

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### HOT TOPICS

<b>HOT01</b>	Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan (SO01)
<b>HOT02</b>	CASA - Training for Educational Assistants (CAS08)
<b>HOT03</b>	CASA - Training for Teachers on Call (CAS09)
<b>HOT04</b>	Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO) (DPT03)
<b>HOT05</b>	EA Allocation – Next Steps and Work with Partners (SSS01)
<b>HOT06</b>	EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process (SSS02)
<b>HOT07</b>	Infrastructure Funding for Child Care (EL04)
<b>HOT08</b>	Water in Schools (SO05)
<b>HOT09</b>	Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan (DPT09)
<b>HOT10</b>	School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board (EP04)
<b>HOT11</b>	School Capacity (SI06)
<b>HOT12</b>	School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy (HR03)
<b>HOT13</b>	Student Data – Reporting and Sharing (DPT14)
<b>HOT14</b>	Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project – EWES (SO21)
<b>HOT15</b>	Yukon School Food Programs (EP10)
<b>HOT16</b>	Whitehorse Downtown School – Future (SO20)
<b>HOT17</b>	Catholic Separate Schools (SP15)

### CASA

<b>CAS01</b>	CASA - Accomplishments
<b>CAS02</b>	CASA - Careers in Health and Social Services
<b>CAS03</b>	CASA - Educational Assistants, Learning Assistance Teachers
<b>CAS04</b>	CASA - IEP Reinstatement
<b>CAS05</b>	CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth
<b>CAS06</b>	CASA - Psychoeducational Assessments
<b>CAS07</b>	CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals
<b>CAS08</b>	CASA - Training for Educational Assistants (HOT02)
<b>CAS09</b>	CASA - Training for Teachers on Call (HOT03)
<b>CAS10</b>	CASA - Wellness Specialists

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### DEPARTMENT-WIDE

<b>DPT01</b>	Accomplishments
<b>DPT02</b>	Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update
<b>DPT03</b>	Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO) (HOT04)
<b>DPT04</b>	Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation
<b>DPT05</b>	Education Legislation
<b>DPT06</b>	Figures at a Glance
<b>DPT07</b>	Legal Cases - Summary
<b>DPT08</b>	Management of Student Records in Schools
<b>DPT09</b>	Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan (HOT09)
<b>DPT10</b>	Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners
<b>DPT11</b>	Privacy Awareness
<b>DPT12</b>	Safer Schools
<b>DPT13</b>	Student Data – Methodology
<b>DPT14</b>	Student Data – Reporting and Sharing (HOT13)
<b>DPT15</b>	Tariffs – US relations
<b>DPT16</b>	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
<b>DPT17</b>	Jordan's Principle

### RISE

<b>RI01</b>	Formal Assessments
<b>RI02</b>	Ready to Learn Schools
<b>RI03</b>	Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

<b>EL01</b>	Child Care Act Review
<b>EL02</b>	Child Development Centre Funding
<b>EL03</b>	Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives
<b>EL04</b>	Infrastructure Funding for Child Care (HOT07)
<b>EL05</b>	Little Blue Learning Centre Expansion

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

- EL06** Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care
- EL07** Universal Child Care
- EL08** Yukon Child Care Board

### EDUCATION PARTNERS

- EP01** Advisory Committee for Yukon Education
- EP02** Private Schools in the Yukon
- EP03** School Board – CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
- EP04** School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board (HOT10)
- EP05** School Board and Council Elections and Referendums
- EP06** School Council Code of Conduct
- EP07** School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process
- EP08** School Governance and Associations
- EP09** Yukon Parent Advisory Committee
- EP10** Yukon School Food Programs (HOT15)

### FIRST NATIONS

- FN01** Collaboration with Yukon First Nations – Yukon-wide Initiatives
- FN02** Education Agreements
- FN03** Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal
- FN04** Language, Culture and Heritage revitalization in Yukon Public Schools

### CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND TRAINING

- CU01** Classroom Assessment Practices
- CU02** Curriculum Resource Material at Catholic Schools
- CU03** First Nations Credit Policy
- CU04** First Nation Programming in Schools
- CU05** Gender Identity and Health Curriculum
- CU06** Graduation – High School Adult Diploma
- CU07** Graduation – High School Dogwood Degree

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND TRAINING

<b>CU08</b>	Literacy
<b>CU09</b>	Locally Developed Courses
<b>CU10</b>	Numeracy
<b>CU11</b>	Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training
<b>CU12</b>	Yukon's Curriculum

### HUMAN RESOURCES - TEACHERS-EAs

<b>HR01</b>	Business Continuity - Emergency Preparedness (YEU Strike Action)
<b>HR02</b>	Community Housing for Teachers
<b>HR03</b>	School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy (HOT12)
<b>HR04</b>	Teacher Allocation – staffing
<b>HR05</b>	Recruitment and Onboarding for Teachers on Call and Educational Assistants
<b>HR06</b>	YAEP Collective Bargaining
<b>HR07</b>	YAEP Consultation
<b>HR08</b>	YEU Collective Bargaining

### SCHOOLS – PROGRAMS

<b>SP01</b>	Attendance Areas
<b>SP02</b>	Aurora Virtual School
<b>SP03</b>	Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools
<b>SP04</b>	Emergency Procedures and Public Notices
<b>SP05</b>	Enrolment at Yukon Schools
<b>SP06</b>	Every Student, Every Day
<b>SP07</b>	French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing
<b>SP08</b>	Gadzoosdaa
<b>SP09</b>	Kindergarten Registration
<b>SP10</b>	School Calendars
<b>SP11</b>	School Messenger
<b>SP12</b>	SOGI Inclusion



# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### SCHOOLS – PROGRAMS

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>SP13</b> | Technology - Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Schools |
| <b>SP14</b> | Technology - K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools          |
| <b>SP15</b> | Catholic Separate Schools (HOT17)                      |

### SCHOOLS - ISSUES

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>SI01</b> | Communicable Disease in Schools                       |
| <b>SI02</b> | Drugs in Yukon Schools                                |
| <b>SI03</b> | Education Appeal Tribunal                             |
| <b>SI04</b> | Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion |
| <b>SI05</b> | Pest Control in Schools                               |
| <b>SI06</b> | School Capacity (HOT11)                               |
| <b>SI07</b> | School Growth Planning                                |
| <b>SI08</b> | School Video Surveillance                             |
| <b>SI09</b> | Schools' Use of Social Media                          |
| <b>SI10</b> | Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools                   |
| <b>SI11</b> | Student Personal Device Usage                         |

### SCHOOLS - OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>SO01</b> | Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan (HOT01)    |
| <b>SO02</b> | Burwash - KLUANE LAKE School - Kêts'ádań Kù       |
| <b>SO03</b> | HIDDEN VALLEY School Playground                   |
| <b>SO04</b> | Joint Use Agreement – Use of School Facilities    |
| <b>SO05</b> | Lead in Water (HOT08)                             |
| <b>SO06</b> | Modular Classrooms                                |
| <b>SO07</b> | Public Announcement Systems in Schools            |
| <b>SO08</b> | Radon in Schools                                  |
| <b>SO09</b> | Rural School Replacements                         |
| <b>SO10</b> | School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process     |
| <b>SO11</b> | School Functional Plan                            |
| <b>SO12</b> | School Maintenance – 2025-26 Projects and Process |

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### SCHOOLS - OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

<b>SO13</b>	Seismic and Schools (EDU-HPW)
<b>SO14</b>	Transportation - Activity Buses
<b>SO15</b>	Transportation - Busing
<b>SO16</b>	Transportation – Busing - Traffic Safety
<b>SO17</b>	Transportation – Special Transportation Needs
<b>SO18</b>	Transportation - Transportation Safety Plans
<b>SO19</b>	WHISTLE BEND School
<b>SO20</b>	Whitehorse Downtown School – Future (HOT16)
<b>SO21</b>	Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project – EWES (HOT14)
<b>SO22</b>	Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term Capital Planning
<b>SO23</b>	GOLDEN HORN Elementary School issues

### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

<b>SSS01</b>	EA Allocation – Next Steps and Work with Partners (HOT05)
<b>SSS02</b>	EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process (HOT06)
<b>SSS03</b>	Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)
<b>SSS04</b>	Medication in Schools – Chronic Conditions
<b>SSS05</b>	Mental Health - Comprehensive Approach
<b>SSS06</b>	Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students
<b>SSS07</b>	Shared Resource Programs
<b>SSS08</b>	Student to Student Harm in Schools
<b>SSS09</b>	Supports for Students Living with Autism
<b>SSS10</b>	Therapeutic Farm School
<b>SSS11</b>	Type 1 Diabetes Strategy
<b>SSS12</b>	Competency Based Individual Education Plans

### STUDENT FINANCIAL

<b>SF01</b>	Apprenticeship Program
<b>SF02</b>	Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2025

## Table of Contents

### STUDENT FINANCIAL

**SF03** Yukon Excellence Awards

**SF04** Yukon Grant

### ADULT EDUCATION

**AE01** Adult Learners - Supports

**AE02** International Student Cap (EDU-EcDev)

**AE03** Private Training Institutions

**AE04** SOVA – School of Visual Arts

**AE05** Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentice Grants

**AE06** Yukon University

**AE07** Yukon University Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement

**AE08** Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility

### YG CORPORATE NOTES

**YG01** Housing Landscape (YHC)

**YG02** Our Clean Future Implementation (ENV/EMR)

**YG03** 2024-25 Supplementary Overview (FIN)

**YG04** Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Updates on Calls to Action (ECO)

**YG05** Inflation and Affordability (FIN)

**YG06** Carbon Pricing (ENV/FIN)

**YG07** Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts (ECO/FIN/EMR)

**YG08** Budget Overview (FIN)

**YG09** Canada and United States Relations (ECO)

### Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

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Education

**Burwash – KLUANE Lake School Kêts'ádań Kù: refer to SO02**

**Modular Classrooms: refer to SO06**

**School Capital – Projects and Process: refer to SO10**

**Whistle Bend School: refer to SO19**

**Whitehorse Downtown School: refer to SO20**

**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to HOT14/SO21**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO22**

#### Value:

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

#### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable for many years.
- We are pleased that work is underway on a new school in Burwash Landing, that planning continues for the replacement of École Whitehorse Elementary School, and early considerations for a downtown Whitehorse school are underway.
- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes Experiential Learning Spaces.
  - In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Experiential Learning Spaces at Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow), Khàtìnas.àxh Community School (Teslin), and Hidden Valley Elementary School (Whitehorse) were completed.
  - The Experiential Learning Space at École Émile Tremblay (Whitehorse) is under construction and is expected to be completed by February 2025.

### Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

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Education

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is aiming to design and build the Experiential Learning Spaces at Christ the King Elementary School and Golden Horn Elementary School (Whitehorse), Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly Crossing) and Ross River School (Ross River) during the 2025-26 fiscal year.

#### Additional response:

- Capital planning decisions are based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs, emerging enrolment trends, and pressures.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Many school communities advocate and lobby for capital projects for various reasons (e.g., enrolment increases, facility upgrades, aging buildings).

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#### Background:

- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan. For a list of projects in the 2025-26 five-year capital plan, refer to **SO10: School Capital – Projects and Process**
- Education staff communicate regularly with school principals to identify projects to enhance programming.

#### Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT01/SO01

Spring 2025

## Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-31

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **CASA - Training for Educational Assistants**

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

#### **Value:**

- Students deserve staff who are well trained, and staff deserve the support they need to do the job they are hired to perform.

#### **Recommended response:**

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement outlines specific actions for the Department of Education and prioritizes funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One key action is creating a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call, ensuring educators and learners receive the support they need.
- The Joint Management Committee consists of membership from the Department of Education, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, including the Association of Yukon Administrators Subcommittee and the Special Education Teachers Association Subcommittee, Autism Yukon, LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.
- The joint management committee deliverables are a revised Educational Assistant training plan program and updated role of the Educational Assistant
- All deliverables from the Joint Management Committee will be subject to the formal consultation processes with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals following conclusion of the committee's work on May 30, 2025.



### **CASA - Training for Educational Assistants**

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Education

- The updated EA training plan program and role of EA will be implemented following the formal consultation process with Yukon Association of Education Professionals, it is anticipated to be implemented in the 2025-26 school year.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Joint Management committee has identified additional subject matter experts to consult on specific topics. This includes teachers or support staff who work with students with complex needs, colleagues from health and social to consult on medically complex students or students with chronic conditions.
- Within the CASA framework, Education is dedicated to doing this work right for both Yukon learners and educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities to meet the needs of Yukoners. The department is dedicated to completing this important work.
- While developing the educational assistant training plan program with partners, the department continues to provide training for educational assistants.
- In the 2024-2025 school year, educational assistants received training through professional development days, including a dedicated session on January 20, 2025. Training topics included:
  - Supporting students with anxiety;
  - Supporting Students with ADHD;
  - Supporting Students with type one diabetes; and
  - Presentations from occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, physiotherapists, autism specialists, the Yukon First

### CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

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Education

Nations Education Directorate, the LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Syndrome Society.

- Educational assistants selected breakout sessions that best suited their learning needs.
  - Students Support Services sends trainers to rural schools to work alongside educators and provide training as needed.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions have been raised about the timing of the completion of the 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement commitment to establish an educational assistants training plan.
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#### **Background:**

- Joint Management Committee membership list:
  - President, Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Chair, Special Education Teacher Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Chairperson, Administrator Yukon Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Executive Director, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Executive Director, LDAY Centre for Learning
  - Executive Director, Autism Yukon
  - Director of Human Resources for First Nation School Board
  - Director of Instructional Leadership, First Nations School Board
  - Executive Director, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
  - Superintendents, Yukon Education Authority schools
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Wellbeing and Inclusion
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Schools
  - Department of Education, Director of Human Resources
- An updated workplan for the CASA commitment on educational assistants and teachers on call training plan programs was approved by the Joint Management Committee:

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT02/CAS08

Spring 2025

## CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

Education

Action	Estimated Timeline
Review available training for teachers on call and draft the teacher on call training plan program and	February 19 – March 5, 2025 Completion: May 20, 2025
Defining the educational assistant's role	March 26 – April 16, 2025 Completion: April 30, 2025
Review available training for educational assistants	April 30, 2025
Draft the educational assistant training plan program	May 1 – 20, 2025 Completion: May 28, 2025

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement outlines specific actions for the Department of Education and prioritizes funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One key action is to create a one-year training plan program for teachers on call and educational assistants, ensuring educators and learners receive the support they need.
- In partnership with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Autism Yukon, the LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, the Department of Education drafted a one-year training plan program for teachers on call.
- A joint management committee will gather input and work together to ensure that the roles and training for teachers on call align with the needs of all students.
- The joint management committee consists of membership from the department of Education, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, including the Association of Yukon Administrators Subcommittee and the Special Education Teachers Association

## CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

Subcommittee, Autism Yukon, LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.

- The joint management committee deliverables are a revised Teacher on Call training plan program.
- The revised Teacher on Call training plan program from the joint management committee will be subject to the formal consultation processes with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals following conclusion of the committee's work on May 30, 2025.
- The updated teacher on call training plan program will be implemented following the formal consultation process with Yukon Association of Education Professionals, anticipated for the 2025-26 school year.
- The department continues to work through many details in the implementation of this commitment, and I will bring forward more information as I am able to.
- I can share that the department is on track to have an updated training plan program for teachers on call.

### **Additional response:**

- The joint management committee has identified additional subject matter experts to consult on specific topics. This includes teachers or support staff who work with students with complex needs, colleagues from Health and Social Services to consult on medically complex students or students with chronic conditions.
- Department officials have met with Autism Yukon, the LDAY Centre for Learning, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to discuss this commitment multiple times in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school year.

### **CASA - Training for Teachers on Call**

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Education

- While developing the formal teacher on call training plan with partners, the department continues to provide access to training for teachers on call through YGLearn, a Yukon government online learning platform.
  - This collaborative work will help ensure the training plan approach is developmentally and culturally responsive.
  - After hearing feedback from the Leader of the New Democratic Party, it was mutually agreed to take the additional time needed to create lasting foundational training plan programs.
  - The Department of Education, the Yukon Liberal Party, and the Yukon NDP are dedicated to doing this work right for both Yukon learners and educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. The department is dedicated to completing this important work.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.
  - On December 27, 2024, the Yukon NDP Caucus publicly criticized through the media the training plan programs for educational assistants and teachers on call, that were developed by the Department of Education.
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#### **Background:**

- No meetings were held over summer 2024 to respect the Yukon Association of Education Professionals regular seasonal operational pause.
- In July 2024, the Department of Education was asked not to consult directly with union membership until bargaining had concluded. The department accepted this request.
- On February 5, 2025, the Department of Education, Yukon Association of Education Professionals, the LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, and Yukon First Nation

### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

Education Directorate, formed a time-limited Joint Management Committee to revise the training plan programs for educational assistants and teachers on call.

- This committee will meet bi-weekly until the end of May 2025 to complete this important work.
- Members on the Joint Management Committee include:
  - President, Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Chair, Special Education Teacher Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Chairperson, Administrator Yukon Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Executive Director, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Executive Director, LDAY Centre for Learning
  - Executive Director, Autism Yukon
  - Director of Human Resources for First Nation School Board
  - Director of Instructional Leadership, First Nations School Board
  - Executive Director, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
  - Superintendents, Yukon Education Authority schools
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Wellbeing and Inclusion
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Schools
  - Department of Education, Director of Human Resources
- An updated workplan for the CASA commitment on educational assistants and teachers on call training plan programs was approved by the Joint Management Committee:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Estimated Timeline</u>
Review available training for teachers on call and draft the teacher on call training plan program and	February 19 – March 5, 2025 Completion: May 20, 2025
Defining the educational assistant's role	March 26 – April 16, 2025 Completion: April 30, 2025
Review available training for educational assistants	April 30, 2025
Draft the educational assistant training plan program	May 1 – 20, 2025 Completion: May 28, 2025

- The Department of Education provides \$475,000 in annual funding to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to provide training and professional development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.



#### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
  - Provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, the LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion – refer to SI04**  
**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- I am pleased to be working with the Child and Youth Advocate and acting on many fronts to address important educational issues.
- As outlined in the Advocacy Protocol Agreement between our two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperative information sharing is a priority.
- We acknowledge that barriers exist in our education system – these have been highlighted in many reviews and reports, including the 2021 Dr. Nikki Yee's *Review of Inclusive and Special Education Report*, the 2019 Auditor General's *Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon* report and the 2021 Child and Youth Advocate's *Review on School Attendance in the Yukon*.
- For over three years, the Department of Education has been actively collaborating with our educational partners to implement the recommendations in these reports.
- Department staff have regularly scheduled meetings with the Child and Youth Advocate to find solutions to individual and systemic issues.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Yukon government's response to use of restraints and isolation spaces at Jack Hulland Elementary School

- We received a copy of the report on April 25, 2025, and we are pleased to receive the Advocate's recommendations.
  - The Advocate requests an initial response by June 30, 2025, and a follow-up response by December 1, 2025.
- We agree that all students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment, and we are committed to doing the important work required to make that happen.
- The Department will ensure both students and staff are supported to uphold safe and inclusive learning environments.

#### Systemic Advocacy—Children with Complex Needs – Close to Home

- On February 5, 2025, the Advocate provided its report entitled *Close to Home: A Yukon approach to supporting children with complex needs: Summary of findings*.
- Staff from Education and Health and Social Services reviewed the report, and the departments' deputy ministers responded to the recommendations, in a letter to the Advocate sent on March 31, 2025, as requested.
  - We have accepted the recommendations in principle and work toward many of them is already planned or underway.
- The Advocate has requested a follow-up response by December 1, 2025.
- On April 16, 2024, the departments of Health and Social Services and Education received notice that the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate office is actively working on a systemic review regarding how Yukon children with complex needs are supported by the departments.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

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

#### Systemic Racism in Education Review:

- In December 2023, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate announced a review of systemic discrimination and racism in education.
- We received the report on April 25, 2025, and we are analyzing the recommendations. This report will inform the ongoing work to strengthen our education system for all Yukon learners and in particular to close the achievement gap between First Nation and non-First Nation students.
  - The YCAO has requested an initial response by June 30, 2025, and a public follow-up response by December 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, outlining progress made toward addressing the calls to action.
- I acknowledge that barriers exist in the Yukon's education system, and department staff and school staff work to identify and remove barriers.
- We have fully cooperated and provided information that the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate office has requested from the Department of Education.
- We have numerous initiatives underway aimed at building inclusive, holistic education and reducing barriers, which is the essence of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).

## Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- Another tangible example of the department's work to reduce systemic barriers is active work towards the renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan for 2025-2035 in collaboration with Yukon First Nation governments. The four priority areas include:
  - K-12 Culture and Language,
  - Authority, Control and Responsibility,
  - Sustainability, Supports and Success, and
  - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap.
- I do want to emphasize that we value all our educators and their tireless work to support all Yukon students and overcoming these challenges requires collective effort and systemic reform.
- As we move forward, our commitment to ongoing improvement, collaboration, inclusivity and fostering belonging for all our learners remains unwavering.
- This includes nation-to-nation work with First Nations governments to learn more on how to create culturally inclusive learning environments and reduce systemic barriers in education.

### SOGI policy review

- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred the SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- This ongoing review asks the Advocate's Office to assess the policy's current impact and provide recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe school communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Hidden Valley Report:

- We value the work of the Child and Youth Advocate to review and report on sexualized abuse in Yukon schools.
- We accepted the report recommendations in principle and provided a detailed formal response to the Child and Youth Advocate in 2022.
- Many of the recommendations in the report closely align with the work currently underway as a part of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).
- The Safer Schools Action Plan also addressed many of the recommendations, and this Action Plan was fully implemented and integrated into the department and across the Yukon government.
- We provided a progress report on October 12, 2023, detailing the progress that the Government of Yukon has made in implementing the recommendations put forth by the Child and Youth Advocate's Office.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address identified issues to make schools safer for all students.

#### Student Attendance Report:

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

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

work plan to guide our joint response to the Review of School Attendance and the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Child and Youth Advocate's reviews raise awareness of important challenges in Education, and the Department is accountable for responding to their recommendations.

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#### Background:

##### The YCAO

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

##### Systemic Racism in Education Review

- In December 2023, the Child and Youth Advocate Office, with support from the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, launched a systemic review of discrimination and racism in education in the Yukon.
- The timeframe of the review focused on 2014-2024 and the public engagement period ran until December 2024.
- The Department of Education also answered numerous questions and provided extensive data that was requested by the YCAO.



### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- The Child and Youth Advocate Office is working to complete and table the final report in the Legislative Assembly for March 2025.
- On February 17, 2025, the Child and Youth Advocate Office provided a high-level update on the initial findings of the report to the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister and the Executive Director of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Melanie Bennet.
- The Child and Youth Advocate Office provided an update on the initial findings at the 6th Annual First Nation Education Conference hosted by the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on February 25 and 26, 2025.

