 school year.

School councils

School councils are important partners in public education. They are a forum for parents and the wider community to share ideas and concerns about their schools and the education system. They decide on important issues, set the direction and atmosphere for Yukon schools and help families to get involved in their children's education. They have an important role in developing the school growth plans as members on the school growth planning teams.

In 2018, elections were held for school council positions. School council elections are held every two years. Voting took place on May 7, 2018 for Tantalus School, J.V. Clark School, Watson Lake Secondary School, Johnson Elementary School and Grey Mountain Primary School. School council positions at remaining schools did not go to a vote. Candidates for other schools were acclaimed to their school council as there was enough space to accommodate all who showed interest.

In September to October 2018, five schools held a by-election to fill spaces that remained open following the May 2018 election: Takhini Elementary School, Ross River School, Nelna Bessie John School, Eliza Van Bibber School and St. Elias Community School. St. Elias Community School elected 3 members on October 22, 2018. The other schools did not require a vote as the number of candidates who put their name forth was enough to fill the vacant positions by acclamation and a vote was not required.

Capital planning and facilities

The Departments of Education and Highways and Public Works are responsible for the planning, monitoring and maintenance of Yukon schools as Yukon government facilities.

We have a number of projects underway to meet the current needs of Yukon schools. We also continue to plan to ensure our schools remain safe and available for the long-term.

Projects underway

French First Language Secondary School

In December 2018, the Government of Yukon awarded the contract for the construction of the new French First Language Secondary School and community spaces in Whitehorse to Ketza Construction, a Whitehorse-based company. The school will be built to accommodate up to 150 students from Grades 7 to 12. Funding for the school includes \$7.5 million from the Government of Canada's Minority Language Education program for the school's community spaces.

The new school and community spaces will support the success of French First Language high school students and the territory's Francophone community. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2019 and be completed in winter 2020-21.

F.H. Collins site development

In 2018, we continued work on the F.H. Collins Secondary School site features. The work includes a community basketball court, an outdoor learning space for experiential learning activities, a new weight room building for the school's sport program, a multi-use path between buildings and new parking spots.

We originally expected the weight room to be completed in fall 2018, but the project was delayed due to the availability of the contractor and complications in material delivery. We anticipate we will begin moving equipment into the new weight room building before the end of the 2018-19 school year. The current weight room continues to be used by F.H. Collins Secondary students.

Work on the basketball court, outdoor learning space and parking spots has also been delayed due to challenges that included the short timeline for fall construction work. These projects were originally expected to be completed in fall 2018, but we now anticipate this work will be completed in time for the 2019-20 school year.

Generic school functional plan

In fall 2018, we completed a generic school functional plan that can be used to scale the design of multiple different types of schools. In the future, this functional planning work will be used in the design and planning of future school projects as we continue to plan to build, replace, maintain and modernize Yukon schools.

Ross River School

The health and safety of students and staff at Ross River School continues to be a priority. We continue to monitor and manage the effects of the permafrost beneath the school to ensure the continued safe operations of the school's programs.

Our monitoring program includes having an independent engineering team visit the school quarterly to survey and assess the building and monitor the permafrost. The engineers completed their most recent assessment in October 2018, and we met with school staff to address their questions. We also shared a comprehensive third-party review and past inspection reports with the school community at that time. The engineers have confirmed that Ross River School continues to be safe to occupy.

As we continue to monitor and assess the Ross River School building and permafrost ground, we will continue to share information with staff, students, and the school community.

Future planning

School Revitalization and Modernizing Learning Environments

The Government of Yukon has a long-term capital plan that includes Yukon schools to ensure all buildings are safe and available for use for many years to come. We plan for schools we need to build, replace, maintain and modernize.

We have a number of ways to plan for the needs of school communities in the short, medium and long-term. We work with each school and Yukon First Nations to identify and plan the short, medium and long term options on their facility needs, including modernizing learning spaces to meet the learning needs of students and reflect students' communities. We also plan for the long-term to identify schools we need to maintain and modernize schools and ensure we continue to meet the current and future needs of Yukon students.

School capital projects are prioritized based on criteria such as building age, seismic mitigation and safety needs to ensure we continue to have safe and healthy learning environments in all Yukon schools. We also need to ensure we have the capacity and flexibility to renovate or replace schools. Our work to ensure Yukon schools meet the current and future needs of our education system will continue in 2019.

Our planning for building or renovating schools will focus on modernizing our learning spaces to align with Yukon's new curriculum and ensure that school facilities meet the needs of educators and students. This includes planning for spaces to accommodate modern learning approaches, such as:

- flexible learning spaces (moveable walls, adjustable chairs, desks; libraries and other spaces as learning commons)
- visible learning (use of glass walls, formal and informal learning spaces)
- personal learning (place for individual study and quiet reflection)

Learning spaces will also be built to reflect Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing, such as incorporating Elder and cultural rooms.

We look forward to working with all school communities to ensure we continue to meet the current and future needs of Yukon students.



Student financial aid

The Student Financial Assistance unit administers several programs to assist students in pursuing post-secondary education, including the Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance, Yukon Excellence Awards, Canada Student Loans and Grants and a variety of scholarships. In the 2017-18 academic year, over \$6.6 million was awarded through student financial assistance programs.

Yukon Grant

The Yukon Grant is established pursuant to the *Student Financial Assistance Act* to provide financial support to Yukon students enrolled full-time at approved post-secondary institutions. Students can receive the grant for a maximum of 170 weeks.

In 2017-18, the total Yukon Grant expenditure was \$4,091,079. Eligible students received \$136 per week of study. In addition, eligible students who studied outside Yukon received a travel amount of \$1,500 to help them travel between home and school.

Student Training Allowance

The Student Training Allowance is provided to students who are enrolled in a full-time program of studies at Yukon College or in an approved human resources development training program within Yukon. Eligible programs must have a minimum duration of three weeks and students must have resided in Yukon for two years prior to their classes commencing.

In 2017-18, eligible students received \$105 per week. The allowance increases with the number of dependants, with a maximum of \$222 per week. Students who must travel from a rural Yukon community are eligible for a travel allowance. If they are required to maintain a second residence while studying, they are also eligible to receive an additional \$83 per week.

Yukon Excellence Awards

The Yukon Excellence Awards encourage secondary school students to do well in their coursework and pursue post-secondary education or training. Yukon students are eligible for up to \$3,000 toward their education through academic achievement in a Yukon secondary school. Students can earn \$300 per course for up to 10 courses, with a maximum of four Grade 10 courses, three Grade 11 courses and three Grade 12 courses. The award is based on earning a final course grade of 80% or better.

In the 2017-18 academic year, we distributed \$299,987 to 226 students for Yukon Excellence Awards earned through secondary school courses.