#### SOGI Policy Review

- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred the SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- To date, the Child and Youth Advocate Office has launched a public survey, conducted focus groups and will host in-person conversations until April 2025.
- The Child and Youth Advocate Office will also request records from the Department of Education around April 2025 with the goal of tabling the final report in the fall 2025 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

#### Review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act

- The Child and Youth Advocate Office is working with Government of Yukon to undertake a review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act. While Department of Education is not leading this work, the department will provide input into this review as appropriate.
- No timelines have been established for the completion of the review. Within the 2023-24 Child and Youth Advocate Office Annual Report, legislative review goals for the year include:
  - Continue engagement with First Nations governments, service providers, and youth and families to collect input for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.
  - Work with Members' Service Board to finalize detailed recommendations for legislative amendments.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- Develop an operational plan and public education plan to implement legislative amendments.

#### 2023-24 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office

- The annual report of the YCAO includes activities of its office for the 12 months ending March 31, 2024. The report was provided to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the fall 2024 sitting.
- The report references the Department of Education numerous times and cites Education as highest department for advocacy issues (87 new issues, compared to 72 for HSS Family and Children Services).
- This is less than the 103 new issues identified for the Department of Education in the 2022-23 annual report.
- The 2023-24 report also states that the Child and Youth Advocate has dealt with the following number of Access to Education issues: Attendance (35), Safety in School (15), Educational Supports (20), and Behavioural Supports (14).
- This is generally less than the numbers referenced in the 2022-23 report related to Access to Education issues: Attendance (39), Safety in School (29), Educational Supports (21), and Behavioural Supports (11).

#### Hidden Valley Elementary School Systemic Review

- On January 25, 2024, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate provided the Minister of Education with a document titled YCAO Progress Tracker re. Yukon Government's 2023 update on Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Procedures. This "progress tracker" is a newly developed tool that the YCAO is using to monitor implementation of its recommendations for systematic and policy reviews.
- Of the 8 recommendations in the 2022 report:
  - 6 have a rating of "some progress". Work has started but is not complete.
  - 1 has a rating of "significant progress". Extensive progress has been made, but the work is not complete.
  - 1 has a rating of "fully implemented".

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Jack Hulland Elementary School Systemic Review

- On March 28, 2025, the YCAO notified the Deputy Ministers of Education and Health and Social Services and Justice that they have completed their findings and recommendations and are in the process of finalizing their full report.
  - The YCAO will reach out to the departments and the RCMP in May to fact check their findings.
  - The YCAO is developing a plan to release their report in the fall of 2025.
- On November 21, 2021, the YCAO notified the department of a systemic review regarding the Yukon government's response to reports of restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- It was clarified between YCAO and ADM of Schools and Student Services at the time that ongoing updates and meetings were satisfactory and a review of services and supports to families may come after the RCMP completes their investigation.
  - On July 14, 2022, the YCAO requested disclosure of a summary and select records provided to the RCMP as per their criminal investigation. The RCMP confirmed that the information requested is evidence in a law enforcement matter and/or criminal proceeding and release will obstruct the matter proceeding.
  - When the RCMP investigation concluded in June of 2024, the Department reached out to the YCAO indicating their records request could be resumed. A response to YCAO's updated request is underway.
- In December 2022, the YCAO met with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to provide a one-year update.
- In July 2023, the YCAO met again with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to discuss updates.
- The Advocate reported promising practices such as interdepartmental meetings with YCAO, RCMP interview process and a parent therapeutic support group, as well as areas for further improvement such as communication with students and families at other Yukon schools, those no longer in school and also between the YCAO.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Child and Youth Advocate Systemic Advocacy - Community Safety

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

#### Child and Youth Advocate Attendance Review

- In January 2020, the Child and Youth Advocate Office announced a review of barriers to school attendance in the territory.
- The Government of Yukon requested the Advocate's independent review be conducted under Section 15 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* to ensure the Child and Youth Advocate can work with partner groups that have perspectives as well as roles and responsibilities to support student attendance, including Yukon First Nations.
- The review, released in May 2021, focused on children aged 16 years and under; and included discussions with a number of partners. The YCAO made 14 recommendations to the Department of Education.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

Education

- On March 24, 2025, the YCAO issued a progress report on the Department of Education's progress in fulfilling their recommendations arising from the 2021 report.
  - For each of the recommendations, the YCAO rated the Department as making "Some Progress. Started but is not yet complete."
    - YCAO recognizes Education's commitment to creating an inclusive and engaging school environment for students, but finds that the output of work to date is not yet significantly reflected in the experiences of children and youth.
  - The YCAO has requested that the Department provide a formal updated response to the original recommendations by December 1, 2025.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

#### **EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process: refer HOT06/SSS02**

##### **Value:**

- Working with partners to ensure all voices are heard is an imperative step towards making sure all students are included and supported to meet their potential.

##### **Recommended response:**

- The letter tabled on April 16, 2025 has been addressed in a response on February 26, 2025.
  - The response states that the Yukon Association of Education Professionals had been informed in a meeting on February 12 that the Department of Education was reverting to the previous (2022-2023) rubric and process for this year so that formal consultation could continue.
- Departmental staff remain committed to working collaboratively with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to understand their views on a successful educational assistant allocation process.
- Departmental staff also continue to engage with partners to hear their concerns and hopes for an equitable process.
- Currently, there is a Joint Management Committee reviewing the training plans for educational assistants and teachers on call.
  - Part of the work of this committee is to collaboratively define the role of the educational assistant moving forward and produce a training plan that meets the needs of all Yukon students and education professionals.
- The membership of this committee includes:

## **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- the president of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals,
  - the president of the Association of Yukon School Administrators,
  - the President of the Special Education Teachers Sub association of Yukon Association of Education Professionals,
  - the Executive Director of Autism Yukon,
  - the Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon,
  - the Executive Director of Yukon First Nations Education Directorate,
  - along with members from First Nations School Board, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and Yukon Education Authority.
- The committee has been meeting biweekly since February 2025 and will continue to do so until the end of May 2025 to carry out this important work.
  - Following the conclusion of the committee's work, its outcomes will go through the usual consultation process with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
  - The next steps in the educational assistant allocation process will be guided by the collaboratively defined role of an educational assistant.
  - The Department of Education continues to receive feedback from schools during the current educational assistant allocation process and will continue to engage formally with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals regarding educational assistant allocations.



### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- Both school boards and the Yukon Education Authority are engaging with their staff and communities and are also involved in the educational assistant allocation consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- The Department of Education aims to ensure that the allocation of educational assistants is transparent, consistently applied, and objectively considers the diverse needs of learners, while aligning with the resources available, and supports all three school authorities as they seek to update their systems.
- Department officials will continue working with partners to understand their concerns and co-develop an open, transparent allocation process that addresses the needs of Yukon learners, within the context of all the available support resources.

### **Additional response - Fall 2023/Spring 2024 work and ongoing process improvement:**

- Partners asked the Department to take urgent action to implement the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education agenda and this included conducting a review of the current educational assistant allocation process.
- EnGauge Consulting was contracted to facilitate and gather diverse perspectives about the current educational assistant allocation process, which included individual, confidential interviews with approximately 30 individuals, including educators, administrators and representatives from the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- The consultants also hosted a two-day session and information gathering process in fall 2023, where many partners, including the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, confidentially provided their perspectives on the overall educational assistant allocations and offered concrete solutions.
- The final report based on these conversations was shared with stakeholders and the public in April 2024 and will help guide the department's next steps with partners.
- The department paused this work over summer 2024 to respect partners' schedules.
- Since this time, staff from the department have met individually with partners to continue discussions regarding the new rubric and allocation process.

#### **Additional response – YAEP Consultation:**

- The department is continuing its formal consultation process with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals. Meetings are ongoing.
- Department leadership will review and consider any recommendations received through consultation with the education assistant allocation process.
- The department values the active participation of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals on the Joint Management Committee to define the role of the Educational Assistant and provide valuable input into training plans for Yukon Association of Education Professionals' membership.

### EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

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Education

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of updates to the education assistant allocation process was raised numerous times in the Spring 2024 session, in the media and by education partners.
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#### Background:

- Interested parties involved in these discussions and engagements have included: Educational assistants, administrators (principals and vice principals), YAEP, LATs, classroom teachers, Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees, superintendents, Executive Director of the First Nations School Board, Executive Director of the CSFY, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, the Child Development Centre, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office, and partners within the Department of Education, Autism Yukon, the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon.
- A community of inquiry examined better ways to align funding models and staffing allocations with student needs. Draft recommendations have been submitted to the department.
- In the fall of 2023, Student Support Services contracted an external consultant to confidentially interview stakeholders on the current EA allocation process. Through this work recommendations have been put forward on possible changes to the process.
- The Public Service Commission received a grievance from YAEP in spring 2024. Consultation timelines may be impacted as the department also works through the grievance process. In February 2025, YAEP added both school boards to the active grievance process.
- The EnGauge Consultants report was shared with interested and involved parties and publicly released in April 2024. The report itself contains short, medium, and long-term goals. Part of the work that we will do with our partners includes analyzing and considering these recommendations.
- On April 25, 2024, department staff met with partners to hear concerns about the update to the rubric form which remains part of the allocation process. The

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

department continued to collaborate with partners over 2024 and will continue to collaborate over 2025.

- On July 12, 2024, Yukon Association of Education Professionals formally requested that all consultation regarding the role of the Educational Assistant be paused as the Yukon Association of Education Professionals considered it a bargaining issue. Yukon Government agreed to respect this opinion and did not consult further with any Yukon Association of Education Professional member or the union itself pending the outcome of bargaining.
- Now that bargaining is completed, a Joint Management Committee has been created to update the role of Educational Assistant, and Yukon Association of Education Professionals are key members of this committee.
- The procurement of the out-of-territory consultants who led the fall 2023 work followed the government's procurement policies. The consultants were chosen based on a proven track record of working in the Yukon.
- The updates to the process that were initially sent out in February 2024 were based on work with the consultants, input from partners and research into best practices. These updates included:
  - Better sharing of information with educators and administrators, including increased transparency in the educational assistant allocation form by clearly noting how the holistic needs of the students are being considered. This includes the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, and socio-emotional skills.
  - Updates to the base calculation.
- On April 25, 2024, a facilitated conversation with education partners was held to understand and discuss concerns, and to collectively discuss a path forward.
- In fall 2024, Student Support Services reviewed the feedback gathered during the consultation process. In February 2025, schools were sent a package which contains a rubric to fill out. This rubric was an information tool to provide information regarding the needs of each student. The scores of these rubrics were totaled, and a final school need calculated with input from Superintendents and discussions with school administrators. After March

### EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

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Education

break 2025, Student Support Services staff will meet to discuss the results with school administrators and learning assistance teachers.

- Often the calculated need is higher than the amount of full-time educational assistants available, and difficult decisions have to be made. The department anticipates communicating the EA allocation results to schools in April 2025.

#### EA Allocation Process Timeline of Meetings

September 2023	Hired Engauge Consulting to support discussions on EA Allocation process
October 2023	One-to-one meetings with education partners, school staff and central administration staff
November 2023	2-day workshop with education partners, school staff and central administration
October/November 2023	Jurisdictional scan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Educational Assistant Allocation process (including rubric/criteria)</li><li>- Educational Assistant training</li></ul>
January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Meetings with Superintendents and Executive Directors of school board to discuss updated rubric and base allocation</li><li>- School Boards given set number of EAs to allocate within their schools</li></ul>
February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Educational Assistant Allocation packages sent out to schools (with updated rubric)</li></ul>
March 2024	Request to pause Educational Assistant Allocation Formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals began Letter received from education partners with concerns (Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, Association of Yukon School Boards and Committees)
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Final Report from Engauge Consulting publicly released</li></ul>

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT05/SSS01

Spring 2025

## EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

	- Meeting with Education Partners April 25, 2024, to discuss rubric
June 2024	Schools notified to hire Educational Assistants based on previous year allocation Schools began hiring Educational Assistants for 2024-2025
July/August 2024	Pause of formal consultation with YAEP – office closure
September-November, 2024	Formal consultation commenced
December 2024	Formal consultation pause for YAEP office closure
December 2024- January 2025	LDAY Centre for Learning and Autism Yukon to hear concerns on new rubric
February 12, 2025	Department officials met with YAEP to continue formal consultation
February 17, 2025	EA allocation needs assessment tools distributed to schools for Area 1 and 2 using 2022-23 process.
February 27, 2025	Department officials met with YAEP to continue formal consultation.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

**EA Allocation - Next steps and work with partners: refer to  
HOT05/SSS01**

#### Value

- Every student deserves the necessary support to fully access their education and be included within the school community.

#### Recommended response:

- The 2025-2026 educational assistant allocation process is underway for all three school authorities (First Nation School Board, Commission scolaire francophone de Yukon, Yukon Education Authority).
- The allocation of educational assistants in schools across the territory takes into account several factors including student need, school community context, and number of full-time equivalents available for allocation.
- All partners play a valuable role in ensuring that students receive support to learn and be included. There is a range of student support available, and providing an educational assistant is one of the most intensive options.
- Changes to the educational assistant allocation process were on hold during the Yukon Association of Education Professional's collective bargaining period.
- With bargaining complete, the department, as well as both school boards, are continuing with formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- There are many additional considerations for educational assistant allocations, including transitions from the Child Development Centre, transitions between elementary and secondary school, and the arrival

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

of new students within or into the territory throughout the year. These factors can lead to adjustments in allocations as the year progresses.

- For the 2024-2025 school year, as of March 4, 2025, there are approximately 358 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants across all Yukon schools and school boards.

#### **Additional response:**

- In the spring of 2024, the allocation process for the 2024-25 school year for Yukon education schools was paused due to ongoing consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and work with broader system partners. To respect this work, the department allocated educational assistants for Yukon education schools based on the 2023-24 numbers.
- Under the 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers over three years, starting in the 2023-24 school year.
- For the 2023-24 school year, 40 new positions were added. These positions include educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists. The department is pleased to provide additional support with direct benefits to Yukon students and learner outcomes.
- For 2023-2024 school year
  - 15 Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs)
  - 13 Educational Assistants
- For the 2024-2025 school year
  - 14 educational assistants



### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- 1 learning assistance teachers
- For 2025-2026 school year, the department allocated:
  - 18 educational assistants
  - 1 learning assistance teachers
- The 18 educational assistants for the 2025-2026 school year, are hired and currently working in Yukon schools.
- These time-limited supports will help address the increasing need across the territory's education system.
- For the 2024-25 school year, as of March 4, 2025, there are approximately 362 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants across all school authorities:
  - approximately 57 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers, and 301 full time equivalents for educational assistants.

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#### Context:

- The Department has seen a significant increase in educational assistant requests from schools.
- There is CASA commitment to increase educational assistants and learning assistance teachers in schools for the 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

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#### Background:

- As of April 2025, there were 240 educational assistants working in Yukon Education Authority schools.
- Within 2025-2026 transfer payment agreements for the First Nations School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, budget was provided to support the following allocations:
  - 49 educational assistant FTEs for FNSB

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- 17 educational assistant FTEs for CSFY
- The educational assistant allocation process for 2025-26 is ongoing and involves aligning the budget with student needs across all schools in the Yukon.
- The department will continue to evaluate staffing proposals as enrollment and school-based needs are identified.
- Both school boards have the authority to adjust the educational assistants through their internal budgeting processes, based on school board priorities and student needs.
- For Yukon Education Authority schools, the educational assistant allocation process remains underway.
- The identified budget for 2025-26 is \$16,303,808, sufficient to hire approximately 235 educational assistant FTEs.
- The process that the department followed for Yukon Education Authority schools is:
  - Student Support Services shared material for school staff to request educational assistant support for their students. This material includes a rubric for shared and intensive support that considers areas like the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, medical needs and social-emotional skills. This follows the established process from 2022/23.
  - School staff complete this paperwork and share it back with Student Support Services.
  - Student Support Services, school staff and superintendents discuss requests for educational assistant support, including students who may not have scored highly on the rubric but who may also require additional support.
  - Student Support Services and Superintendents jointly assign educational assistant support for each school based on conversations, needs-informed evaluation and budgeted full-time equivalents. Increased collaboration between Student Support Services and the Schools division ensures that those who understand the needs in schools are actively involved.

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- Schools work with human resources to hire educational assistants.
  - Principals assign educational assistants within their school based on need.
- For the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and the First Nation School Board, the school boards decide how they will allocate the Educational Assistant positions within their overall allotments. They are also able to purchase additional Educational Assistant positions as required if they have room in their budget.
- The allocation for the 2024-25 school year in Yukon Education authority schools was based on the actual educational assistants hires as of March 2024.
- Allocation numbers for schools can vary each year as school and students' needs and school enrolments change.
- Many students have goals to develop independence and self-advocacy skills. When progress is made, the need for educational assistant support may be reduced after evaluating their successful skill development.
- School administrators continue to be responsible for determining day-to-day educational assistant schedules to maximize meeting both individual and shared needs of students.
- There is an increase in educational assistant allocation requests from schools. Schools are still focused on recovery from the pandemic years and working to better understand the needs of students and how best to support their educational programming.
- The FTE count (the number of education assistants working in schools) was 241 for Yukon Education Authority schools for the 2024-25 school year, which exceeded the FTE allowance. The additional FTEs were managed through vacancy factors.
- For 2025-26, risk managing additional FTEs through vacancy factor is not viable, based on a review and updating of allocations for the 2025-26 school year, there will now be 235 FTE in both Student Support Services (whose educational assistants serve all Yukon schools) and Yukon Education Authority schools.
  - As a result, most schools' educational assistant FTEs will remain consistent or decrease slightly, although needs have significantly risen.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT06/SSS02

Spring 2025

## EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

- The department is monitoring needs for 2025-26 and overall staffing proposal requests will include need requirements for Educational Assistants.

### Educational assistant allocation

	Budget FTE Educational Assistant Allocation	Budget \$	Note:
2024-25 Supplementary #2	290.4	\$22.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and K-12, includes realignment of CASA FTEs to meet the needs of the students.
2024-25 Mains	275.4	\$18.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and 10 new for 2024-25 CASA commitments and 13 for 2023-24 CASA commitments that were not included in 2023-24 Mains. Funding for CASA commitments were provided at a subsequent budgeting exercise
2023-24 Supplementary #2	251.4	\$18.6M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA FTEs were added in 2023-24 Mains and personnel funding was provided in Supp #2
2023-24 Mains	251.4	\$18.1M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA commitments were added in supplementary 2023-24 budget exercises (13 new for 2023-24)
2022-23 Mains	249.9	\$17.3M	Includes CSFY and FNSB
2021-22 Mains	248.4	\$16.2M	Includes CSFY
2020-21 Mains	245.4	\$15.9M	Includes CSFY
2019-20 Mains	245.4	\$15.1M	Includes CSFY

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

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

#### Educational assistant allocation process

- In 2015-16, an 'Educational Assistant Allocation Advisory Committee' recommended a needs-informed allocation process. Within this process:
  - Each school assesses its needs and submits a request for educational assistants to the Schools and Student Services Branch.
  - The Student Support Services staff review the schools' requests and use a needs-informed formula to initially allocate educational assistants.
  - Adjustments may be made if the assessed request total exceeds the number of educational assistant positions available.
  - Educational assistants are allocated to schools in the spring, and the principal assigns them within the school to best meet student needs.
  - At the beginning of the new school year, adjustments are made to the allocations based on actual student enrolment, needs at each school, the number of applications received, and positions filled.
  - Allocations may be further adjusted during a school year as needs change.
  - The department receives more requests for educational assistants from schools than it has full-time equivalents, and Student Support Services supports classroom teachers and Learning Assistance Teachers to meet a student's unique needs as part of the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education work.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-16**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

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Education

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL04**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education has a three-year agreement covering the years 2023-24 to 2025-26 with the Government of Canada that will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- In February 2025, an agreement for an additional year of funding was secured for 2026-27, increasing the total amount to \$10.5 million from 2023-24 to 2026-27.
- As well, an increase in the carryforward amount was negotiated for 2024-25 from 10% to 100%, which will maximize the benefits to Yukon communities.
- This partnership with the Government of Canada will support a mutual vision of high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

### Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

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Education

- The department will be making an announcement in the upcoming weeks providing information on recently approved infrastructure projects.
  - Two major and two minor projects have been approved for funding which will both increase child care spaces and accessibility.
- These investments will support more families benefiting from affordable child care.

#### **Additional response:**

- The department is also looking forward to receiving more details on the Federal Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Loan Program, announced in the Federal Budget 2024, which will further increase access to early learning and child care.
- Investments to date, supported by funding from Canada, provide Yukon families up to \$8,400 in yearly savings on child care expenses, provides increased wages for early childhood educators and increased funding to operators of licensed early learning and child care programs.
- These investments support work to improve outcomes for all Yukon children.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

### Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

Education

#### Background:

- The Minister of Education signed the funding agreement with the Government of Canada on March 28, 2024. In February 2025, an additional year of funding was secured through the extension of the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement. Under the infrastructure fund Yukon will receive a total of \$10,497,870.
  - 2023/24 \$2,283,404
  - 2024/25 \$2,598,232
  - 2025/26 \$2,808,117
  - 2026/27 \$2,808,117
- The agreement states that Yukon can roll over 100 per cent in the first year and 10 per cent in the remaining years. Although the Government of Canada has indicated that the rollover can be negotiated. In February 2025, the Yukon was able to secure 100% carry forward for the 2024/25 annual contribution.
- The priorities identified for the funding include:
  - Increased access to Indigenous led early learning and child care.
  - Increased access to Francophone early learning and child care.
  - Increased access to early learning and child care in underserved communities in rural Yukon.
  - Enhanced accessibility for children with disabilities in existing early learning and child care programs.
- The Government of Yukon announced the Yukon's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Infrastructure Fund on November 20, 2024, with a deadline to apply of January 15, 2025 for both major and minor submissions.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- All Yukon schools have access to clearly identified sources of potable water.
- For the start of the school year, each school had at least one clearly identified potable water source that meets Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*.
- The Department of Education supported the Department of Highways and Public Works and contracted a third-party firm to complete water sampling in all schools owned and operated by the Yukon government. The sampling was finished in December 2024, and all results have been received.
- Potable water fixtures were sampled at Independent Learning Centre on March 20, 2025. All three fixtures sampled meet Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*.
- The Department of Education, Highways and Public Works, Environmental Health, and the Chief Medical Officer have developed an action plan to address fixtures that exceed Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*. Mitigation work includes removal or isolation of fixtures; replacement of some fixtures or valves; installation of filter systems; and daily flushing protocols at all dental program sinks. All classroom sinks remain in use as they are suitable for hand washing or other education related activities but will be removed from the long-term monitoring program, except for kindergarten and grade one classrooms.
- Testing and remediation of potable water sources is an ongoing

project. The Department of Education and Highways and Public Works, in consultation with Environmental Health and the Chief Medical Officer, are developing a long-term water management plan. The plan will include regular monitoring of potable water sources in Yukon schools.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In the spring of 2024, the department learned that lead levels in some schools exceeded recommended standards.
- In the spring of 2024, the Department of Education provided signs to school to clearly identify sources of clean drinking water.
- Potable water fixtures were sampled at Independent Learning Centre on March 20, 2025. All three fixtures sampled meet Health Canada's Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. This was the last school to be tested, as collaboration with the building owner was involved.

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### **Background:**

- The Departments of Education, Highways and Public Works, Environmental Health, and the Chief Medical Office of Health have met weekly since May 2024 to discuss water in schools, testing, and mitigations and to ensure work remains on schedule.
- Highways and Public Works has installed filters at all Elkay water stations in Yukon schools – some by a contractor and some by HPW in collaboration with EDU.
  - An Elkay water filter is a type of filtration system designed to improve drinking water quality. These filters typically work to reduce contaminants such as chlorine, lead, and other impurities, ensuring cleaner and better-tasting water.
- A critical fixture is defined as that which is used for drinking water and food preparation. These fixtures are most likely utilized for the preparation of food for consumption. Critical fixtures include hallway drinking fountains, kitchen faucets in staff rooms, home education rooms, cafeteria, and kindergarten and grade one classroom sinks.

- Non-critical fixtures include janitor's sinks and bathroom sinks. These fixtures are less likely to be used for consumption. These faucets are not designated for use for drinking or food preparation.

#### Fixture signage

- Signage was necessary during the initial phase of the testing and remediation project to aid building occupants in identifying sources of drinking water.
  - Analyses of the comprehensive water testing in 2024 has confirmed that fixtures meet Canada's drinking water guidelines.
  - Based on these analyses, and recommended by the CMOH, it was determined that signage at each individual fixture is no longer necessary.
- Students and staff have been directed to use drinking fountains, water bottle filling stations and kitchen sinks as the source of their drinking water.
  - Incidental ingestion of water from other locations presents no significant risk to health.
  - Fixtures that are over Canada's drinking guideline maximum acceptable concentration for lead in drinking water will be addressed based on usage.
- Signs remain in the Children's Dental Program treatment rooms at schools.
  - As these sinks are used infrequently, the water sits in the plumbing and fixtures for extended periods.
  - The best mitigation at this point is to encourage routine flushing prior to use. Flushing is a proven mitigation to reduce the level of lead at the fixture.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-02**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

#### Value

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students while in the care of any Yukon school.

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education accepted, in principle, all eight of the Ombudsman's recommendations on its February 2024 Safer Schools Action Plan assessment.
- On February 28, 2025, the Department of Education provided a progress update to the Ombudsman.
- On March 27, 2025, the Ombudsman notified the Deputy Minister of Education that all eight recommendations have been fulfilled, and they are closing the file.
- The department has made significant progress on each of the recommendations.
- The department's policy and procedure documents have been revised to incorporate the Ombudsman's recommendations, and the drafts are undergoing reviews.
- While the reviews are underway, the department is implementing mandatory staff training and supporting updates to the policy and procedure documents to address the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- The recommendations that have been fully addressed include:
  - Recommendation #6: The department provided all documents associated with actions in the Safer Schools Action Plan, which was fully implemented in June 2023.

## Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

- Recommendation #7: The department identified the authorities responsible for the operationalization of products associated with the Action Plan.
- Recommendation #8: A comprehensive training regimen has been developed and implementation is continuous.
- The department appreciates the work of all the organizations that have reviewed, reported, or made recommendations on improving student safety. The department is committed to continuing system-wide improvements.
- While the department has made significant positive changes through the Safer Schools Action Plan, there is still more work to do to improve safety and security in Yukon schools. The department is committed to this work and appreciates the recommendations provided by the Ombudsman.

### **Additional response:**

- In 2024, the Department of Education accepted the Ombudsman's recommendations in principle, agreeing with all of them. This acceptance allows flexibility to explore various approaches to achieve the recommendations outcomes while prioritizing the safety of schools and the protection of students. Further work is needed to detail, analyze, adjust, and plan for effectively implementing and operationalizing the desired outcomes.
- I thank the Ombudsman and his staff for collaborating with the Department of Education on this review and supporting the continuous improvement of processes to ensure the safety of Yukon students.
- The valuable insights provided by the Ombudsman brought greater clarity to the Department of Education's policies and processes. Their

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

work is appreciated and will significantly contribute to making Yukon schools safer.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The update to the Ombudsman on their February 28, 2025, report may lead to questions regarding Education's work addressing the recommendations.
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#### Background:

##### Recommendations

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

##### Process

2. The Office of the Ombudsman investigated a 2021 complaint that the lengthy delay by the Department of Education to inform the parents, guardians and caregivers of students at Hidden Valley Elementary School about 2019 allegation of sexualized abuse of a student by a staff member was unfair. This matter has been the subject of four independent investigations.
3. The Ombudsman issued findings in two parts: The first report was issued on September 7, 2023, examining:
  1. why the Department waited more than 19 months to inform parents;
  2. why the Department began sharing information following a CBC news story; and

## Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

3. whether the Department had an obligation to communicate with the parents when it first became aware of the alleged abuse or whether it was prohibited from doing so by law.
4. The Ombudsman concluded that the complaint about the communication failure was substantiated but did not make any recommendations at that time.
5. The second preliminary report was issued on December 18, 2023, reviewing the Safer Schools Action Plan to determine if it is sufficient to avoid a reoccurrence of the communications failure that resulted in unfairness to the parents as reported in the first report.
6. After the Office of the Ombudsman completed their preliminary investigation report, the department was provided with the report to verify facts, considered the recommendations, and provided comments in relation to the preliminary report for consideration by the Ombudsman.
7. The Office of the Ombudsman then released their second report on February 27, 2024.

### One-year update – background, February 28, 2025

- Following the August 27, 2024, update to the Ombudsman, their office had made numerous requests for more information, which department staff provided.
- On January 7, 2025, department staff met with the Ombudsman's staff to try to address their questions. Department staff shared they aimed to complete the work addressing the recommendations in time for the start of the 2025-26 school year.
- On January 30, 2025, Ombudsman staff emailed Department of Education staff requesting that all work on the recommendations be finalized by February 28, 2025. This request did not align with the department's previously shared operational plan, which allowed time for reviews that would strengthen improvements for the Student Protection Policy and procedure documents, with all updates finalized in time for training at the start of the 2025-26 school year.

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

One-year update – status of each recommendation

**1. Activity: Document updates (Ombudsman recommendation #1, #2, #3, and #4)**

**Lead:** Policy Director

**Status:** In progress.

Draft updates to the Student Protection Policy, the Yukon School Post-Incident Communication Guidance and Chapter 9.11 of the School Procedures Handbook: Procedures for Preventing and Responding to Harm by Adults have been developed to address each of the recommendations. Updates are in final internal and user reviews. Additional changes will be made as more feedback is received. Depending on revisions, additional reviews with rightsholders and stakeholders may be required.

**Next steps:** Anticipate release of updated documents in time for training prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year. In the interim, mandatory training sessions clarify expectations and address the concerns identified in the report.

**2. Activity: Update CIR Guidelines (Ombudsman recommendation #5)**

**Lead:** Executive Council Office

**Status:** Supporting.

**Next steps:** The Department of Education will continue to support the Executive Council Office to revise the Responding to Critical Incidents guidance as needed.

**3. Activity: Revise Actions (Ombudsman recommendation #6)**

**Status:** Complete.

The Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented. For the benefit of the Ombudsman, the list of relevant documents associated with each Action, with an explanation for how they tie together for purposes of operational priority and cross-referencing, was shared in the August 27, 2024, update.

**4. Activity: Authority (Ombudsman recommendation #7)**

**Status:** Complete.

The Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented. Authorities responsible for operationalization of products of the Action Plan have been identified and described in the August 27, 2024, update. Page 2 of 4 5.

**5. Activity: Training regimen (Ombudsman recommendation #8)**

**Status:** Complete.

A comprehensive training regimen has been developed, and implementation is



### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

continuous. The August 27, 2024, update described the training that had taken place up to that time.

#### Six-month update – Background, August 27, 2024

- On August 27, 2024, the Department provided an update to the Ombudsman on the work that has been done to meet the recommendations.
- In January 2025, department staff met with staff from the Ombudsman's office to further discuss its work to address the recommendations.

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

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

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-31**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board**

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Education

**School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP05**

**School Governance and Associations: refer to EP08**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The First Nation School Board governs eleven schools across the Yukon, marking a historic step for Yukon First Nations and their citizens.
- The board empowers Yukon First Nations to reclaim greater responsibility for administering and managing education programs for students in their communities.
- As Minister of Education, I will continue to collaborate with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board trustees while exercising my oversight authority for Yukon education.
- I remain committed to working on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations to address their educational priorities for their citizens.

#### **Additional response:**

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

### **School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board**

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Education

- The board oversees 11 schools—nine in rural communities and two in Whitehorse—including the original eight schools and three added through February 2023 referendums.

#### **Additional response - Funding:**

- In December 2024, the Department of Education finalized a two-year Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) with the First Nation School Board to provide stable operational funding in the amount of \$33.4 million per year with \$24.2 million being withheld for salaries and heating fuel and \$9.221 million flowing directly to FNSB. This is for 830 students in 11 schools.
- The increase of \$5.404 million is adjusting the budget associated with the funds being flowed to FNSB, and includes board governance and administration, community committees, Whole Child Initiative and Yukon First Nations Language Initiatives in response to the 2019 Auditor General's Report.
- Interim TPAs ensured the board had operational funding during negotiations.
- The 2024-25 Budget and supplementary estimates include funding for the operation of all 11 schools.
- School Board TPAs are aligned with the school year and run from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The department is working with the board to develop a long-term funding formula to ensure equitable funding between school authorities and consistent service levels for K-12 education programs.

### **School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board**

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Education

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

- The First Nation School Board has developed and begun implementing its own Literacy and Numeracy strategies during the 2023-24 school year. The department supports and celebrates these successes.
- The Department of Education works closely with Yukon First Nation governments to develop Education Agreements that support improved outcomes for First Nation students.
  - The department is committed to working with the First Nation School Board on Education Agreements for the schools they operate.
- Three school authorities operate schools in Yukon: The First Nation School Board; the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY); and Yukon Education.
- All school authorities operate within the established curriculum, legislation, regulations, and policies, while maintaining significant autonomy in how education is delivered.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is considerable interest in how the First Nation School Board operates the 11 schools under its authority and the impact this has on all Yukon students.
- The November 2025 school boards election has the potential to overlap with the 2025 Yukon general election which will be held on or before November 3, 2025.

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#### **Background:**

- In December 2024, a two-year TPA was signed with the First Nations School Board to provide stable funding, supporting operations and governance.

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- The two-year TPA with the First Nations School Board ends on June 30, 2026 and provides \$33.4 million in funding each year as follows:
  - Annual operational support and operations and maintenance of eleven schools \$25.7M – this includes the same cost factors and drivers as the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, or CSFY, with a minor difference for rural remoteness.
  - Annual Board governance and administration of eleven schools of \$2.7M.
  - Discretionary grant for Indigenous recognition \$3.4M each year of the agreement
  - Annual funding for the governance of community committees \$179k.
  - Discretionary grant for Whole Child Initiative and Yukon First Nation Language Initiatives in response to the 2019 Auditors General report in the amount of \$1.4M each year of the agreement.
- There were interim TPAs in effect between June and December 2024.
- The negotiation team met a number of times through August and September, On September 20, 2024, the First Nation School Board submitted a funding proposal to support the TPA negotiation discussions.

#### By Fiscal Year:

- When broken down by fiscal year, instead of school calendar year, for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the funding breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eleven schools for April 2024 to March 2025 - \$25.4M.
  - From April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 there were 852 students enrolled and from July 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 there are 830 students enrolled.
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools - \$2.7M
  - Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report - \$4.2M
- For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the funding breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eight schools (675 students) for April 2023 to June 2023 and 11 schools (852 students) from July 2023 to March 2024 \$23.1M
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools of \$2.7M.

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$6.6M.
  - One-time funding for governance of community committees \$113k.
- The breakdown for the 15-month TPA (which ended June 2024) with the FNSB included:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eight schools \$29.3M
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools of \$3.3M.
  - Discretionary grant for Indigenous recognition \$4.8M.
  - One-time funding for governance of community committees \$450k.
  - Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$3.125M.
- The TPA was amended to include funding to support the three new schools as well as to extend the expiry date past June 30, 2024, while negotiating the new TPA.
- The following schools are operated by the First Nation School Board (FNSB):
  - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, Old Crow, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.
  - Johnson Elementary School & Watson Lake Secondary School, Watson Lake, Liard First Nation.
  - Ross River School, Ross River, Ross River Dena Council.
  - St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
  - Nelna Bessie John School, Beaver Creek, White River First Nation.
  - Grey Mountain Primary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
  - Takhini Elementary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
  - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing, Selkirk First Nation.
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross, Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
  - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, Kluane First Nation.

#### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- JV Clark School (Mayo) electors voted in 2022 to not have their school operated by the FNSB.
- An interim funding agreement was in place to ensure a successful transition for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The total amount of this agreement was \$13,094,188 (to March 31, 2023) and represented base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
- For 12 months of the funding agreement that ended on June 30, 2024 provided the FNSB with \$27,322,346 for the operation, administration, salaries and strategic initiatives for the original 8 schools along with the School Board for the 2023-24 school year.
  - The previous funding agreement was updated to include the 3 additional schools and any enrolment changes in early 2024.
- Following the establishment of the First Nation School Board, the Minister of Education appointed an interim governance committee based on recommendations of the Chiefs Committee on Education.
- This committee oversaw operations of the school board until November 2022, when school board trustee elections took place.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-18**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**For Building Schools - 5-year Capital Plan: refer to HOT01/SO01**

**For Modular Classrooms: refer to SO06**

**For School Growth Planning: refer to SI07**

#### **Value:**

- School facilities are important spaces that enable students to learn, host a variety of activities and support vibrant communities.

#### **Recommended response:**

- As Whitehorse continues to see steady population growth, Yukon school facilities need to grow and adapt to meet student population needs.
- The Department of Education routinely gathers data and input from school communities to plan their short, medium and long-term needs.
- Secondary school buildings in Whitehorse are more than large enough to accommodate the number of grade 8 -12 students enrolled across the system.
- The department recognizes that some schools' enrolment levels are approaching operational capacity. Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify additional space needs.

#### **Additional response:**

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



- In collaboration with other departments, Education monitors school facilities, capacity and demographic trends and plan for future school growth within the system.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions have been raised in the Legislative Assembly, in the media, and from school councils on how the department will deal with schools nearing or exceeding their operational capacity.
  - Determining operational capacity is complex, as space usage and programming needs change on a yearly basis and targets for operational capacity are set below the maximum number of students a school can accommodate.
- 

#### **Background:**

##### Capital planning:

- The departments of Highways and Public Works and Education make capital planning decisions based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with educational programming needs, demographic projections and enrolment trends and pressures. All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan.
- Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify additional space needs.
- The departments of Education and Highways and Public Works are working on a multi-year procurement and placement program for modulars, including where to replace aging structures and where to place new ones at Yukon schools.

##### Out-of-area requests and catchment analysis:

- Students wishing to attend a secondary school outside their catchment area must complete an out-of-area request.
  - For the 2024–25 school year, these requests were carefully considered if the student wants to attend a school experiencing enrolment pressures.
  - The same considerations will be in place for the 2025–26 school year.

- The department is undertaking a holistic catchment analysis of Whitehorse high schools, including out-of-area enrolment at F.H. Collins Secondary School.

#### School capacity:

- School capacity is estimated and measured by operational and total capacity while considering enrollment numbers.
- Enrolment numbers at F.H. Collins School, and other Whitehorse secondary schools do not fully reflect cross-enrolled students. While each student has a designated home school, many also attend another school part-time or full-time, such as the Individual Learning Centre, Aurora Virtual School, or Wood Street School.
- Operational capacity refers to the ideal state in which a school should function, considering factors such as fluctuations in enrollment, the ability to accommodate an influx of student enrollment as well as the efficient use of facilities and resources that all contribute to an ideal learning environment.
- Total capacity refers to the highest number of students that a school can accommodate, considering all available spaces, resources, and facilities.
- Both operational and total capacity are based on the number of classrooms and teaching spaces and the school's grade structure. Class size maximums are part of the YAEP collective agreement.
- Operational and total capacity estimates are subject to fluctuation monthly and throughout the school year due to factors such as changes in student enrollment, program offerings, classroom configurations, and facility utilization.
- Schools and school boards make decisions about managing operational capacity. For example, schools above operational capacity may repurpose spaces in facilities or alter class schedules to optimize use.
- The department continually reviews and refines its methods for measuring and improving operational and total capacity, ensuring that estimates remain accurate and effective in supporting informed decision-making.

### Estimated Elementary Operational and Total Capacities as of February 2025

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
Christ the King Elementary	353	294	120%	368	96%
École Whitehorse Elementary School	452	459	98%	551	82%
Elijah Smith Elementary School	271	330	83%	396	69%
Golden Horn Elementary School	246	216	114%	259	95%
Grey Mountain Primary School	86	67	128%	80	108%
Hidden Valley Elementary School	187	142	132%	170	111%
Holy Family Elementary School	185	147	126%	176	105%
Jack Hulland Elementary School	315	351	89%	421	74%
Selkirk Elementary School	375	302	124%	362	103%
Takhini Elementary School	160	222	72%	266	60%
Whistle Bend Elementary School	230	340	67%	425	53%
École Émilie-Tremblay (K-6)	220	302	73%	362	61%

### Estimated Secondary Operational and Total Capacities as of February 2025

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
CSSC Mercier	160	150	106%	195	82%
F.H. Collins Secondary School	741	744	99%	967	76%

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT11/SI06

Spring 2025

## School Capacity

Education

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
Porter Creek Secondary School	558	765	73%	994	56%
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	471	518	91%	673	70%

### F.H. Collins Secondary School:

- F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed as a high school with the possibility to accommodate a school expansion in the future. Currently, this school is at 99 per cent operational capacity and long-term capital planning will include options for expansion.
- For the 2024–25 school year, 12 students from the F.H. Collins Secondary School catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at the school when those students attempted to register.
- The City of Whitehorse's building inspection team has determined that the occupancy capacity of F.H. Collins is 1,630 persons. This contrasts with the school's operational capacity of 744 students. Occupancy capacity is determined by the building and fire codes.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-10**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The ongoing national labour shortage and limited housing options, particularly in rural communities, continue to impact overall school staffing recruitment efforts.
- For the 2025–26 school year, the Department of Education is taking many strategic recruitment actions:
  - Advertising was placed on Yuwin, Employment Central, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
  - Department of Education officials attended the following career fairs:
    - Simon Fraser University on September 9, 2024,
    - Lakehead Orillia Faculty of Education on November 8, 2024,
    - Laurentian University on January 20, 2025,
    - University of Alberta on January 22, 2025,
    - University of British Columbia on January 24, 2025,
    - The Bachelor's Degree of Education/Master's Degree of Education Job Search Fair which features Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, St. Francis Xavier University and Université Sainte-Anne on January 25-26, 2025,
    - University of Regina on January 27, 2025,
    - Université de Moncton and University of New Brunswick on February 5-6, 2025, and

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Virtual information sessions with Queen's and Nipissing Universities and the WestCoast Career Fair, a virtual fair for students from Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of British Columbia.
- The Department of Education's Human Resources team will attend an Outdoor Education Job Fair and Conference in Banff, Alberta in May 2025.
- These steps support our recruitment efforts.
- The Department of Education works to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- On November 13, 2024, the department launched a recruitment video which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
  - This video will be used as part of recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- and Post-Intensive French, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- In April 2025, the department will launch two recruitment videos which highlight Yukon Education programming across the Yukon.
  - These videos will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities.
- The CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million for a three-year commitment from 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26 to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- As per the CASA, the department will also provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call in

## **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.

- The department is dedicated to working collaboratively and in the best interests of both Yukon learners and Yukon educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. The department is committed to getting this work done.
- The Department of Education is streamlining the process that the Teacher Qualification Board uses to formally place new employees at the appropriate level of the pay grid. The department values the skills and experiences that educators bring, from within and outside of the territory, and constantly seeks to ensure that our processes reflect this throughout every stage of a new employee's journey.

### **Additional response:**

#### 2025-2026 School Educator Recruitment

- To expedite the hiring and onboarding process, the Department of Education's Human Resources branch returned to the Apply to Education recruitment platform, which streamlines job postings to reach the target educator audience and creates a smoother on-boarding process.
- 93% of school boards and authorities across Canada choose Apply to Education as their recruiting platform. This platform will be the primary site for all three school authority educator vacancies.
- During the transition period, there were some educator job postings on both recruitment platforms. This was due to either an extended job posting closing date or an until filled posting.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- The Yukon government career page will redirect applicants to the educator job postings, for all three school authorities, on the Apply to Education site, and will provide instructions on how to apply.

#### Temporary vacancy management

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by administrators, and I commend our administration teams for their ability to effectively adjust where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:
  - temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments,
  - adjustments to student learning groups; and
  - the use of teachers on call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of superintendents to schools under the authority of Yukon Education, or regrouping students, will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.
- If the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* is invoked, employees from areas across the Yukon government could be redeployed to other tasks and responsibilities. Classroom operations in the school system do not constitute an emergency under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*.
- Departmental central administration or board employees, who are eligible for a Yukon Teaching Certificate, can request a temporary assignment to a teaching position to assist with teacher shortages.

#### Rural recruitment

- Recruitment for education staff and office administration is often a challenge in rural communities.



### School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

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Education

- This is especially true when recruiting for less than full-time positions, which is often the case as per the staffing allocation.
- Staffing allocations are based on the number of students, with special provisions made for small, rural schools.

#### Creation of a new annual rural retention allowance:

- On January 23, 2025, after a successful ratification vote for a new collective agreement, dated July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, a new annual rural retention allowance for all the YAEP bargaining unit members, excluding teachers on call and employees working in Whitehorse, has been implemented for the full three-year period:

Community	Annual Amount
Carcross	\$945
Haines Junction, Teslin, Carmacks	\$1,166
Watson Lake, Dawson City	\$1,785
Mayo, Ross River, Pelly Crossing, Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, Faro	\$3,010
Old Crow	\$13,610

#### Psychological wellbeing

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
  - Health, safety and wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace;

## **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- An Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
- Conflict Management Services, formerly known as the Respectful Workplace Office, as another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

### Raising workplace concerns

- Educators who have concerns related to their work should bring them forward through the appropriate channels. These channels include:
  - The school's administrative team
  - The Office of the Superintendents
  - The Human Resources branch of the Department of Education
  - The Yukon Association of Education Professionals

### Employee supports for Yukon government staff (including educators)

- The employee and family assistance program (EFAP) is provided for all Government of Yukon staff and educators. EFAP can provide all Yukon government employees with confidential, expert support for various personal and workplace challenges.
- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available through Telus Health at 1-844-880-9142 or via the Telus Health One platform.
- Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act (PIDWA) – Employees can raise concerns under this legislation, though the process involves multiple steps. Educators can learn more about their rights and obligations by enrolling in the self-paced online PIDWA for Yukon Government Employees course on YG Learn (Course #1253).
- Conflict Management Services (formerly the Respectful Workplace Office) is available through the Public Service Commission.

## **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Investigations Office – Public Service Commission.
- Workplace injury claims – Submit a claim through the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.
- Yukon Association of Education Professionals – Provides support and advocacy for educators.
- Critical Incident Debriefs – Coordinated through the Human Resources branch, Department of Education.

### Responding to Reports of Harassment from External Parties

- Employees are responsible under the General Administration Manual 3.48 Workplace Health and Safety to report hazards and incidents to their direct supervisors. This includes reports of harassment from external parties.
- The supervisor is responsible for investigating the report with assistance from the human resources branch and Corporate Health and Safety.
- The focus of the investigation is to determine whether harassment may have occurred and the likelihood of it occurring again to determine what mitigations can be established.
- The supervisor and employee both have responsibility to review and adhere to the mitigation strategies.

### May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day

- The Department of Education is following their established human resource processes to review the matters and address the concerns raised by some of the Committee members. We are looking into the past correspondence to identify what follow-up happened.
- On April 2, 2025, the human resources branch met with the signatories of the May 16, 2023, letter and will take appropriate next steps.

### Teachers on call (TOCs)

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- As of April 24, 2025, there are 283 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon Education Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 33 pending applications.
  - Please note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.
  - Also note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs have accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education Authority school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of February 16, 2024, there were 220 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon School Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 24 pending applications.
  - Please note that these numbers include the First Nation School Board.
- The department continues to actively recruit teachers on call and recognizes that demand for coverage continues to be a challenge.
- The department continues to evolve its recruitment efforts to attract candidates for teacher on call roles and to support staff in accepting assignments as they are available. For example, the department has enhanced their promotion of teacher on call opportunities specific to each community and are continuing to take steps to improve the experience that teacher on call candidates have throughout each step of the recruitment process.
- The department has increased advertising for TOCs on Yuwin, Employment Central, and other recruitment sites.
- The department sent targeted communications to former teachers on call, retirees, candidates from the Apply to Education registry, and applicants from educational assistant competitions.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- The department is working with leaders in community schools to schedule in-person recruitment days, to promote teacher on call opportunities and provide information to community members who may be interested in applying.
- During the 2023–24 school year, the Department of Education's human resources team partnered with three schools to host school open houses, at Robert Service School in Dawson, and École Selkirk Elementary School and Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse.
- For the 2024–25 school year, the department is scheduled to host school open houses at Robert Service School in Dawson.
- The Golden Horn Elementary School Council decided to join a central teacher-on-call open house and not have a school-based open house.

### Teacher Certification – Internationally Educated Teachers

- Teachers working in Yukon public schools must be certified in the Yukon.
- To obtain certification in Yukon, teachers must have a teacher qualification document from another Canadian jurisdiction. This requirement does not apply for Yukon Native Teacher Education Program or the Bachelor of Education After Degree program at Yukon University.
- Each territory and province in Canada has specific certification requirements, which internationally educated teachers must meet to teach in a Canadian jurisdiction.
- Many provinces and territories are participating in Pathways to Teach Canada. This is a platform for internationally educated teachers seeking a license to work as a teacher in Canada.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Pathways to Teach Canada gives internationally educated teachers access consistent, fair, transparent and timely access to assessments of training and language proficiency.
  - To be eligible for a Yukon teacher certificate, a teacher must be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or hold a work permit.
  - Internationally educated teachers can reach out to [teachercertification@yukon.ca](mailto:teachercertification@yukon.ca) to discuss options that meet their needs.
  - Because of the Yukon's Teacher Certification Regulations, with the requirement for teachers educated outside of the Yukon to be certified elsewhere before applying, Yukon is an observer member on
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT12/HR03

Spring 2025

## School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-29](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

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Education

**Student Data – Methodology (and graduation rates): refer to DPT13**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional response:

- The department gathers, analyzes and shares student data throughout the school year to give all education partners a better understanding of how students are doing.
- The department is also exploring the establishment of integrated service agreements under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to share non-aggregated data with Yukon First Nation governments about their citizens.



### Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

Education

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

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

#### Background

- School Profile reports give an overview and analysis of each school's student assessment results and enrolment numbers and are provided in January to each school.
- Yukon Wide Student Data Reports provide an overview for the public of academic performance and attendance using comparative and historic analyses of urban, rural, Yukon First Nation, other Indigenous and non-First Nation students.
- How Are We Doing? Yukon First Nations reports were established under the Data Working Group and focus on Yukon First Nation student performance data.
- Yukon Wide Student Data Reports and How Are We Doing? Yukon First Nations reports are published every spring on Yukon.ca.
  - The 2023–24 reports were posted on January 9, 2025.
- While the department follows British Columbia's methodologies and data reporting practices as much as possible, differences do exist as there are contextual variations due to the different jurisdictional sizes.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

#### Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO22

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- In August 2023, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd. was awarded the prime consultant contract for the École Whitehorse Elementary School replacement project through a public tender.
- This includes conducting a Site Analysis (Phase 1) and producing a report on potential sites for the new school within the Takhini Educational Land Reserve.
- On October 1, 2024, the Government of Yukon announced that the new École Whitehorse Elementary School will be built at the northwest corner of the Takhini Educational Land Reserve.
- The Department of Education is nearing the end of the pre-design phase (Phase 2), during which, key studies and reports will be completed. These documents will help inform the design of the new school.
- Highways and Public Works received the completed Traffic Impact assessment study, which was shared with stakeholders during the engagement sessions and at an open house on April 10, 2025.

## Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- The traffic study evaluates the impact on major intersections around Takhini and provides recommendations for two roundabouts, parking, access, pedestrian, and cyclist safety along Range Road.
  - If the bus ridership to the new school meets the current 80% ridership of the present École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Normandy Road and University Drive intersections along Range Road are expected to maintain minimal delays (less than 15 seconds per vehicle) and free-flow conditions, ensuring smooth traffic flow.
- Over 110 people attended the April 10<sup>th</sup> open house including a large portion of Takhini residents.
  - Attendees visited tables set up by the Department of Education, Highways and Public Works, and Community Services, to learn more about the Traffic Impact Assessment Findings, Project Details, Busing and Transportation, and Sports Infrastructure Investments.
  - Participants were able to provide feedback on forms and surveys in English and French. 160 surveys were received, and half of the respondents were Takhini residents.
- The verbal feedback received included appreciation for the engagement and wishing for additional Questions and Answers sessions. Site location was a common theme in that participants were curious as to why the Takhini location was chosen.
- Based on the feedback received, a "What We Heard Report" will be produced. The initial input included comments about a desire for safe, active transportation and unanimous positive remarks for a large gym.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Feedback from the survey will help guide the conceptual design phase by identifying community priorities, addressing concerns, and ensuring the project aligns with user needs and expectations.
- The project will require a YESAA assessment to evaluate potential impacts and provide recommendations. Engagement with YESAB will occur at the appropriate stage.
- The project is still in an early planning phase, and based on the current estimated timeline, construction of the new school will commence in the spring of 2027 at the earliest.
- If construction starts in the summer of 2027, the school could be completed by the fall of 2029 and welcome its first students in 2029-2030.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude establishing another downtown school in the future.

#### **Additional response – engagement:**

- Representatives from the Government of Yukon met with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association on October 18, 2024, to better understand the community's key concerns, including the need for a traffic study and ongoing engagement.
- The *Choosing the future site for École Whitehorse Elementary School* location report was updated on Yukon.ca as of October 28, 2024.
- The Department of Education will continue engaging with the Takhini Neighborhood Association as planning proceeds.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Future opportunities for all partners and stakeholders to discuss the project will be provided.
- This is a valuable opportunity to enhance French immersion programming in a new, modern learning environment.

#### **Additional response - Site options:**

- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large, serviced parcel of land that offers a central location with improved access to green space, meeting modern learning needs.
- Some trees on the chosen site are unhealthy or unsafe due to damage from annual spring flooding and will be removed to make room for the new multi-sport field. The design team has worked closely with a landscape architect to identify which trees are healthy and which pose risks.
- Only a small portion of the existing trees, which are mostly unhealthy, will be removed. Most of the forested area will remain to minimize the environmental impact.
- The First Nation School Board are engaged in these discussions and will provide input on the final design decisions.
- Rezoning will be required for the new school location. Discussions with the City of Whitehorse to address rezoning will begin during the conceptual design phase.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- MLAs have been vocal about keeping a school in the downtown core. On October 21, 2022, the Minister met with concerned downtown residents.
- Takhini residents have been vocal on social media about their concerns over removing trees in the location of the future multi-sport field.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

#### Background:

- Department officials continue to meet with Softball and Sport Yukon, and a commitment has been made to ensure they remain informed as the project progresses. The agreement focuses on relocating softball infrastructure while ensuring the sport remains vibrant in the community.
- The Departments of Education, Community Services, Highways & Public Works, and Sport Yukon are working on an agreement to collaborate on expanding school gymnasiums in Whitehorse. The agreement aims to address the significant deficit in large gymnasium space and support community health and recreation.
- The École Whitehorse Elementary School Council wrote to the Minister of Education on October 29, 2024, emphasizing the importance of building a modern and safe educational facility.
- The School Council expressed support for the Government of Yukon's commitment to building a new École Whitehorse Elementary School and willingness to continue working with stakeholders and the Project Advisory Committee.
- École Whitehorse Elementary School was built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The school cannot meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders, and the Government of Yukon. Meetings were held on:
  - October 3, 2022
  - November 10, 2022
  - May 15, 2023
  - August 28, 2023
  - November 23, 2023
  - January 11, 2024

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- April 18, 2024
  - October 17, 2024
  - November 14, 2024
- On November 23, 2023, a representative of the Takhini Neighborhood Association joined the Project Advisory Committee.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Council
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
  - City of Whitehorse
  - Government of Yukon
  - Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
  - Kwanlin Dün First Nation
  - Takhini Neighbourhood Association
- The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- Other schools are currently located downtown: the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.
- Issues have been raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed building code upgrades, and overall accessibility.
- Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate the build.
- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations, and the public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key design milestones.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- In March 2024, various partners and stakeholders were invited to a meeting to review the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit report, and subsequent meetings were held with the EWES school council (April 15, 2024).
- As the Takhini Neighborhood Association requested, Department of Education Operations staff met with Takhini residents on April 24, 2024, to share the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit Report.
- The meeting with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association was attended by a number of residents, including MLA Kate White.
- On October 2, 2024, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd., the consulting firm responsible for designing the new EWES, organized site visits to five modern schools in Vancouver. These visits provided the project team with valuable insights. Participants included representatives from Highway and Public Works, Education, and two members of the Project Advisory Committee. The tours highlighted contemporary educational environments that emphasize innovative design, revealing effective strategies for enhancing student learning and support, which will inform the development of the new EWES school.
- On October 17, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee convened for a meeting at which the Kobayashi + Zedda Architects team presented insights on 21st-century schools. They also provided an update on the recent Vancouver school tour, sharing key takeaways that could inform the planning of the new school.
- On November 14, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee held a meeting at which the EWES school principal and staff shared their insights and suggestions for the new school. They provided several recommendations regarding its design.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve:
  - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
  - There are not a lot of other vacant sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school.
  - To look at a different site would entail going through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity, etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.



### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Work to identify suitable land for educational purposes for future school builds is in the preliminary stages.
- The consultant is currently in phase two of seven. These phases include:
  - Site analysis and test fit
  - Pre-design
  - Conceptual design options
  - Schematic design
  - Detailed Design and Specifications
  - Contractor procurement
  - Construction administration and warranty
- Potential site analysis and pre-design have been completed, and community engagement is underway. The engagement process includes information from the Traffic Impact Assessment, Site Analysis, the project's next steps and participant survey collection.
- Information about participating in an Open House on April 10, 2025, will be shared in a press release the week of March 31, 2025.

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

- The Takhini Neighborhood Association ran an online survey between October 13 and 17, 2024 and received 144 unique responses.
- The survey asked three questions focused on 1. key messages for the Minister for the relocation project, 2. support of WES's relocation to the Takhini Educational Reserve, and 3. reasons for support or lack thereof.
- Question 1 - What's the most important message that the Minister of Education needs to hear regarding the WES relocation project?
  - Traffic concerns
  - The need for consultation
  - The lack of transparency in the decision-making process
- Questions 2 and 3 - Do you support the relocation of WES to Takhini?
  - Maybe: 21% - Traffic concerns, green space, softball fields, downtown needs school.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Yes: 19% of respondents were excited about a French immersion school in the neighbourhood, believed that it would be good to have a walkable new school in the neighbourhood, and looked at the school situation in Whitehorse as a whole.
- No: 60% - Traffic concerns, loss of green space, lack of consultation, question why two schools would be next to each other.
- As part of the current engagement strategy, survey information will be collected for a What We Heard Report.

#### Bussing at École Whitehorse Elementary School

- Currently, approximately 80% of École Whitehorse Elementary School students are registered for bus transportation.
  - According to daily bus ridership logs, approximately 90% of those students take the bus on any given day.
  - Variations in usage may arise due to factors such as illness, appointments, parental pickups, field trips, after-school care, sports activities, or forgotten items like lunchboxes.

#### Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

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

#### Budget

- For 2024-25 fiscal year, \$2.08M is being deferred due to ongoing adjustments in the work and extending planning and engagement opportunities.
  - The department is being responsive to concerns by stakeholders such as traffic concerns and is taking the time to do additional work and ensure we are getting it right.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT14/SO21

Spring 2025

## Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

Education

- For 2025-26 fiscal year, we are estimating \$1M for this year. As such timing of the 5-Year capital plan has been adjusted.

### Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025

2024-25 Actuals	2024-25 Supplementary budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total project actuals to date	Total project estimated budget
\$425,969	\$420,000	\$1,000,000	\$744,592	To be determined

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-25

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Value:**

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

**Recommended response:**

- On April 1, 2024, Canada announced a \$1 billion investment over five years to create a National School Food Program.
- The new National School Food Policy outlines principles and objectives to support the vision of every child having access to nutritious food in school.
- In February 2025, the Government of Yukon signed a bilateral agreement with Canada for National School Food Program funding for 2024-25 to 2026-27.
- Investing in school food programs reflects our commitment to students' health and wellbeing, ensuring they have access to nutritious meals that support learning.

**Additional Response:**

- While the April 1, 2024, budget announcement detailed a \$1 billion investment over five years, the bilateral agreement covers a three-year period.
- The Yukon will receive \$2.26 million for 2024-25 and \$2.55 million annually for 2025-26 and 2026-27, with 100% of the 2024-25 funds rolling over into 2025-26.
- Eligible expenditures include food purchases, staffing, infrastructure for food preparation and storage, transportation, equipment, logistics, program capital and operating costs, quality assurance, administrative and overhead costs, and other program delivery expenses.

- The Government of Yukon is not required to match the federal investment.
  - The Year 1 (2024-25) Action Plan approved by Canada includes working with partners, including school boards, school councils, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Yukon Food for Learning Association to set the foundation for school food program enhancements that will be rolled out across the Yukon in Years 2 and 3 (2025-26 & 2026-27).
  - Details of the Years 2 and 3 Action Plan and the implementation of Yukon school food program funding will be shared once the Years 2 & 3 Action Plans are finalized.
  - We value and appreciate our partners for their ongoing work in supporting Yukon students.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- As the Yukon is still negotiating a bilateral agreement and associated action plans, there may be questions as to the status of the National School Food Program funding.
  - Several provinces have signed bilateral agreements with Canada for the National School Food Program funding, including Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, PEI, Ontario and New Brunswick.
- 

### **Background:**

#### Future of School Food Programs Working Group

- The Future of School Food Programs working group has been meeting since 2022 to identify areas for improvement in the delivery of school food programs in the Yukon and to propose options for implementing a universal school food program in the Yukon.
- The group is co-chaired by the Yukon Food for Learning Association. The working group includes members representing:
  - Yukon Food for Learning Association
  - Department of Education (including Department officials, teachers and administrators)

- Department of Health and Social Services (Health Promotion, Environmental Health Services)
- Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Agriculture)
- Yukon First Nations Education Directorate
- Liard First Nation
- Kluane First Nation
- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- Yukon Food Security Network
- School council members

### Yukon School Food Programs

- School food programs in Yukon schools are currently administered and funded through a combination of funding from the Yukon Food for Learning Association and Yukon First Nations Education Directorate with funding from Jordan's Principle.
- Yukon Government provides \$137,000 annually to the Yukon Food for Learning Association. Schools can apply for funding to support a school food program or to buy kitchen equipment to support their school food program.
- The Yukon First Nations Education Directorate receives funding from Jordan's Principle to administer school food programs in Yukon schools for Indigenous students. In schools that lack capacity for meal preparation, food is prepared in commercial kitchens off-site and then delivered to the schools.
- Porter Creek, St. Francis of Assisi, F.H Collins, and CSSC Mercier secondary schools all have commercial kitchens. All schools have some capacity to deliver food and nutrition programs to students through smaller kitchens or Home Economic rooms.
- The commercial kitchens at Porter Creek Secondary School and CSSC Mercier are made available through a special request for user groups to access through the Joint Use Agreement with the City of Whitehorse.
- In the 2023-24 budget the Government of Yukon announced a one-time financial enhancement of \$500,000 to strengthen existing school food programs.

- The Yukon Food for Learning Association received \$450,000 to distribute to all Yukon schools and Yukon First Nation Education Directorate received \$50,000 to support school feasts.
- This funding was a crucial part of the government's efforts to further support nutrition programs in all Yukon schools and help ease the financial burden on families with school aged children.

### Yukon's Rural and Urban School Kitchen Spaces Assessment Project

- The Yukon Food for Learning Association has contracted Kobayashi and Zedda Architects to produce a comprehensive report on the state of kitchens in all Yukon schools.
- The consultant will develop a functional space plan and identify the requirements for a commercial kitchen space needed to deliver a full-service food program delivery model in Yukon schools where student meals can be prepped on site daily.
- This contract is underway, with an expected completion date of spring 2025.
- This report will inform options for moving forward to enhance school food programs in Yukon schools.
- Upgrading current infrastructure to meet commercial kitchen standards is a complex process that will involve extensive design and planning.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-02-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Whitehorse Downtown School - Future

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Education

#### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to SO21

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School's current age, condition, and location present challenges and limitations that make it the top candidate for Whitehorse school replacements.
- Due to capital project timelines, limited educational land reserves, and associated considerations, it is not possible to locate the École Whitehorse Elementary School's replacement school downtown.
- We recognize that many people feel an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse is essential, and we will continue to work with residents, stakeholders, First Nations governments, and the City of Whitehorse so that planning for a new downtown school can occur.
- Downtown residents have told us they value having a school in their neighbourhood. This echoes the feedback we heard in spring 2023 public engagement on capital planning for schools. We've heard that Yukoners value local neighbourhood schools
- The Yukon government understand that a school is at the heart of a vibrant community, offering not only a central hub for learning and growth but a place of connections among residents.
- We are committed to have the planning and development of a new school in downtown Whitehorse part of the 2025–2026 budget.



### Whitehorse Downtown School - Future

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Education

- We are looking forward to inviting you to engage on the new school in downtown Whitehorse in late spring 2025.

#### **Additional response:**

- Our government is committed to ongoing consultation and long-term planning to ensure the educational needs of Yukoners are met.
- We have heard from community members that providing input into school planning is a high priority, and so we are planning an early-stage public engagement on a future downtown school.
- Additionally, we are currently engaging with Takhini residents and educational partners on the traffic study for the École Whitehorse Elementary School's replacement school in Takhini.
- With anticipated development and increased densification in the downtown core, the future of downtown Whitehorse is evolving.
- In response, our government is exploring options to build a new school. We are actively engaging with partners, stakeholders, First Nations governments and the community to understand the future needs and identify potential locations for a new school.
- As part of the due diligence of this work, all existing parcels of land will be explored to determine their feasibility.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

### Whitehorse Downtown School - Future

Education

#### Background:

- In April 2024, the Minister of Community Services asked the Whitehorse mayor and council to work with the Government of Yukon to identify land within the downtown core larger than École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location for an educational reserve and that the City of Whitehorse make the appropriate changes to the Official Community Plan.
- Current downtown schools include École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School.
- While École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated to a new school on the Takhini Educational Reserve Land, the other learning centres will remain in the downtown core.
- The department has had preliminary meetings with various stakeholders regarding the building of a new downtown school. Department officials have met with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the City of Whitehorse, Yukon Housing and representatives from the Kèjän + Rogers (5<sup>th</sup> & Rogers) Development team: Northern Vision Development, Da Daghay Development Corporation, Kobayashi+Zedda, and Ketza Construction.
- Work on a needs/gap analysis, including population projections for the downtown area are underway.
- \$50,000 has been allocated in the 2025-2026 budget for public engagement on a new downtown Whitehorse school.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-02

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

- Catholic Separate Schools are Yukon public schools and any Catholic school policies must comply with the policies in effect for all Yukon public schools.

#### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon works with the Catholic school communities and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse to deliver public school programs and religious education at the Yukon's three Catholic schools.
- The relationship between the Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation is outlined in the Education Act and a 1962 agreement that remains in effect.
- St. Francis Secondary, Christ the King Elementary, and Holy Family Elementary follow the same curriculum, laws, and policies as other Yukon schools.
- In addition, they provide religious education instruction such as Catholic values lessons, prayers, and Church-related activities.
- The Department of Education continues to review policies and structures to clarify roles and improve communication between the department and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation.
- Yukon's Catholic schools are part of the Yukon Education school authority, managed directly by the Department of Education. There is a process outlined in the Education Act for school councils to follow should they wish to join an existing or establish a new school board.

#### Additional response:

- There is a communication protocol between the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse to ensure all parties have a comprehensive and common understanding of the agreement. This includes:

- Monthly meetings between Department officials, including the Deputy Minister, and the Bishop.
  - A YGLearn course on Catholic education in Yukon, providing guidance for educators.
  - Ongoing engagement on SOGI inclusion implementation in Catholic schools.
  - Catholic educators who have concerns related to their work should bring them forward through the appropriate channels. These include:
    - The school's administrative team
    - The Office of the Superintendents
    - The Human Resources branch of the Department of Education
    - The Yukon Association of Education Professionals
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- After a letter of the Holy Family Elementary School principal became public when she stepped down in February 2025, questions were raised in the House and the media about what the Government of Yukon is doing regarding Bishop Hector Villa's influence on Catholic schools.
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#### **Background:**

- Under the *Education Act*, the Minister of Education is responsible for the operation and management of any school for which there is a School Council, including the three Catholic schools (Christ the King Elementary School, Holy Family Elementary School, and Vanier Catholic Secondary School).
  - The 1962 agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse provides that:
    - The Catholic separate schools will be funded by the Yukon government and must be operated and governed in accordance with all legal requirements in force in Yukon.
-

- The Yukon government is responsible for operations and maintenance of Catholic separate schools.
- The Episcopal Corporation is responsible for instructing students in the Roman Catholic religion and has a role in staff recruitment and recommendations on a teacher's suitability to teach in these schools.
- Under the *Education Act*, all rights and privileges arising out of the 1962 Agreement must be respected and continued under the Act.

### 1962 Agreement:

- An agreement signed in April 1962 between the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory (Commissioner) and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation (Corporation) of Whitehorse outlined the following:
  - The sale of land and schools from the Corporation to the Commission of schools then known as Christ the King Elementary School and High School, in Whitehorse Yukon for the sum of \$200,001 (occurred).
  - That the Government of Yukon will establish, operate and maintain Catholic separate schools, subject to the terms outlined in the agreement until such a time that locally funded Catholic school districts were established (ongoing commitment).
  - That Government of Yukon will not impose any fee, levy or tax on a Catholic separate school that is higher than those for non-separate schools (ongoing commitment).
  - That the funding and services provided for Catholic separate schools will be of an equivalent standard to those provided for non-separate schools (ongoing commitment).
  - That the Commissioner will consult with the Corporation for the approval of teacher's suitability to teach in a Catholic separate school (ongoing commitment).
  - That the Corporation shall undertake programs for the recruitment of teachers, including principals and vice-principals for separate schools (recruitment currently coordinated through Department of Education, with a role for the Corporation).

- That the Corporation will be responsible for instructing students attending Catholic separate schools in the Catholic religion and morality at no cost to the Government of Yukon, inclusive of instructors, religious books and materials (this currently occurs through Catholic religion coordinators, paid for by the Department of Education).

School	Assigned FTE	Approximate Cost
Christ the King Elementary School	0.5	\$63,026.85
Holy Family Elementary School	0.3	\$43,950.11
St. Francis of Assisi Secondary School	1.0	\$103,932.74
Total	1.8	\$210,909.69

- That religious instruction be given during specified times for this instruction and training (ongoing commitment).
- That Catholic separate schools will be operated and maintained and governed by all laws of the Yukon Territory (ongoing commitment).
- The Corporation may work with the Commissioner to identified appropriate sites for future Catholic separate schools (the last new Catholic school, Holy Family Elementary School in Porter Creek opened in 1993).
- The 1962 Agreement is protected under the *Education Act* (section 57):

“All rights and privileges arising out of the Yukon Act (Canada), any agreement or understanding between the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory or the Minister and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation shall be respected and continued under this Act and any regulations passed thereunder. S.Y. 1989- 90, c.25, s.57.”
- Additionally, there is a Separate School Regulation, pursuant to sections 57, 58, 59, 60, and 306(f) of the *Education Act* (O.I.C 1991/231), which outlines residency for attendance areas, elections, religious instruction and exercises for separate schools in the Yukon.
- The Yukon Act allows for the Legislature to make laws in relations to education in the Yukon, but any law must provide that “the minority of the ratepayers in that part of Yukon, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish separate schools in that part and, if they do so, are liable only to assessments of the rates that they impose on themselves in respect of those schools.” (Yukon Act – S.C. 2002, c. 7 (Section 18))

- As long as the 1962 agreement remains in force, it is legally binding on both parties. However, the agreement cannot displace other laws of Canada or the Yukon such as the Education Act, the Constitution, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the Yukon Human Rights Act.
- Should the Commissioner (as represented by the Government of Yukon) decide to change the 1962 agreement with the Corporation, this could be done in one of the following ways:
  - Encouraging the establishment of school districts (school boards) as described in the 1962 agreement. The process for establishing school boards is outlined in sections 72 through 76 of the Education Act; or
  - Amending the Education Act and repealing the Separate Schools Regulation; or
  - Ceasing to follow the terms of the 1962 agreement, in which case the extent to which the Government of Yukon has a duty to continue to follow this agreement within the Department of Education's current legislative framework would likely be decided by the courts.

### Protocols

- The table below identifies the protocols between the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse that are currently in place and the priority level for protocol development. These protocols support both the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse around roles and responsibilities.

Protocol	Branch Director	Priority Level Order
Communication	Superintendents and Director, Communication	Complete
Staffing	Director, Human Resources	Consultation with the YAEP
MOU - Roles and Responsibilities	Director, Policy and ADM Schools	1
Funding for Religious Instruction	Superintendents and Director, Finance	2

Protocol	Branch Director	Priority Level Order
Curriculum and Instruction Materials	Director, Curriculum and Assessment	3
Professional Development	Superintendents, Director, Curriculum and Assessment, and Director, Student Support Services	4
Development of Policy	Director, Policy and ADM Schools	5

**May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day**

- There have been questions raised as to why the department has not followed up with some members of the Catholic Professional Development Committee who raised concerns about the May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day.
- While there have not been any formal workplace health and safety complaints or concerns documented, in continuing to thoroughly review archived files from previous employees, the department located a letter signed by some members of the Catholic Professional Development Committee, the teacher committee that organized the May 1, 2023, Professional Development Day, that was sent in May 2023. Both recipients of the letter have since moved on from the Office of the Superintendents.
- With renewed awareness of these concerns, the Department of Education will take the concerns of previous complaints from 2023 seriously.
- The Department of Education is following their established human resource processes to review the matters and address the concerns raised by some of the Committee members. We are looking into the past correspondence of these former employees to identify if any follow-up was actioned.
- At no point did the Department of Education communicate or imply that attendance at Mass was mandatory for staff. The department is continuing to understand and explore the concern that has been brought forward and to learn why some members felt that attending mass was mandatory.
- On April 2, 2025, the human resources branch met with the signatories of the May 16, 2023, letter and will take appropriate next steps.



### History

- There have been many instances over the years where differences between the enforcement of Department of Education policies and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation have become public.
- Examples include:

#### 2004

- Prayer by non-Catholics in Catholic schools 2004
  - Complaints were made both by a school and reported in the media that non-Catholics who had been accepted in the Catholic system were not following the religious rules in the school.

#### 2012

- Catholic “One Heart” document and opposition to SOGI policy 2012.
  - A document prepared by the bishop, was put on the Vanier Catholic Secondary School website but subsequently removed after review of the Department of Education.
- Locker vandalism 2012
  - A student locker at Vanier Catholic Secondary School was vandalized with the word “faggot” with subsequent media and school community reaction.

#### 2023

- Professional development - 2023
  - At a Catholic administrators meeting Bishop Vila suggested that Christopher West be invited to be the presenter at the Catholic Schools of Whitehorse Professional Development Day. Christopher West is controversial for non-Catholics as he a proponent of “Theology of the Body”. Theology of the Body fits within the Catholic doctrine. Christopher West was not invited to be the presenter.
  - The Catholic Schools of Whitehorse professional development day was held on May 1, 2023. As per tradition, a mass was held at Sacred Heart Cathedral to begin the professional day and was presided over by Bishop Hector Vila. During the homily Bishop Vila spoke to the Catholic beliefs on marriage, at which time approximately one-third of the people attending left. The principals of Christ the King Elementary School and St. Francis of Assisi remained for the entire mass.

- The professional development day continued at the Gold Rush Inn conference centre with on-line presentations from Father Martin, who does not live in the Yukon. Father Martin's message was well received at the professional development day. Bishop Vila remained in attendance for the rest of the time at the Gold Rush Inn.

#### 2024

- Pride Flag theft 2024
  - A Pride flag was damaged and stolen from Holy Family Elementary School and reported in the media.
- Curriculum resource material and textbook 2024
  - An anonymous letter was received complaining about a textbook use in the *Morals and Ethics* course at St. Francis of Assisi. The complaint was regarding textbook language which contradicted the SOGI policy, specifically regarding homosexuality.
  - A comprehensive review of the textbooks used in Grades 10-12 was completed by a panel which included, a curriculum consultant and two St. Francis staff, one of which was the religious education coordinator.
  - A list of recommendations for each text was compiled and it was determined that the textbook mentioned in the letter be replaced with an alternative.

#### 2025

- Holy Family Principal 2025
  - The principal of a Whitehorse Catholic school stepped down from her position alleging that the local bishop frequently oversteps his authority while the education department does little to address his behaviour.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional response:

- As of March 2025, the department has hired eight school wellness specialists to provide ongoing mental wellness and systems navigation support in Yukon schools.
- The department is in the final stages of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the First Nation School Board so they may choose wellness specialists that best meet the needs of their school communities. Five school wellness specialists positions have been transferred to the First Nations School Board in 2024-2025 school year and one will be transferred for the 2025-2026 school year.
- The department met the commitment to provide all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan.

- The department has developed a service standard to complete psychoeducational assessments within six months of a school sending the signed informed consent form to Student Support Services.
  - If this work cannot be done within the department, the department contracts external providers to conduct psychoeducational assessments to meet student needs.
  - If neither of the above options are available, the department reimburses parents to have the assessment done privately.
- The Department of Education has met the commitment to allocate an additional one million dollars in the last two budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- The department is meeting the commitment to increase the number of positions of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers.
  - For the 2023-2024 school year the department allocated 13 educational assistants and 15 learning assistance teachers; and for the 2024-2025 school year the department allocated 14 educational assistants and one learning assistance teacher.
- The government is meeting the commitment to make an additional annual investment of one million dollars for mental health outcomes for youth; \$500,000 for the Department of Education and \$500,000 for the Executive Council office, Youth Directorate branch.
- With agreement from the NDP, the department has extended the deadline to create a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call. Additionally, the department is collaborating with partners to update the role of educational assistants.

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Once the work is completed the department and partners will update the educational assistant training plan program.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

### **Background:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS01

Spring 2025

CASA - Accomplishments

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **CASA - Careers in Health and Social Services**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education is actively collaborating with the Yukon University to explore partnership opportunities that support people in Yukon communities in pursuing careers in health and social services.
- In addition, the department provides the university with \$740,780 in ongoing funding for the Practical Nursing program.
- This program now provides annual opportunities for up to 18 new students to pursue healthcare careers. The graduates of this program

### CASA - Careers in Health and Social Services

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Education

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

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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#### Background:

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



# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS02

Spring 2025

## CASA - Careers in Health and Social Services

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Education

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

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **CASA - Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers**

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to  
HOT12/HR03**

**CASA – Wellness Specialists: refer to CAS10**

#### **Value:**

- All children have a right to education and deserve access to educational supports needed to optimize their learning. Supports must be tailored to each student's specific needs and may include learning assistance teachers as well as educational assistants.

#### **Recommended response:**

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions is to increase the number of positions of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers.
- The Yukon government committed to 81 new positions over three fiscal years starting in the 2023-2024 school year, including educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, the department has expanded on the 2023-2024 school year's allocations by adding one additional learning assistance teacher to the 15 added previously, and 14 new educational assistant positions to the 13 added previously.
- For the 2025-2026 school year, the department is proposing the following allocation, one additional learning assistance teacher and 18 new educational assistant positions.

## **CASA - Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers**

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Education

### **Additional response:**

- These positions are one piece of the puzzle in supporting students and ensuring that they can meet their potential across all Yukon schools.
- Other pieces include:
  - Ongoing work to ensure learning assistant teachers are trained and ready to meet the evolving needs of Yukon students;
  - Implementing the Ready-to-Learn approach in Yukon schools to ensure every student is supported to be ready to learn each day; and
  - When needed, developing learning plans on psychological assessments completed within six months of referral, in alignment with the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education work plan.
- The department looks forward to continued engagement with education partners to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed in their learning journey and participate fully in school life.
- For the 2025-2026 school year the department allocated:
  - 18 educational assistants; and
  - 1 learning assistance teacher.
- For the 2024-2025 school year the department allocated:
  - 14 educational assistants; and
  - 1 learning assistance teacher.
- For the 2023-2024 school year the department allocated:
  - 13 educational assistants; and
  - 15 learning assistance teachers.
- Superintendents and school board executive directors are prioritizing the implementation of these important positions in schools.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS03

Spring 2025

## CASA - Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers

Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
  - Increase the allocation of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers starting in the fall of 2023.
- Over three fiscal years, the Department of Education is allocating 81 FTEs to meet the government's commitment to increase the allocation of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers starting in the 2023-24 school year, as follows:

Position	School Year	# Increase FTE Allocation	# Hired	Total Allocated
Educational Assistant	2023-2024	13	13	44
	2024-2025	14	14	
	2025-2026 (proposed)	17	0	
Learning Assistance Teacher	2023-2024	15	15	20
	2024-2025	4	1	
	2025-2026 (proposed)	1	0	

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-12

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs): refer to SSS03

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions includes providing all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan, also known as an IEP.
- I am pleased to say that the Department of Education has met this commitment and continues to support educators, Yukon learners and families with Individualized Education Plans as needed.
- As of April 15, 2025, there are 426 students throughout all three school authorities, or 7% of the students enrolled in school in the Yukon, on an Individual Education Plan.
- The Department of Education and Yukon schools continue to communicate with parents, school staff, partners, stakeholders, and families about the process for Individualized Education Plans and learning plans.
- At any time, parents and guardians can bring forward concerns to their school and ask for a school-based team meeting to hear about how their child is learning at the school.

- Individualized Education Plans are outlined in the *Education Act* to provide support for students in need of a special education program.
- The Department of Education is strengthening the implementation of Individualized Education Plans to foster a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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#### Background:

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

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-16

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

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Education

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

**Ready-to-Learn Schools: refer to RI02**

**Mental Health – supports for school staff and students: refer to SSS06**

**CASA - Wellness Specialists: refer to CAS10**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports several specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- Under the Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government has committed \$500,000 annually over three fiscal years ending in fiscal 2025/26 to the Department of Education to improve mental health outcomes for youth.
- For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the department has allocated this additional funding to various initiatives including Ready-to-Learn implementation, development of the Comprehensive Mental Health Approach, and support for the Territorial Youth Summit.
- For the 2025-26 fiscal year, the department will allocate the funding to various initiatives including Ready-to-Learn implementation into additional Yukon schools, training on Mental Health and Wellness for Yukon educators, development of the Comprehensive Mental Health Approach, and continued support for the Territorial Youth Summit.

## **CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth**

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Education

- The Ready-to-Learn approach is an important way that we are incorporating a mental wellness focus across all Yukon schools.
- Ready-to-Learn trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive and to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive, or social age. It also helps educators to understand brain development, functioning, and learning.
- As part of this investment, the Department of Education is developing a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach. This is an important part of the overall work being done to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- Department officials are collaborating with education partners to gather their valuable input. A draft will be shared more broadly in spring 2025.
- Implementing a "wellness counsellor or similar positions" has helped to support and improve student mental health outcomes in schools and classrooms. Eight School Wellness Specialists have been providing support to students in Yukon schools, department officials are working with First Nation governments to implement First Nation government-led wellness roles in their communities.

### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education's Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach will focus on prevention and promoting positive mental wellbeing, as well as intervention supports and responses both within schools and in the broader community. The approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- The approach will align with Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy and be informed by the Territorial Youth Strategy, which brings



### CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

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Education

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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#### Background:

- In the 2023-24 fiscal year, the Department of Education's \$500,000 was allocated as follows:
  - Ready-to-Learn rolled out in additional schools,
  - Mental Health and Wellness kits (developed by Youth for Youth),
  - Supported the Territorial Youth Summit,
  - Training for schools on Suicide Prevention, and
  - Teegatha Oh Zheh: Our Suitcases, Our Stories Art Installation.
- In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Department of Education's \$500,000 was allocated as follows:
  - Ready-to-Learn,
  - Support for Territorial Youth Summit,
  - Training on Mental Health and Wellness, and
  - Development of the Mental Health and Wellness Approach.
- In the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Department of Education's \$500,000 will be allocated as follows:
  - Ready-to-Learn, implementation with the goal of onboarding all Yukon schools to the initiative.
  - Support for Territorial Youth Summit,
  - Training on Mental Health and Wellness for Yukon educators, and
  - Continued development of the Mental Health and Wellness Approach.
- The Youth Directorate (Executive Council Office) received the other \$500,000 out of the \$1,000,000 commitment to advance its youth mental health initiatives.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS05

Spring 2025

## CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-03-17](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The Confidence and Supply Agreement reflects the values of the Yukon government to support students in their learning goals.
- This agreement outlines several specific actions for the Department of Education and details funding commitments over three fiscal years to work towards these goals.
- Educational psychologists provide consultation to teachers, educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and administrators.
- Schools request this type of consultation to support students with diverse learning needs and mental health concerns, ensuring they can access their education and be included in all school community activities.
- In some cases, a formal assessment is helpful for gaining a deeper understanding of a student, such as when diagnosing a learning disability or understanding how they learn best.
- As of April 15, 2025, 49 educational psychology standardized assessments have been completed during the 2024-25 school year; there are 56 students currently undergoing an educational psychological

## CASA - Psychoeducational Assessments

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Education

assessment; and there are 19 students identified and waiting for an assessment.

- Currently the department has one educational psychologist and contracts with three psychology practices. Student Support Services is currently in the process of contracting a fourth psychology practice to provide services and is actively recruiting to hire additional Educational Psychologists.
- The department is aware that some schools have been maintaining their own waitlists for psychological assessments and some referrals were not submitted to Student Support Services. This caused confusion for parents, who may not know that their child's assessment referral is not with Student Support Services. Department officials are working with schools to align their referral processes and ensure all students receive the support that they need.
- A learning plan can be created for a student whenever parents and schools identify a need for support. A psychological assessment is not required for a student to have a learning plan or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), but it can provide helpful information to add to the plan.
- The department is communicating with parents and school-based staff to clarify the process for assessments, school-based team meetings and referrals. The department is also updating Individualized Education Plans and ensuring strategies from assessments are implemented.
- The department has set a service standard to complete assessments within six months of a school sending the signed informed consent form to Student Support Services.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS06

Spring 2025

## CASA - Psychoeducational Assessments

Education

- If this work cannot be completed internally, the department either contracts it out or reimburses parents for having the assessment done privately.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals**

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education has implemented a number of initiatives to improve recruitment and retention efforts since 2023, including:
  - enhanced marketing for recruitment;

## **CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals**

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Education

- posting jobs earlier each year;
- participating more widely at job fairs;
- enhanced onboarding and training for staff; and
- exploring a bursary incentive for Yukon students to pursue post-secondary programs in professional education fields.
- On November 13, 2024, the Department of Education launched a recruitment video promoting French language education programming across the Yukon. The video highlights opportunities for educators in French Immersion, Pre- & Post-Intensive French, Core French and the Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon (CSFY). By showcasing the vibrant teaching opportunities in these programs, the video aims to attract educators to the Yukon and strengthen the department's ability to fill teaching roles.
- In 2025, department officials attended the following career fairs in-person:
  - Laurentian University on January 20, 2025;
  - University of Alberta on January 22, 2025;
  - University of British Columbia on January 24, 2025;
  - the Bachelor of Education and Masters of Education Job Search Fair which features Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, St. Francis Xavier University and Université Sainte-Anne, from January 25 to 26, 2025;
  - University of Regina on January 27, 2025; and
  - Université de Moncton and University of New Brunswick, from February 5 to 6, 2025.

## CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

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Education

- In February 2025, the department officials also attended virtual information sessions with Queen's and Nipissing Universities and the West Coast Career Fair (a virtual fair for students from Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of British Columbia).
- On May 8 to 10, 2025, department officials will attend the 2025 Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff, Alberta.

### Create an annual rural retention allowance:

- On January 23, 2025, after a successful ratification vote for a Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP) collective agreement, dated July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, a new annual rural retention allowance for all the YAEP bargaining unit members, excluding teachers on call and employees working in Whitehorse, has been implemented for the full three-year period:

Community	Annual Amount
Carcross	\$945
Haines Junction, Teslin, Carmacks	\$1,166
Watson Lake, Dawson City	\$1,785
Mayo, Ross River, Pelly Crossing, Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, Faro	\$3,010
Old Crow	\$13,610

- There is also an annual allowance for Yukon First Nation Language Teachers who are not currently compensated on the Teacher Pay Grid of \$5,000 for the full three-year period.



## CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

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Education

### Enhanced onboarding and training for staff:

- In May 2024, the department expanded the online learning management system, known as YGLearn to all school-based educators. This system allows the school-based educators access to all YG courses, virtually and in-person.
- In March 2025, the department re-launched the Apply to Education recruitment platform, which streamlines job postings that reach the right educator audience and a smoother on-boarding process.

### Exploring a bursary incentive for Yukon students to pursue post-secondary programs in Education:

- A bursary program is in development.
- A return of service commitment is in a final draft and will be reviewed by the Department of Justice and the Public Service Commission.
  - The department is aiming to launch a bursary program in September 2025.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
  - Allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS07

Spring 2025

## CASA - Recruitment and Retention of Rural Education Professionals

Education

This may include a program aimed at supporting Yukon students pursuing studies in educational fields who commit to working in the Yukon after graduation.

- Last school year (2023-24), human resource consultants attended seven in-person education career fairs in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta. The dates of those were as follows:

University	Virtual/In Person	Date
Education Expo	In-person	December 20, 2023
University of British Columbia	In-person	January 19, 2024
University of Alberta Campus Saint Jean	In-person	January 22, 2024
Laurentian University/Université Laurentian	In-person	January 29, 2024
University of Moncton	In-person	February 7, 2024
Université d'Ottawa	In-person	March 7, 2024
Outlearning Fair – Banff	In-person	May 9 to 11, 2024

- In September and November of 2024, department officials attended two in-person career fairs at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, and Lakehead University in Ontario, and received excellent feedback.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-22

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **CASA - Training for Educational Assistants**

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

#### **Value:**

- Students deserve staff who are well trained, and staff deserve the support they need to do the job they are hired to perform.

#### **Recommended response:**

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement outlines specific actions for the Department of Education and prioritizes funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One key action is creating a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call, ensuring educators and learners receive the support they need.
- The Joint Management Committee consists of membership from the Department of Education, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, including the Association of Yukon Administrators Subcommittee and the Special Education Teachers Association Subcommittee, Autism Yukon, LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.
- The joint management committee deliverables are a revised Educational Assistant training plan program and updated role of the Educational Assistant
- All deliverables from the Joint Management Committee will be subject to the formal consultation processes with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals following conclusion of the committee's work on May 30, 2025.

### **CASA - Training for Educational Assistants**

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Education

- The updated EA training plan program and role of EA will be implemented following the formal consultation process with Yukon Association of Education Professionals, it is anticipated to be implemented in the 2025-26 school year.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Joint Management committee has identified additional subject matter experts to consult on specific topics. This includes teachers or support staff who work with students with complex needs, colleagues from health and social to consult on medically complex students or students with chronic conditions.
- Within the CASA framework, Education is dedicated to doing this work right for both Yukon learners and educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities to meet the needs of Yukoners. The department is dedicated to completing this important work.
- While developing the educational assistant training plan program with partners, the department continues to provide training for educational assistants.
- In the 2024-2025 school year, educational assistants received training through professional development days, including a dedicated session on January 20, 2025. Training topics included:
  - Supporting students with anxiety;
  - Supporting Students with ADHD;
  - Supporting Students with type one diabetes; and
  - Presentations from occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, physiotherapists, autism specialists, the Yukon First

### CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

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Education

Nations Education Directorate, the LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Syndrome Society.

- Educational assistants selected breakout sessions that best suited their learning needs.
- Students Support Services sends trainers to rural schools to work alongside educators and provide training as needed.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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#### Background:

- Joint Management Committee membership list:
  - President, Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Chair, Special Education Teacher Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Chairperson, Administrator Yukon Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Executive Director, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Executive Director, LDAY Centre for Learning
  - Executive Director, Autism Yukon
  - Director of Human Resources for First Nation School Board
  - Director of Instructional Leadership, First Nations School Board
  - Executive Director, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
  - Superintendents, Yukon Education Authority schools
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Wellbeing and Inclusion
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Schools
  - Department of Education, Director of Human Resources
- An updated workplan for the CASA commitment on educational assistants and teachers on call training plan programs was approved by the Joint Management Committee:

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT02/CAS08

Spring 2025

## CASA - Training for Educational Assistants

Education

Action	Estimated Timeline
Review available training for teachers on call and draft the teacher on call training plan program and	February 19 – March 5, 2025 Completion: May 20, 2025
Defining the educational assistant's role	March 26 – April 16, 2025 Completion: April 30, 2025
Review available training for educational assistants	April 30, 2025
Draft the educational assistant training plan program	May 1 – 20, 2025 Completion: May 28, 2025

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

**School Staffing Concerns – Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy: refer to HOT12/HR03**

**Formal Assessments: refer to RI01**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement outlines specific actions for the Department of Education and prioritizes funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One key action is to create a one-year training plan program for teachers on call and educational assistants, ensuring educators and learners receive the support they need.
- In partnership with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Autism Yukon, the LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, the Department of Education drafted a one-year training plan program for teachers on call.
- A joint management committee will gather input and work together to ensure that the roles and training for teachers on call align with the needs of all students.
- The joint management committee consists of membership from the department of Education, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, including the Association of Yukon Administrators Subcommittee and the Special Education Teachers Association

## CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

Subcommittee, Autism Yukon, LDAY Centre for Learning, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.

- The joint management committee deliverables are a revised Teacher on Call training plan program.
- The revised Teacher on Call training plan program from the joint management committee will be subject to the formal consultation processes with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals following conclusion of the committee's work on May 30, 2025.
- The updated teacher on call training plan program will be implemented following the formal consultation process with Yukon Association of Education Professionals, anticipated for the 2025-26 school year.
- The department continues to work through many details in the implementation of this commitment, and I will bring forward more information as I am able to.
- I can share that the department is on track to have an updated training plan program for teachers on call.

### **Additional response:**

- The joint management committee has identified additional subject matter experts to consult on specific topics. This includes teachers or support staff who work with students with complex needs, colleagues from Health and Social Services to consult on medically complex students or students with chronic conditions.
- Department officials have met with Autism Yukon, the LDAY Centre for Learning, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to discuss this commitment multiple times in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school year.



### **CASA - Training for Teachers on Call**

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Education

- While developing the formal teacher on call training plan with partners, the department continues to provide access to training for teachers on call through YGLearn, a Yukon government online learning platform.
  - This collaborative work will help ensure the training plan approach is developmentally and culturally responsive.
  - After hearing feedback from the Leader of the New Democratic Party, it was mutually agreed to take the additional time needed to create lasting foundational training plan programs.
  - The Department of Education, the Yukon Liberal Party, and the Yukon NDP are dedicated to doing this work right for both Yukon learners and educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. The department is dedicated to completing this important work.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the term of the agreement.
  - On December 27, 2024, the Yukon NDP Caucus publicly criticized through the media the training plan programs for educational assistants and teachers on call, that were developed by the Department of Education.
- 

#### **Background:**

- No meetings were held over summer 2024 to respect the Yukon Association of Education Professionals regular seasonal operational pause.
- In July 2024, the Department of Education was asked not to consult directly with union membership until bargaining had concluded. The department accepted this request.
- On February 5, 2025, the Department of Education, Yukon Association of Education Professionals, the LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, and Yukon First Nation

### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

Education Directorate, formed a time-limited Joint Management Committee to revise the training plan programs for educational assistants and teachers on call.

- This committee will meet bi-weekly until the end of May 2025 to complete this important work.
- Members on the Joint Management Committee include:
  - President, Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Chair, Special Education Teacher Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Chairperson, Administrator Yukon Sub-Association (YAEP)
  - Executive Director, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Executive Director, LDAY Centre for Learning
  - Executive Director, Autism Yukon
  - Director of Human Resources for First Nation School Board
  - Director of Instructional Leadership, First Nations School Board
  - Executive Director, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
  - Superintendents, Yukon Education Authority schools
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Wellbeing and Inclusion
  - Department of Education, Assistant Deputy Minister, Schools
  - Department of Education, Director of Human Resources
- An updated workplan for the CASA commitment on educational assistants and teachers on call training plan programs was approved by the Joint Management Committee:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Estimated Timeline</u>
Review available training for teachers on call and draft the teacher on call training plan program and	February 19 – March 5, 2025 Completion: May 20, 2025
Defining the educational assistant's role	March 26 – April 16, 2025 Completion: April 30, 2025
Review available training for educational assistants	April 30, 2025
Draft the educational assistant training plan program	May 1 – 20, 2025 Completion: May 28, 2025

- The Department of Education provides \$475,000 in annual funding to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to provide training and professional development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.

### CASA - Training for Teachers on Call

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Education

- From the 2023 CASA agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
  - Provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, the LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement supports specific actions for the Department of Education and has prioritized funding commitments over three fiscal years.
- One of these actions is to create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions.
- These positions will be served by two specific roles:
  - School Wellness Specialists – that require a minimum of a Bachelor of Social Work or equivalent; and
  - First Nation government-led wellness support, which department officials are developing in collaboration with First Nation governments. This could be an Elder, a traditional knowledge keeper or a traditional healer.
- Addressing students’ mental health needs requires flexible and adaptable approaches to effectively meet a range of needs.
- The goal is for each school to have access to a school wellness specialist. This position is part of the team that supports students, teachers, families, and school communities.

### Additional response – First Nation government-led wellness role:

- The department has had conversations to begin the development of the First Nations government-led wellness support role.

- Department officials are moving forward with First Nation governments as they are ready.
- These positions will provide culturally appropriate supports that meet the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and academic needs of students. These roles are not replacing existing roles that are key to supporting students such as education liaison coordinators or education support workers.
- The roles will take time to continue developing as they will be specific to the needs of each individual First Nation and the school community.

### **Additional response – School Wellness Specialist:**

- Beginning in 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Department of Education allocated the following fulltime equivalent (FTE) positions for the School Wellness Specialist role:
  - 2023-2024: 12 FTEs allocated
  - 2024-2025: 3 FTEs allocated
  - 2025-2026: 2 FTEs allocated
- The role of a school wellness specialist is to provide a variety of direct supports to students, families, educators, and the community, which may range from assessments, counselling, consultation, programming, case management, and education, depending on the specific needs of individual schools and communities.
- The job description for the School Wellness Specialist role was developed with partners at Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services in 2023 and reviewed by executive directors of the school boards, and superintendents. This position is identified as a Yukon Employees' Union (YEU) bargaining unit position.

- Department officials will continue to work with superintendents and school board executive directors to prioritize the school wellness specialist implementation over the next year. They are working with the First Nation School Board to set up six of these positions to report directly to the First Nation School Board instead of the department (five positions were transferred in 2024-2025 school year and one will be transferred in 2025-2026).
  - Six school wellness specialists were hired in the 2023-2024 school year and two have been hired to date in the 2024-2025 school year. They have completed important training and have begun working in schools to support targeted responses.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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

- Carcross/Tagish First Nation has a job description for a “Deadly Uncle” position and has not yet been able to fill this position. Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in has signed their TPA to support a culturally responsive mental wellness support worker position that is currently providing support in the community.
- The School Wellness Specialist position is another role in supporting the wellbeing of students. The position is classified as an SS15, the range can be from \$89,704 to \$104,043, which is in-line with other social work positions across Yukon government and is determined by the Public Service Commission’s classification process.
  - Classification for other mental wellness related roles across Yukon government include:
    - School counsellors (YAEP): These roles are performed by teachers, meaning that the pay range is informed by years of work and levels of education. The range can be from \$79,142 to \$126,510.
    - Clinical Counsellors (YEU, Health and Social Services): the position is classified as an SS16, the range can be from \$94,501 to \$109,661.
- The job advertisement for the School Wellness Specialist was first posted on Yukon.ca in fall 2023 and recruitment continues.
- The Department (Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Division) currently has 8 School Wellness Specialists, 7 are working in 18 Yukon Authority schools, and 1 is working in the 3 Commission scolaire Francophone Yukon schools.
  - École Émilie Tremblay/CSSC Mercier/Dawson French School
  - Jack Hulland Elementary School
  - Porter Creek Secondary School
  - École Selkirk Elementary School/FH Collins School
  - Aurora Virtual School/Individual Learning Center/Golden Horn Elementary School
  - Elijah Smith Elementary School/Khàtìnas.àxh (Teslin)
  - Hidden Valley Elementary School/JV Clark Community School (Mayo)
  - Christ the King Elementary/St. Francis of Assisi Secondary School/Holy Family Elementary School

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# CAS10

Spring 2025

## CASA - Wellness Specialists

Education

- First Nation School Board has been allocated 6 positions and are responsible for hiring these positions for their schools (five positions transferred in 2024-2025 school year and one will be transferred in 2025-2026).

School Year	Yukon Education		First Nation School Board		Commission Scolaire Francophone Du Yukon	
	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired	Allocated	Hired
2023-2024	7	5	4	0	1	1
2024-2025	2	2	1	0	0	0
2025-2026	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	10	7	6	0	1	1

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-13

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Early Learning and Child Care

#### *Child Care Act*

- In September 2024, we released a What We Heard Report based on engagement on the modernization of the Child Care Act.
- Public engagement for the review of the Child Care Act, which ran from November 27, 2023, through February 29, 2024, received several hundred responses from parents, early childhood educators, operators of family day homes and early learning and child care centres, First Nations governments, education partners and interested stakeholders.

#### *Infrastructure Funding*

- In November 2024, the Government of Yukon launched the Yukon's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Infrastructure Fund, supported by a \$7.7 million investment under the Canada-Yukon ELCC Infrastructure Fund Agreement signed in March 2024.
- The fund is designed to support current and prospective owners of not-for-profit early learning and child care centres in creating new spaces and improving the accessibility of existing programs. The funding program focuses on four priorities identified during engagement on modernizing the *Child Care Act*.
  - Increased access to early learning and child care in underserved communities in rural Yukon.
  - Increased access to Indigenous-led early learning and child care.
  - Increased access to Francophone early learning and child care.

### Accomplishments

Education

- Enhance accessibility for children with disabilities in existing early learning and child care programs.

#### *Promoting the profession and professional development*

- In October 2024, Early Learning and Child Care participated in the Education, Career and Volunteer Expo at Yukon University supporting our strategy to recruit and recognize early childhood educators.
- In September and October 2024, specialists from the Early Learning and Child Care Branch presented to six career classes at local high schools.
- In September and October 2024, Early Learning and Child Care Branch invited local early child educators to participate in professional development: Learning Through Play and Social and Emotional Learning. Professional development sessions are offered monthly.
- In September 2024, we hosted a conference for more than 350 early childhood educators from across the Yukon to come together and learn from each other.
- The first “Understanding the Early Years” course rolled out in Dawson City on September 11, 2023, with 14 early child educators participating from the three local child care programs. A second course was offered in Watson Lake from November 6-8, 2023, to five people. The course was offered in Old Crow in April 2024 with 6 participants, Haines Junction in May/June 2024 with 16 participants, and Whitehorse in May 2024 with 7 participants.
- April 2023 - signed three-year transfer payment agreement with Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to design, develop and deliver a culturally rich “Understanding the Early Years” course.

## Accomplishments

Education

- August 9, 2022 – Online resource and a professional development hub is released for Early Childhood Educators.
- Spring 2022 – signed agreement with Yukon University to implement the Professional Diploma Pathway program so that early childhood educators holding a level three equivalent certificate could work towards a full level three certificate through flexible course offerings and practicum placements in their existing workplaces.
  - As of January 2024, 51 educators have benefitted from the PDP program.
- December 2021 - launched funding for licensed early learning and child care programs to provide access to extended health benefits.

### *Making child care more accessible, inclusive and affordable*

- In October 2024, Early Learning and Child Care licensed two new after school programs increasing access to licensed affordable child care for Yukon families by 74 spaces - 44 spaces at Takhini Elementary School and 30 spaces at École Whitehorse Elementary School.
- In October 2024, Early Learning and Child Care partnered with the Child Development Centre to present information on the Supported Child Care Program.
- In August 2024, Early Learning and Child Care met with rural not for profit early learning and child care owner/operators, including representatives from 6 First Nations governments, to discuss the challenges of operating centres in rural communities.
- Announced in spring 2024, our three-year agreement with Canada will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can

be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.

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

## Reconciliation with First Nations

- In October 2024, we launched two Social Studies curriculum units – one new and one updated – for Grades 5 and 10, focusing on the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools in the Yukon and Canada. These resources, designed to provide students with a deeper understanding of the impacts of residential schools, represent a significant step toward truth and reconciliation in the Yukon's education system.
- In September 2024, we introduced the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy, enabling Yukon First Nations to deliver and assess credit programs for high school students. The new policy allows students

- to earn elective credits toward their graduation requirements through participating in cultural, language and traditional knowledge learning activities led by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other community members.
- On October 25, 2024, I hosted a leadership meeting with Yukon First Nation Chiefs invited to discuss the progress of the development of the draft JEAP Implementation Plan for 2025 – 2035, including each governments priorities for education with respect to inclusion in the Implementation Plan.
    - First Nations governments and Government of Yukon approval processes, timelines and next steps were topics of discussion at the leadership meeting.
  - Each year the department provides \$735,000 to the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to implement the Joint Education Action Plan and related collective education priorities.
  - Each year the department provides \$1.19 million in support of language First Nations Languages revitalization through the Yukon Native Language Centre. We are proud to see students of Youth Today, Language Leaders Tomorrow program complete placements to support community language initiatives.
  - August 30, 2024 - the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon signed a historic Letter of Agreement on Education Co-governance. This marked a significant milestone in our commitment to building a more inclusive and representative education system within the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory. This agreement strengthens the partnership between the two governments and aims to create an education system that reflects the unique values, culture, and language of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people.

- May 27, 2024 – The department continues to foster First Nations reconciliation, multiculturalism and educational inclusivity by ensuring that student participation in cultural and religious events is recognized positively in attendance records. When Yukon students participate in any Indigenous cultural or harvesting activity, these activities will be positively recognized in our school records and students will not be recorded as absent.
- May 6, 2024 – We facilitated an immersive educational experience for students by hosting the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. This initiative, aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about Indigenous language groups, traditional place names, and significant historical events through a giant floor map guided by First Nation Elders.
- January 25, 2024 - In partnership with the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, we celebrated the successful completion of the third cohort of Dáshāw k'e, a culturally-centered, land-based program at F.H. Collins Secondary School that enriches student learning through Yukon First Nations knowledge and traditions. This accomplishment highlights the department's commitment to education-based reconciliation and providing diverse, experiential learning opportunities for Yukon high school students.
- August 2023 – signed an Education Agreement with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council that identifies joint education priorities and supports implementing the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- August 2023 – FNSB is managing and operating 11 schools throughout the Yukon.
- July 2023 - Collaborated with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to offer

a French First Language program of instruction in Dawson City starting August 2023 that recognizes the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation Self Government Agreement.

- May 2023 – the First Nations Education Commission and the department established next steps for implementation of the Collaboration Framework and will report back to the Commission at each quarterly meeting to track progress of implementing education initiatives and the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan.
- July 2023 - the first phase of the N'tsaÜw Chu' Kedts'edán Kù Traditional Camp, at Porter Creek Secondary, the fire pit, was completed and is ready for use for the 2023-2024 school year.
- April 3, 2023 - \$35M funding agreement to support the First Nation School Board is approved.
- Spring 2023 – Shared access to a new data dashboard with Yukon First Nations and YFNED that provides better access to some types of student data.
- February 14, 2023 – First Nation School Board is officially established.
- April 2022 signed three-year Transfer Payment Agreements with each Yukon First Nation to support education initiatives and implementing the priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan
- February 2022 – the First Nations Education Commission approved the Collaboration Framework with Yukon First Nations.
- Ongoing - Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources, and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.

## Accomplishments

Education

- February 2020 – Created a student data sharing Memorandum of Understanding and data working group with Yukon First Nations.

## K-12 and Schools

### *Investing in capital infrastructure*

#### *Kêts'ádań Kù project*

- Kêts'ádań Kù meaning “House of Learning” was selected by KFN citizens as the name for the new school.
- Construction started in September 2024 and stopped at the end of October due to freeze-up. Work will restart in the spring after the ground thaws.
- In August 2024, GemMec ALC Inc. was awarded the construction contract for \$26.5 million.
- The construction is expected to be completed for the 2026-2027 school year.
- The bipartite oversight committee and the project management team hold regular meetings.
- In May 2023 we celebrated the Kêts'ádań Kù site clearing with the school community.

#### *Other school capital*

- May 29, 2024 – Students, parents, and community members were invited to celebrate the opening of the new Whistle Bend Elementary School.
- November 2, 2023 – We released a "What We Heard" report, summarizing feedback from nearly 1,000 Yukoners on Whitehorse school capital planning. The input gathered will guide future decisions on building, upgrading, and renovating schools to reflect



### Accomplishments

Education

the values and priorities of Yukon's diverse families, learners, and communities.

- July 2023 - In collaboration with Highways and Public Works, we continued to invest in education infrastructure and proactively maintain and upgrade school facilities across the territory over the summer. This work ensured safe and modern learning environments for all students and staff. Some projects in 2023 included roof replacements, fire alarm upgrades, and gymnasium lighting improvements.

#### *Investment in educators*

- Under the Confidence and Supply Agreement the Yukon government has committed to increasing the number of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers. The department has made a significant investment of 81 new full-time positions over the next three years along with an additional \$1 million in funding for student supports.
- Streamlining how educators are hired while improving the recruitment experience for applicants, the department has transitioned to e-recruitment for hiring all education professionals. We're now using the same system as all other Yukon government departments.
- The Department of Education hosted in August 2024 Welcome Week for Yukon Education staff. This week was a comprehensive four-day orientation, training and development event designed to support and connect new and returning educators from across the territory. This was first time of hosting an orientation event for educator since 2019.

- Yukon Education's Welcome Week brought together 200 new educators for two-days of orientation. The new educators joined their colleagues from various Yukon communities for the final two days. About 850 educators heard a keynote from Leona Prince, were introduced to 2025-2035 Learner Outcomes statements for Yukon students and participate in a range of interactive sessions.
- Topics covered current educational practices in supporting student learning, an overview of departmental policies, the kindergarten to grade 7 Literacy Strategy and numeracy supports, artificial intelligence in the K-12 classroom and role-specific learning for educators including teachers, learning assistance teachers, educational assistants and Yukon First Nation Language teachers.

#### *Making schools safer and more inclusive*

- Ongoing work includes training for school-based staff on our Safer Schools procedures and policies. The department is also making updates to policy and procedure documents to reflect recent recommendations by the Yukon Ombudsman.
- The department is working to form a Yukon Parent Advisory Committee to identify safety and wellness issues in Yukon schools, to help continue making well-informed decisions to improve safety for all students in Yukon schools.
- The department is evaluating how to better support schools, students, families and contracted school bus services to improve safety for all who ride school buses.
- In the 2024-25 school year, the department is implementing Ready to Learn at Elijah Smith Elementary, Whistle Bend Elementary and F.H. Collins Secondary in Whitehorse. Del Van Gorder school in

Faro, École Nomade in Dawson City, J.V. Clark school in Mayo and Khatinas.axh in Teslin.

- August 30, 2024 – We shared an update to the public on progress to ensure safe and inclusive schools through implementing initiatives such as Student Protection Policy training, the Ready-to-Learn Schools program, and support for 2SLGBTQIA+ students and staff. A six-month progress report on work to make schools safer was provided to the Yukon Ombudsman, demonstrating a commitment to creating supportive learning environments for all students.
- June 27, 2024 – The department has referred the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review. The Advocate will prepare a report for the Department of Education with recommendations about further SOGI Policy amendments.
- May 14, 2024 - The Department of Education is advancing the Ready-to-Learn initiative, which empowers educators with evidence-based strategies to create inclusive and supportive learning environments. In May 2024, a Ready-to-Learn Symposium was held that saw over 100 Yukon educators come together to share knowledge and celebrate their commitment to fostering students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development.
- September 2023 – Working groups on literacy and numeracy put forth recommendations for culturally responsive teaching methods that are based on the latest research. These recommendations have shaped the creation of two guiding documents: A Culturally Responsive Yukon Literacy Strategy; and A Culturally Responsive Yukon Numeracy Strategy. Implementation of the literacy strategy is underway.
- August 17, 2023 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) policy is updated and training for school staff and school

## Accomplishments

Education

administrators starts. A three-year partnership with ARC Foundation was made to support the implementation of SOGI inclusive education and practices in all of Yukon's K-12 schools.

- August 17, 2023 – Ready-to-Learn Schools program launched in additional Yukon Schools
  - This program supports schools to affect positive social change and well-being for all students and staff. It is based on the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- June 20, 2023 - The 23 action items in the Safer Schools Action Plan were announced as fully implemented.
- March 1, 2023 – Released progress report to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.
- September 2022 - Student Protection Policy v.1 and related procedures is finalized and implemented.

## Adult Learners

- On September 12, 2024, we hosted the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Yukon Apprenticeship Awards of Excellence ceremony and celebrated 50 individuals that achieved excellence in their trades and 44 apprentices that are now journeypersons.
- We have seen a sizable increase over the past year in apprentices finishing their apprenticeship and becoming journeypersons. We had 56 in 2023 and 72 in 2024.
- August 1, 2023 - Introduction of a new online student financial assistance application portal.
  - We received and processed over 1,400 applications for post-secondary funding supports through our new online student portal. This year, we processed and responded to every student within 5-7 days of their application. Before the online system, response times took upwards of 8 weeks at times!

### Accomplishments

Education

Client service has drastically improved with this new portal system.

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-02-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

### Value:

- Together with partners, Yukon education is being reimagined. This transformative work relies on the trust of partners – educators, students, and families - who are at the heart of the education community.

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is working with education partners and stakeholders to reimagine education and create school environments that are safe, inclusive, and build on student strengths. The department is working to ensure that every child feels connected and supported to thrive.
- The department remains focused on the important work of responding to the Auditor General of Canada's Review of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in the Yukon, and the 2021 Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
- In February 2025, the department provided an update to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on progress made to advance recommendations in the 2019 Auditor General's Report.
- Over the past several years, the department has prioritized learning, and continues to make progress on various initiatives to address system inequities, including:
  - Launching the Universal Child Care model and continuing to invest in high quality, accessible and affordable early learning programs for Yukon children.
  - Further enhancing early learning through the provision of kindergarten and full-day kindergarten in rural communities to enhance development of solid foundational skills.

## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

- The department has continued to work with the First Nation School Board and the Chiefs Committee on Education to support the successes of the First Nation School Board, which operates eleven Yukon schools.
- The department continues to work directly with Yukon First Nation governments to address joint education priorities through several collaborative initiatives inclusive of work on the Collaboration Framework and the next Joint Education Action Plan.
- Completing the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and advancing the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education work plan developed with Yukon First Nations and education partners.
- Launching a Ready-to-Learn approach in Yukon schools.
- Supporting the indigenization and localization of curriculum, locally developed courses, and launching the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy.
- Working to create a data sharing Memorandum of Understanding with Yukon First Nations.
- The Department of Education continues to provide publicly available student data reports including an overview and analysis of student assessments, attendance and enrolment; and have expanded the distribution of education data dashboards to both schools and Yukon First Nations.
- The department is continuing to collaborate with Yukon First Nations and education partners to develop and implement the

## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners. This strategy provides a clear understanding of the desired outcomes of the Yukon education system and to address longstanding gaps in student performance, including for Indigenous and rural students and students with diverse learning need.

### Additional response:

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

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The department continues to implement programs and services in response to the Auditor General's 2019 report on K-12 education in the Yukon.
  - In February 2025, the department provided an update to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on progress made to advance recommendations in the 2019 Auditor General's Report.
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### Background:

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



## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

- The Department of Education provided \$735,000 in the 2024-25 fiscal year in funding to implement the Joint Education Action Plan and related collective education priorities.
- In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the department will provide funding as follows:
  - Approximately \$1.83 million to support community-level education agreements with the 14 Yukon First Nations
  - Approximately \$1.4 million to Yukon First Nation organizations to support other education initiatives, including language learning, cultural activities, and Elder programming in schools
  - \$2.6 million to specifically support language initiatives within schools
  - \$1.2 million to the First Nation School Board (FNSB) for language teachers in schools
  - In the recently signed TPA for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026, \$5.0 million in additional funding to support the First Nation School Board initiatives around student support, culture/language/heritage, indigenization of the curriculum and community committees.
- The Department is in tripartite discussions for the renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan priorities and the development of an implementation plan. At a later stage funding discussions will begin.
- The Department finalized a two-year (2024-2026) TPA with the First Nations School Board in late 2024 that will provide long term security and funding in the amount of \$ 33.4 million each year.
- Working with Yukon First Nations on a new teacher resource and professional learning tool for Yukon First Nations languages, cultures, histories, and ways of knowing, doing and being in all grade levels and subject areas.
- Implementing a collaboration framework with Yukon First Nations.
- The launch of the Ready-to-Learn Schools approach in schools across the Yukon beginning in 2022. This program supports schools to affect positive

## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

social change and wellbeing for students and staff. It is based on the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.

- Working with First Nation governments and other partners to deliver and enhance early learning child care program in the Yukon.
- Completing several engagements since 2021 to inform universal child care and a comprehensive review of the child care act.
- Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources, and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.
- Completing engagement on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners.
- Providing all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### 2019 Office of the Auditor General (OAG) recommendations:

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

## Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update

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Education

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-06

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion – refer to SI04**  
**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- I am pleased to be working with the Child and Youth Advocate and acting on many fronts to address important educational issues.
- As outlined in the Advocacy Protocol Agreement between our two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperative information sharing is a priority.
- We acknowledge that barriers exist in our education system – these have been highlighted in many reviews and reports, including the 2021 Dr. Nikki Yee's *Review of Inclusive and Special Education Report*, the 2019 Auditor General's *Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon* report and the 2021 Child and Youth Advocate's *Review on School Attendance in the Yukon*.
- For over three years, the Department of Education has been actively collaborating with our educational partners to implement the recommendations in these reports.
- Department staff have regularly scheduled meetings with the Child and Youth Advocate to find solutions to individual and systemic issues.

## Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

### Yukon government's response to use of restraints and isolation spaces at Jack Hulland Elementary School

- We received a copy of the report on April 25, 2025, and we are pleased to receive the Advocate's recommendations.
  - The Advocate requests an initial response by June 30, 2025, and a follow-up response by December 1, 2025.
- We agree that all students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment, and we are committed to doing the important work required to make that happen.
- The Department will ensure both students and staff are supported to uphold safe and inclusive learning environments.

### Systemic Advocacy—Children with Complex Needs – Close to Home

- On February 5, 2025, the Advocate provided its report entitled *Close to Home: A Yukon approach to supporting children with complex needs: Summary of findings*.
- Staff from Education and Health and Social Services reviewed the report, and the departments' deputy ministers responded to the recommendations, in a letter to the Advocate sent on March 31, 2025, as requested.
  - We have accepted the recommendations in principle and work toward many of them is already planned or underway.
- The Advocate has requested a follow-up response by December 1, 2025.
- On April 16, 2024, the departments of Health and Social Services and Education received notice that the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate office is actively working on a systemic review regarding how Yukon children with complex needs are supported by the departments.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

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

#### Systemic Racism in Education Review:

- In December 2023, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate announced a review of systemic discrimination and racism in education.
- We received the report on April 25, 2025, and we are analyzing the recommendations. This report will inform the ongoing work to strengthen our education system for all Yukon learners and in particular to close the achievement gap between First Nation and non-First Nation students.
  - The YCAO has requested an initial response by June 30, 2025, and a public follow-up response by December 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, outlining progress made toward addressing the calls to action.
- I acknowledge that barriers exist in the Yukon's education system, and department staff and school staff work to identify and remove barriers.
- We have fully cooperated and provided information that the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate office has requested from the Department of Education.
- We have numerous initiatives underway aimed at building inclusive, holistic education and reducing barriers, which is the essence of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).

## Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- Another tangible example of the department's work to reduce systemic barriers is active work towards the renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan for 2025-2035 in collaboration with Yukon First Nation governments. The four priority areas include:
  - K-12 Culture and Language,
  - Authority, Control and Responsibility,
  - Sustainability, Supports and Success, and
  - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap.
- I do want to emphasize that we value all our educators and their tireless work to support all Yukon students and overcoming these challenges requires collective effort and systemic reform.
- As we move forward, our commitment to ongoing improvement, collaboration, inclusivity and fostering belonging for all our learners remains unwavering.
- This includes nation-to-nation work with First Nations governments to learn more on how to create culturally inclusive learning environments and reduce systemic barriers in education.

### SOGI policy review

- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred the SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- This ongoing review asks the Advocate's Office to assess the policy's current impact and provide recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe school communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Hidden Valley Report:

- We value the work of the Child and Youth Advocate to review and report on sexualized abuse in Yukon schools.
- We accepted the report recommendations in principle and provided a detailed formal response to the Child and Youth Advocate in 2022.
- Many of the recommendations in the report closely align with the work currently underway as a part of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).
- The Safer Schools Action Plan also addressed many of the recommendations, and this Action Plan was fully implemented and integrated into the department and across the Yukon government.
- We provided a progress report on October 12, 2023, detailing the progress that the Government of Yukon has made in implementing the recommendations put forth by the Child and Youth Advocate's Office.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address identified issues to make schools safer for all students.

#### Student Attendance Report:

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



### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

work plan to guide our joint response to the Review of School Attendance and the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Child and Youth Advocate's reviews raise awareness of important challenges in Education, and the Department is accountable for responding to their recommendations.

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#### Background:

##### The YCAO

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

##### Systemic Racism in Education Review

- In December 2023, the Child and Youth Advocate Office, with support from the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, launched a systemic review of discrimination and racism in education in the Yukon.
- The timeframe of the review focused on 2014-2024 and the public engagement period ran until December 2024.
- The Department of Education also answered numerous questions and provided extensive data that was requested by the YCAO.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- The Child and Youth Advocate Office is working to complete and table the final report in the Legislative Assembly for March 2025.
- On February 17, 2025, the Child and Youth Advocate Office provided a high-level update on the initial findings of the report to the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister and the Executive Director of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Melanie Bennet.
- The Child and Youth Advocate Office provided an update on the initial findings at the 6th Annual First Nation Education Conference hosted by the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on February 25 and 26, 2025.

#### SOGI Policy Review

- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred the SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
- To date, the Child and Youth Advocate Office has launched a public survey, conducted focus groups and will host in-person conversations until April 2025.
- The Child and Youth Advocate Office will also request records from the Department of Education around April 2025 with the goal of tabling the final report in the fall 2025 sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

#### Review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act

- The Child and Youth Advocate Office is working with Government of Yukon to undertake a review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act. While Department of Education is not leading this work, the department will provide input into this review as appropriate.
- No timelines have been established for the completion of the review. Within the 2023-24 Child and Youth Advocate Office Annual Report, legislative review goals for the year include:
  - Continue engagement with First Nations governments, service providers, and youth and families to collect input for the review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.
  - Work with Members' Service Board to finalize detailed recommendations for legislative amendments.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

- Develop an operational plan and public education plan to implement legislative amendments.

#### 2023-24 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office

- The annual report of the YCAO includes activities of its office for the 12 months ending March 31, 2024. The report was provided to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the fall 2024 sitting.
- The report references the Department of Education numerous times and cites Education as highest department for advocacy issues (87 new issues, compared to 72 for HSS Family and Children Services).
- This is less than the 103 new issues identified for the Department of Education in the 2022-23 annual report.
- The 2023-24 report also states that the Child and Youth Advocate has dealt with the following number of Access to Education issues: Attendance (35), Safety in School (15), Educational Supports (20), and Behavioural Supports (14).
- This is generally less than the numbers referenced in the 2022-23 report related to Access to Education issues: Attendance (39), Safety in School (29), Educational Supports (21), and Behavioural Supports (11).

#### Hidden Valley Elementary School Systemic Review

- On January 25, 2024, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate provided the Minister of Education with a document titled YCAO Progress Tracker re. Yukon Government's 2023 update on Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Procedures. This "progress tracker" is a newly developed tool that the YCAO is using to monitor implementation of its recommendations for systematic and policy reviews.
- Of the 8 recommendations in the 2022 report:
  - 6 have a rating of "some progress". Work has started but is not complete.
  - 1 has a rating of "significant progress". Extensive progress has been made, but the work is not complete.
  - 1 has a rating of "fully implemented".

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Jack Hulland Elementary School Systemic Review

- On March 28, 2025, the YCAO notified the Deputy Ministers of Education and Health and Social Services and Justice that they have completed their findings and recommendations and are in the process of finalizing their full report.
  - The YCAO will reach out to the departments and the RCMP in May to fact check their findings.
  - The YCAO is developing a plan to release their report in the fall of 2025.
- On November 21, 2021, the YCAO notified the department of a systemic review regarding the Yukon government's response to reports of restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- It was clarified between YCAO and ADM of Schools and Student Services at the time that ongoing updates and meetings were satisfactory and a review of services and supports to families may come after the RCMP completes their investigation.
  - On July 14, 2022, the YCAO requested disclosure of a summary and select records provided to the RCMP as per their criminal investigation. The RCMP confirmed that the information requested is evidence in a law enforcement matter and/or criminal proceeding and release will obstruct the matter proceeding.
  - When the RCMP investigation concluded in June of 2024, the Department reached out to the YCAO indicating their records request could be resumed. A response to YCAO's updated request is underway.
- In December 2022, the YCAO met with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to provide a one-year update.
- In July 2023, the YCAO met again with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to discuss updates.
- The Advocate reported promising practices such as interdepartmental meetings with YCAO, RCMP interview process and a parent therapeutic support group, as well as areas for further improvement such as communication with students and families at other Yukon schools, those no longer in school and also between the YCAO.

### Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

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Education

#### Child and Youth Advocate Systemic Advocacy - Community Safety

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

#### Child and Youth Advocate Attendance Review

- In January 2020, the Child and Youth Advocate Office announced a review of barriers to school attendance in the territory.
- The Government of Yukon requested the Advocate's independent review be conducted under Section 15 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* to ensure the Child and Youth Advocate can work with partner groups that have perspectives as well as roles and responsibilities to support student attendance, including Yukon First Nations.
- The review, released in May 2021, focused on children aged 16 years and under; and included discussions with a number of partners. The YCAO made 14 recommendations to the Department of Education.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT04/DPT03

Spring 2025

## Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

Education

- On March 24, 2025, the YCAO issued a progress report on the Department of Education's progress in fulfilling their recommendations arising from the 2021 report.
  - For each of the recommendations, the YCAO rated the Department as making "Some Progress. Started but is not yet complete."
    - YCAO recognizes Education's commitment to creating an inclusive and engaging school environment for students, but finds that the output of work to date is not yet significantly reflected in the experiences of children and youth.
  - The YCAO has requested that the Department provide a formal updated response to the original recommendations by December 1, 2025.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

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Education

**Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP04**

**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education continuously improves health and safety programs at all levels, working closely with the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board and the Public Service Commission's Health Safety and Wellness branch.
- The Department of Education continues to support schools in developing their Joint Health and Safety Committees or identifying Health and Safety Representatives by ensuring that appropriate training is provided, and schools have access to all required resources.
- The Department of Education continues to support schools to comply with legislated health and safety committee and collective agreement requirements.
- Throughout the school year, the department submits all worksite Joint Health and Safety Committee data to the Public Service Commission. Committee minutes are available upon request.

#### Additional response:

- In 2022, the Yukon Employees' Union requested that the Yukon Workers' Safety Compensation Board investigate three departments, including the Department of Education. The department fully cooperated with the investigation, providing all necessary information by the deadline.

### Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

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Education

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- In January 2022, Education received notification that the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board was investigating to determine the current state of Joint Health and Safety Committees in schools.
  - Education provided all available documents within the requested timeframe.
- Health and Safety committee requirements for individual workplaces are based on staff size and are outlined in the *Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*, s.36.
  - Where required, all Department of Education worksites have functioning Joint Health and Safety Committees; this includes the central administration building.
  - Training and orientation are available for all Health and Safety representatives in workplaces with less than twenty staff.
- The department has developed a framework to ensure all the necessary training and resources are available and that all worksites adhere to the *Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.
  - The framework consists of continuous monthly communication with the schools on upcoming training opportunities.
  - Education worked with the Public Service Commission to ensure that training is accessible to all front-line staff. This includes access to YGLearn training content and alternating course offerings to in-person and virtual formats.
  - Schools continue to update their processes for providing documentation, such as meeting minutes and worksite inspections.
  - All Health and Safety committees or school safety representatives report statistics monthly to the Public Service Commission's Health, Safety and Wellness branch.



# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT04

Spring 2025

## Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**For Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal: see Tab FN03**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- It has been over 35 years since the *Education Act* was passed, and we have heard from Yukon First Nation governments and education stakeholders about changes they believe are needed.
- The Department of Education is collaborating with Yukon First Nations and education partners to extensively reshape education in the Yukon.
- The Department of Education is working to identify education priorities in collaboration with all 14 Yukon First Nation governments, the Government of Yukon, and the Government of Canada. Some actions may require amendments to the *Education Act* to fully implement.

#### Additional response:

- I understand the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate issued an expression of interest in late 2024 to review the *Education Act* with a focus on its impact on Indigenous learners.
- The Department of Education looks forward to learning from this independent review, which may inform the Yukon government's future legislative reviews.
- The *Education Act* is a complex and significant piece of legislation, and conducting a comprehensive review in collaboration with our many stakeholders will take time.

- The department is currently reviewing the *Child Care Act* and will identify future legislative priorities for the Department of Education once that work is complete.

### **Yukon First Nation Language Teachers response:**

- I am pleased to share with you that through renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan, we are working to ensure Yukon First Nation Language Teachers receive equitable support and recognition within our education system.
- This has been identified as a priority for all parties, and I would like to note that over the past decade, the wage scale disparity between certified teachers and Yukon First Nations Language Teachers has significantly reduced to between 5-7%.
- This progress reflects the ongoing commitment to recognizing and valuing the crucial role that Yukon First Nations Language Teachers play in our educational system.
- Encouragingly, approximately one-third of our language teachers are also certified teachers, and as a result, receive compensation on the teacher pay scale.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Several key stakeholders have requested reviews of the *Education Act* and/or proposed amendments to the Act, including Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and Elections Yukon.
- In November of 2024, the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate and the First Nations Education Commission issued a call for expressions of interest to independently review the *Education Act* from an Indigenous perspective.
- FNSB and CYFN have requested amendments *Education Act* to include in the definition of 'teacher' to include First Nations Language Teachers and provide them with the same level recognition as other teachers.

#### Background:

##### Act amendment history

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

##### Act review history

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

##### List of Education legislation

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

#### For Schools:

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

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

#### For Early Learning and Child Care

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

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

#### For Post-Secondary and Future Skills:

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

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-05**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## FINANCE

### O&M BUDGET (000's)

CHART #1	2024-25 Mains	2024-25 Supp #1	2024-25 Supp #2
Education Support Services Deputy Minister's Office \$728 Communications \$953 Human Resources \$2,888 Finance \$1,736	\$6,305	\$6,305	\$6,305
School Authorities K-12 \$90,140 CSFY \$11,278 FNSB \$26,356	\$127,774	\$128,432	\$147,068
Administration and Support Administration \$338 Technology & Student Information \$2,025 Facilities and Transportation \$8,585	\$10,948	\$11,601	\$11,601
Corporate Services and Programs Administration \$410 Information Technology and Analytics \$2,379 Policy, Planning and Evaluation \$1,030 French Programs \$1,616 Training Programs \$10,811 Early Learning and Child Care \$42,500	\$58,746	\$64,590	\$62,874
Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Administration \$114 Student Support Services \$3,333 Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education \$500 Student Wellbeing \$1,798	\$5,745	\$5,445	\$5,589
Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives Administration \$351 Program Delivery and Curriculum Development \$3,906 First Nations Initiatives \$7,775	\$12,032	\$12,032	\$12,446
Yukon University	\$31,195	\$31,195	\$31,195
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$252,745</b>	<b>\$259,600</b>	<b>\$277,078</b>

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT06

Spring 2025

## Figures at a Glance

Education

CHART #2	2025-26 Mains
Education Support Services Deputy Minister's Office \$763 Communications \$987 Human Resources \$2,923 Finance \$1,777	\$6,450
School Authorities K-12 \$102,711 CSFY \$12,699 FNSB \$35,521	\$150,931
Administration and Support Administration \$361 Technology & Student Information \$2,016 Facilities and Transportation \$9,790	\$12,167
Corporate Services and Programs Administration \$406 Information Technology and Analytics \$2,425 Policy, Planning and Evaluation \$1,304 French Programs \$2,252 Post-Secondary and Future Skills \$12,023 Early Learning and Child Care \$46,829	\$65,239
Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Administration \$116 Student Support Services \$4,232 Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education \$5,167 Student Wellbeing \$1,533	\$11,048
Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives Administration \$351 Program Delivery and Curriculum Development \$3,906 First Nations Initiatives \$7,775	\$12,719
Yukon University	\$31,195
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$289,749</b>



### FTEs by Location

	School based*	Central Administration-school based**	Central Administration***	Total
2023-24 budgeted FTEs (Mains)	1,025.08	18.50	144.30	1,187.88
2023-24 budgeted FTEs (Supp 2)	1,057.70	29.71	146.09	1,233.50
2024-25 budgeted FTEs (Mains)	1,078.08	30.60	144.80	1,253.48
2024-25 budgeted FTEs (Supp 1)****	1,088.88	30.60	144.80	1,264.28
2024-25 budgeted FTEs (Supp 2)	1093.78	29.60	145.80	1,269.18
2025-26 budgeted FTEs (Mains)	1,108.58	32.00	144.70	1,285.28

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

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

\*\*\*Central administration includes all three school authorities but does not include central administration - school based staff. Includes staff whose primary job function is not school specific or that is administrative or supports the overall department. Examples include, but are not limited to, ADMs, DM, executive assistants, advisors, finance, policy, performance and analytics, training programs, communications, human resources and early learning and child care.

\*\*\*\* Adjusted to use pro-rated FTEs as per approved budget documents

## HUMAN RESOURCES

As per **Teacher Allocations**

**And Main Estimates**

		2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024
1	Teachers	590.50 (includes all school authorities)	587.3 FTEs (includes all school authorities)	560.1 FTEs (includes all school authorities)
1a.	Confidence and Supply Agreement – Learning Assistance Teachers	20.00 (includes all school authorities)	19.00 (includes all school authorities)	15.00 (includes all school authorities)
2	Paraprofessionals (EAs and Remedial Tutors)	297.40 (includes all school authorities)	Budgeted 275.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)	Budgeted 251.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)
2a	Confidence and Supply Agreement – Educational Assistants	45.00 (includes all school authorities)	27.00 (includes all school authorities)	13.00 (includes all school authorities)

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

## EARLY LEARNING & CHILD CARE

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

2025-26

Yukon overall average daily rate for Infant to Kindergarten with universal child care: **\$10.17**

Category	Parent Pays Monthly on average 2025-26	Daily Average Fee 2025-26
Infant	\$271.86	\$12.45
Toddler	\$217.53	\$9.91
Preschool	\$205.63	\$9.43
Kindergarten	\$188.24	\$8.96

# of licensed spaces (0 - 12)		# of children enrolled		# of early childhood educators	
March 2021	March 2025	March 2021	March 2025	March 2021	March 2025
1,802	2,345	1,467	1923	333	530

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

		2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
1	Students on IEPs (includes CSFY and FNSB)	440	383 as of June 2024	393 at the end of the 2021-22 school year
2	Student Learning Plans	949	938*	N/A
3	Behaviour Support Plans	78	58*	N/A
4	Safety Plans	31	31*	N/A

\*We are working with schools to make sure they are accurately reporting this data. The January 2025 information is the most recent we have.

### Educational Psychological Consultation/Assessments

# of referrals for psychological assessments	493
Completed	50 (between August 2024-March 31 2025)
Waiting for psychological assessment; having completed consultation	18
Students receiving consultation	187 (consultation required before assessment)
Students waiting for consultation	92

\*\*Anticipating a maximum additional 287 psychological assessment referral by the end of school year (187 student currently receiving consultation and 92 students waiting for consultation; with 18 students currently waiting for assessment). Subject to change.

## TRAINING PROGRAMS

### ADULT LEARNERS

### 2024-2025 Forecast

### 2023-2024 Actuals

1	Registered Apprentices	520 (in 2024 calendar year)	574* (in 2023 calendar year)
2	Trade (Journey person) Certifications issued	72 (in 2024 calendar year)	56 (in 2023 calendar year)
3	STEP program positions filled	100** (summer 2025)	88 (summer 2024)
4	Summer Career placements filled	38** (summer 2025)	31 (summer 2024)
5	Post-secondary student funding expenditures (Academic Year - August 1 to July 31) (Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance, Yukon Excellence Awards)	\$5,950,000 (Aug 1, 2024 to July 31, 2025)	\$5,713,554 (Aug 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024)

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

\*\* These numbers are subject to change as hiring processes get finalized over the spring months.

## OVERALL ENROLMENT COUNTS IN YUKON SCHOOLS

	May-23	May-24	Mar-25	Change (+/-) Since May 2024
**All Yukon Schools	5872	6035	6212	177
Rural Schools	1083	1074	1071	-3

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT06

Spring 2025

## Figures at a Glance

Education

	May-23	May-24	Mar-25	Change (+/-) Since May 2024
Urban Schools	4789	4961	5141	180
Elementary Students	3706	3742	3805	63
Secondary Students	2166	2293	2407	114
First Nation School Board	668*	852*	843*	-9
Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon	345**	382**	394**	12
Yukon Education Schools	4859	4801	4971	170

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

\*\* This excludes Aurora Virtual School (including homeschool students), École Nomade, pre-kindergarten and post secondary school students.

Aurora Virtual School (AVS)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Dec 2024	Mar 2025
Homeschool	132	146	126	127	145	142
Aurora School (*Primary)	76	114	117	132	113	127
École Nomade	11	9	24	6	9	8

\* Primary in this instance refers to students for whom AVS is their primary (home/main) school. The students who may be cross-enrolled with AVS to take one or two courses and their primary or main school is different are not included.

## GRADUATION RATES IN YUKON SCHOOLS

### Six-Year Graduation rate

	2018-24
Students enrolled minus outmigrants plus new arrivals	371
Dogwood Diploma Graduated	278
Adult Graduation Program Graduated	16
Six-Year Graduation rate	79%

### First Time Grade 12 graduation rate

	2023-24
First Time in Grade 12	419
First Time Grade 12 Graduated	293
First Time Grade 12 Graduation Rate	70%

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The wellbeing, safety, and protection of students are of utmost importance when they are in the care of Yukon schools.

### Recommended response:

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

### Additional response:

- All Yukoners have a legal duty to report suspected abuse, harm, or unlawful behaviour against children, and all allegations or reports of harm are taken seriously.
- The Department of Education focuses on addressing and meeting the educational requirements of all students, while proactively sharing information with families to ensure they remain confident their children are safe and secure while at school.
- When Department of Education officials receive a report of suspected harm against a child, this is reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.
- The department also works with all affected government departments to ensure government-wide accountability and oversight.
- When sharing information on any incident or claim, the department must maintain the privacy and dignity of all staff and students involved.

- The Department of Education cooperates with the Department of Justice with respect to court processes.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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**Background:**

- The Department of Education is assigned legal counsel from the Department of Justice when legal claims are made against the government.
- As of January 10, 2024, there were 11 active litigation claims involving the Department of Education in Yukon courts.
- The Government of Yukon cannot comment on specifics of any case before the courts, except through submissions by our counsel to the court.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-22**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## Management of Student Records in Schools

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Education

### Value

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

### Recommended response:

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

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT08

Spring 2025

## Management of Student Records in Schools

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Education

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

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

#### Value

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students while in the care of any Yukon school.

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education accepted, in principle, all eight of the Ombudsman's recommendations on its February 2024 Safer Schools Action Plan assessment.
- On February 28, 2025, the Department of Education provided a progress update to the Ombudsman.
- On March 27, 2025, the Ombudsman notified the Deputy Minister of Education that all eight recommendations have been fulfilled, and they are closing the file.
- The department has made significant progress on each of the recommendations.
- The department's policy and procedure documents have been revised to incorporate the Ombudsman's recommendations, and the drafts are undergoing reviews.
- While the reviews are underway, the department is implementing mandatory staff training and supporting updates to the policy and procedure documents to address the Ombudsman's recommendations.
- The recommendations that have been fully addressed include:
  - Recommendation #6: The department provided all documents associated with actions in the Safer Schools Action Plan, which was fully implemented in June 2023.

## Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

- Recommendation #7: The department identified the authorities responsible for the operationalization of products associated with the Action Plan.
  - Recommendation #8: A comprehensive training regimen has been developed and implementation is continuous.
- The department appreciates the work of all the organizations that have reviewed, reported, or made recommendations on improving student safety. The department is committed to continuing system-wide improvements.
- While the department has made significant positive changes through the Safer Schools Action Plan, there is still more work to do to improve safety and security in Yukon schools. The department is committed to this work and appreciates the recommendations provided by the Ombudsman.

### **Additional response:**

- In 2024, the Department of Education accepted the Ombudsman's recommendations in principle, agreeing with all of them. This acceptance allows flexibility to explore various approaches to achieve the recommendations outcomes while prioritizing the safety of schools and the protection of students. Further work is needed to detail, analyze, adjust, and plan for effectively implementing and operationalizing the desired outcomes.
- I thank the Ombudsman and his staff for collaborating with the Department of Education on this review and supporting the continuous improvement of processes to ensure the safety of Yukon students.
- The valuable insights provided by the Ombudsman brought greater clarity to the Department of Education's policies and processes. Their

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

work is appreciated and will significantly contribute to making Yukon schools safer.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The update to the Ombudsman on their February 28, 2025, report may lead to questions regarding Education's work addressing the recommendations.
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#### Background:

##### Recommendations

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

##### Process

2. The Office of the Ombudsman investigated a 2021 complaint that the lengthy delay by the Department of Education to inform the parents, guardians and caregivers of students at Hidden Valley Elementary School about 2019 allegation of sexualized abuse of a student by a staff member was unfair. This matter has been the subject of four independent investigations.
3. The Ombudsman issued findings in two parts: The first report was issued on September 7, 2023, examining:
  1. why the Department waited more than 19 months to inform parents;
  2. why the Department began sharing information following a CBC news story; and

## Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

3. whether the Department had an obligation to communicate with the parents when it first became aware of the alleged abuse or whether it was prohibited from doing so by law.
4. The Ombudsman concluded that the complaint about the communication failure was substantiated but did not make any recommendations at that time.
5. The second preliminary report was issued on December 18, 2023, reviewing the Safer Schools Action Plan to determine if it is sufficient to avoid a reoccurrence of the communications failure that resulted in unfairness to the parents as reported in the first report.
6. After the Office of the Ombudsman completed their preliminary investigation report, the department was provided with the report to verify facts, considered the recommendations, and provided comments in relation to the preliminary report for consideration by the Ombudsman.
7. The Office of the Ombudsman then released their second report on February 27, 2024.

### One-year update – background, February 28, 2025

- Following the August 27, 2024, update to the Ombudsman, their office had made numerous requests for more information, which department staff provided.
- On January 7, 2025, department staff met with the Ombudsman's staff to try to address their questions. Department staff shared they aimed to complete the work addressing the recommendations in time for the start of the 2025-26 school year.
- On January 30, 2025, Ombudsman staff emailed Department of Education staff requesting that all work on the recommendations be finalized by February 28, 2025. This request did not align with the department's previously shared operational plan, which allowed time for reviews that would strengthen improvements for the Student Protection Policy and procedure documents, with all updates finalized in time for training at the start of the 2025-26 school year.

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

One-year update – status of each recommendation

**1. Activity: Document updates (Ombudsman recommendation #1, #2, #3, and #4)**

**Lead:** Policy Director

**Status:** In progress.

Draft updates to the Student Protection Policy, the Yukon School Post-Incident Communication Guidance and Chapter 9.11 of the School Procedures Handbook: Procedures for Preventing and Responding to Harm by Adults have been developed to address each of the recommendations. Updates are in final internal and user reviews. Additional changes will be made as more feedback is received. Depending on revisions, additional reviews with rightsholders and stakeholders may be required.

**Next steps:** Anticipate release of updated documents in time for training prior to the start of the 2025-26 school year. In the interim, mandatory training sessions clarify expectations and address the concerns identified in the report.

**2. Activity: Update CIR Guidelines (Ombudsman recommendation #5)**

**Lead:** Executive Council Office

**Status:** Supporting.

**Next steps:** The Department of Education will continue to support the Executive Council Office to revise the Responding to Critical Incidents guidance as needed.

**3. Activity: Revise Actions (Ombudsman recommendation #6)**

**Status:** Complete.

The Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented. For the benefit of the Ombudsman, the list of relevant documents associated with each Action, with an explanation for how they tie together for purposes of operational priority and cross-referencing, was shared in the August 27, 2024, update.

**4. Activity: Authority (Ombudsman recommendation #7)**

**Status:** Complete.

The Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented. Authorities responsible for operationalization of products of the Action Plan have been identified and described in the August 27, 2024, update. Page 2 of 4 5.

**5. Activity: Training regimen (Ombudsman recommendation #8)**

**Status:** Complete.

A comprehensive training regimen has been developed, and implementation is

### Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan

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Education

continuous. The August 27, 2024, update described the training that had taken place up to that time.

#### Six-month update – Background, August 27, 2024

- On August 27, 2024, the Department provided an update to the Ombudsman on the work that has been done to meet the recommendations.
- In January 2025, department staff met with staff from the Ombudsman's office to further discuss its work to address the recommendations.

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

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

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-31**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

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Education

### Values

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

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is in the process of developing a 10-year Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners.
- The department continues to engage with partners before finalizing the strategy to ensure this work is approached thoughtfully and effectively.
- The Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners will provide deeper insights into what students need to thrive and support more data-informed decision-making.
- IRP Consulting has led an extensive engagement with Yukon First Nations and the broader education community. The feedback from this engagement forms the foundation of the strategy.
- The strategy aims to address the longstanding gaps in student performance and improve outcomes for Yukon students, including First Nations students, rural students, and students with diverse learning needs.

### Additional response:

- The strategy will help develop a deeper understanding of how the department can best support students and make evidence-based decisions that ensure all students have an opportunity to succeed.
- All initiatives in Education - including in schools and in central services - will align with the values and intentions of the strategy.

### Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

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Education

- The department highly values its collaborative work with Yukon First Nations, the First Nation School Board, the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to improve outcomes for Indigenous students.
  - The department has included the Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP) throughout the development of the Strategy and is in the process of completing a final consultation with YAEP prior to finalizing and releasing the Strategy.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

#### **Background:**

- Yukon education staff were provided with an update on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners during Welcome Week, August 20 to 23, 2024.
- On March 5, 2024, the Yukon Association for Education Professionals served notice to bargain, pursuant to the Education Labour Relations Act. To respect the bargaining process, formal consultation with the Yukon Association for Education Professionals will take place after bargaining has concluded. In the meantime, the Department has shared an update to give staff a sense of what was heard during the IRP engagements and what the learner outcomes will be. Officials are working with partners to support the strategy’s rollout and implementation between 2025 and 2035.
- Recommendation #42 from the 2019 audit, states “The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to address the long-standing gaps in

### Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners

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Education

student performance and improve student outcomes, particularly those of Yukon First Nations and rural students.”

- In response, the Department of Education committed to “collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments... to develop and implement an outcome management improvement strategy for the Yukon education system.”
- The Yukon First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) provided a clear preference for the department to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations.
- The Department of Education continues to work with FNEC and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, which is expected to be finalized in time to begin implementation in the 2025-26 school year.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-04**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### School Video Surveillance: Refer to SI08

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional Response:

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- On Dec. 28, 2024, there was a high-profile news story about a cybersecurity incident with Power School SIS (student information system). This incident did not impact Yukon.
- On March 25, 2024, the Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner tabled their 2022 Annual Report with the Yukon Legislative Assembly which featured two stories involving the access and privacy aspects of video surveillance at schools.

- In 2022, a privacy breach occurred at the Department of Education involving the personal information of 537 individuals that had applied for the Yukon Grant.
- 

#### Background:

- The department is documenting what personal information they collect and how they handle and safeguard that information for all program areas through the Personal Information Map project. This project is near completion.
- The department follows the Yukon Government Privacy Breach Protocols as set out by the government's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy office including notifying the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of significant breaches.
- On Dec. 28, 2024, there was a high-profile news story about a cybersecurity incident with Power School SIS (student information system). This did not affect Yukon student information. Yukon uses MyEdBC/Aspen student information system as well as another Power School application (School Messenger). This application was not compromised in the data breach.
- The 2024 Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner Annual Report identified that of the 98 total privacy complaints opened that year, there were 17 complaints involving the Department of Education. Of those complaints 16 were dealt with through informal case resolution and one resulted in a formal investigation. In addition, Education was involved in three privacy breaches.
- The 2023 Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner Annual Report noted that of the 83 total privacy files opened that year, 11 files were related to the Department of Education.
- The 2023 report described a Compliance Audit for the Department of Education regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of student images or video on internet platforms. The Information and Privacy Commissioner made 6 recommendations. The Department accepted 4 recommendations and rejected 2.
- The 2022 Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner Annual Report took special interest in video surveillance at schools. It described a complaint received in November 2021 about

its use of video surveillance in Yukon schools. The Information and Privacy Commissioner investigated. An Annual Report noted that the Department of Education rejected its recommendations. The Department responded that use of the technology was justified.

- The report also described the Information and Privacy Commissioner's compliance audit to evaluate whether the use of video surveillance in schools adequately protects personal information. The Department of Education committed to ensuring that any new video surveillance technology in schools complies with the 24 recommendations.
- The Information Privacy Commissioner Office completed a Breach Evaluation Report which was sent to the Department of Education in November 2022.
- In November 2022, the Department of Education accepted and started acting on the 4 recommendations in the Information and Privacy Commissioner's evaluation Report on the breach of Yukon Grant information.
- Actions include:
  - Since January 1, 2024, 158 staff have received annual privacy training.
    - Staff have been trained on:
      - When, why and how to use Secure File Transfer.
      - What is a privacy breach, unauthorized collection, employee duty to report, and the process for reporting.
      - Guidance on how to reduce risk of a breach through better email practices.
    - Sessions also included awareness on:
      - ATIPPA and Regulation, roles and responsibilities, records, personal information, and the Department of Education's Privacy Management Program
      - Other mitigation strategies such as inventories, limiting the amount of personal information collected to the minimum needed, reviewing and limiting permissions, minimize data exports and anonymizing information

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# DPT11**  
**Spring 2025**

## Privacy Awareness

Education

- Another 25 staff have received training on collection notices and consent.
- Privacy training sessions occurred during Welcome Week 2024 for Yukon Education teachers and school administrators.
- 2025 Data Privacy Week is January 27-31 with a “Put Privacy First” theme. Education will be highlighting this event.
- Introduction to the ATIPP Act: Level 1, has recently been mandated as a requirement for all Education staff.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-03**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to HOT09/DPT09**

**Student to Student Harm in Schools: refer to SSS08**

#### **Value:**

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety, and protection of students while in the care of any Yukon school.

#### **Recommended response:**

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- Since the Safer Schools Action Plan's release, the Department of Education has done significant work to ensure safe learning environments. The department is committed to supporting students, teachers, and families.
- The action items in the Safer Schools Action Plan emphasized creating safe and caring environments, transparency, accountability, victim-centered approaches, collaboration, and reconciliation in education settings.
- Although the Safer Schools Action Plan is fully implemented, the work to ensure students are safe at school remains ongoing.

#### **Additional response:**

- The department continues to work on actions to build back trust, and repair and restore confidence in the department's ability to respond to critical incidents and support school communities.
- The Yukon government continues to take meaningful steps to improve government-wide coordination in response to critical incidents so that supports for children, their families, and the school community are timely and appropriate.



- Department officials continue to work hard to address policy gaps and enhance safety and oversight mechanisms across all government departments and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
- A few highlights of the department's ongoing work include:
  - Ongoing training for school-based staff in the requirements of safer schools.
  - Updates to policy and procedure documents to reflect recent recommendations by the Yukon Ombudsman.
  - The formation of a Yukon Parent Advisory Committee to support identification of safety and wellness issues in Yukon schools, to help continue making well-informed decisions to improve safety for all students in Yukon schools.
  - Planning engagement with other government departments, Yukon First Nations and other education partners to enhance prevention and responses to student-to-student harm.
  - Evaluating how to better support schools, students, families and contracted school bus services to improve safety for all who ride school buses.
  - In 2023, the department updated its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy.
  - The department is actively progressing work through the Reimaging Inclusive and Special Education (RISE) initiative to ensure the creation of inclusive and welcoming learning environments for everyone.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

- The Government of Yukon announced in a news release on June 20, 2023, full implementation of the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- Key advancements included:
  - Implementation of new policies and procedures for preventing and responding to harm by adults, including guidance for information sharing and reporting allegations to the RCMP (actions 1 and 6).
  - Completion of actions 2, 3, 11, 18 and 20, focused on enhancing corporate guidance and leadership capacity across the organization to improve coordination and response management of critical incidents.
  - The development of comprehensive victim support plans (action 4).
  - A new joint agreement between the departments of Education and Health and Social Services regarding interdepartmental operations and communication when a child's safety is, or is likely to be, at risk (action 7).
  - New corporate procedures and guidance for responding to situations where employees are charged, convicted, or under investigation for criminal conduct, including improved information sharing with the RCMP within the bounds of appropriate legislation (action 8).
  - Completion of training and new requirements for all school-based staff on preventing and responding to harm by adults (action 10, 13 and 14).
  - Implementation of new onboarding practices for all school-based and administrative staff (action 12).
  - Development of processes to strengthen the collection, maintenance and archiving of the assignment of adults who work with students in school-related activities (action 15).
  - Development of a process for ongoing review of policies, procedures and best practices for higher risk educational settings (action 17).
  - Finalization of a Values and Ethics Code for Government of Yukon public servants (action 21).
  - Finalization of a new government-wide communications policy that outlines roles and responsibilities of the public service for leading internal and external communications related to critical incidents and emergencies (action 22); and,

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT12

Spring 2025

## Safer Schools

Education

- An updated temporary assignment directive to provide employees with development opportunities and encourage sharing and networking between departments (action 23).

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- Measuring student success is important, and the Department of Education is committed to continually refining the metrics presented in our reports. The department actively seeks new ways to present data within each metric, striving to enhance clarity and utility while balancing key considerations such as privacy and transparency.
- As much as possible, the department follows the British Columbia methodologies for calculating and reporting statistics as we share our curricula, assessments and student information system with British Columbia.
- Where differences exist between British Columbia's methodologies and the Yukon's, it is often due to the Yukon's small population size.
- One of these differences is British Columbia's use of a method to estimate outmigrants, which they use to then help estimate drop-out rates, which is a key component for graduation rate calculations.
  - The Yukon is too small to rely on this estimation method and must use other methods to determine drop-out rates while ensuring as much accuracy as possible.

### Additional response:

- British Columbia relies on methodologies and data reporting practices suited to a larger population and the Yukon must adapt these methods to account for our smaller, unique demographics.

- The department has engaged Yukon Bureau of Statistics to validate its student data and graduation rate calculation methodologies. The department intends to continue this collaboration to ensure the most accurate data and analysis possible.
- As part of its efforts to decolonize the school system, the department is working to incorporate the First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession of data, into the departments methodologies.
- How this principle is implemented may have an impact on how the department reports on the student population in the future.
- Future changes to how graduation and other metrics are calculated and reported will be developed as the department moves forward on work to improve student outcomes, in particular Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education, the planned Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, and supporting the development of the Joint Education Action Plan.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions on how education metrics are calculated have been asked in the House and media, including on graduation rates, absenteeism, and several of the standardized assessments (for example, Boehm and Foundation Skills Assessments).
- In June 2024, the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate (YFNED) published a report alleging the department is intentionally inflating graduation numbers to make rates look better than they actually are.

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#### **Background**

- School administrators are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of data their staff enter into the information system. The department is developing tools and processes to support these efforts.

- The Department of Education publishes annual reports, such as How Are We Doing and Yukon Wide, which include explanations of the methodologies used for each metric.
- In small populations, aggregated data can more easily reveal individual identities, raising significant privacy concerns, so the department looks for alternative methods for making or representing these calculations, or in some cases chooses not to make a calculation at all.
- Analyzing complex student data is challenging and time-consuming. To address this, the department is building a data warehouse to automate processes and improve efficiency and reliability.
  - A data warehouse provides a single, unified repository for the department's data which will significantly improve data reliability and support advanced reporting and analytics.

#### Graduation rates and drop-outs:

- Graduation rates are an important metric to assess the performance of the school system and support effective decision-making.
- Some metrics, like graduation rates, can't capture complex realities. To address this, the department uses multiple metrics and tools, including Sankey charts, to better illustrate student pathways.
- Analyzing complex student data is challenging, especially for calculating graduation rates, which require a comprehensive understanding of the entire student population. While larger jurisdictions use estimation techniques, such as the proxy cohort analysis, to fill gaps in their understanding, this approach is not statistically viable for the Yukon because of the size of our population.
- Every jurisdiction, including the Yukon, faces challenges with tracking students who stop regularly attending school. This impacts the accurate calculation of withdrawal, outmigration and drop-out rates. The department is working to improve our processes and systems to improve tracking.
- British Columbia is moving to the "First-time in Grade 12 Graduation Rate" and has added "5-year" and "7-year Graduation Rate" analyses to the current "6-year Graduation Rate" calculation.

- The department is looking at how these changes can be applied in the Yukon context.

#### Special report:

- In 2024, the Department of Education collaborated with Yukon Bureau of Statistics to review its methodology and student data from the 2022–23 school year.
  - Using additional data unavailable to the department, Yukon Bureau of Statistics was able to clarify whether students had moved to other jurisdictions or discontinued their studies.
  - A special report was published on December 11, 2024, outlining the finding that the department's methodology was sound. The graduation rates in the report were updated accordingly.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-22**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

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Education

**Student Data – Methodology (and graduation rates): refer to DPT13**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional response:

- The department gathers, analyzes and shares student data throughout the school year to give all education partners a better understanding of how students are doing.
- The department is also exploring the establishment of integrated service agreements under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to share non-aggregated data with Yukon First Nation governments about their citizens.



### Student Data – Reporting and Sharing

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Education

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

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

#### Background

- School Profile reports give an overview and analysis of each school's student assessment results and enrolment numbers and are provided in January to each school.
- Yukon Wide Student Data Reports provide an overview for the public of academic performance and attendance using comparative and historic analyses of urban, rural, Yukon First Nation, other Indigenous and non-First Nation students.
- How Are We Doing? Yukon First Nations reports were established under the Data Working Group and focus on Yukon First Nation student performance data.
- Yukon Wide Student Data Reports and How Are We Doing? Yukon First Nations reports are published every spring on Yukon.ca.
  - The 2023–24 reports were posted on January 9, 2025.
- While the department follows British Columbia's methodologies and data reporting practices as much as possible, differences do exist as there are contextual variations due to the different jurisdictional sizes.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value

- It is important for all Government of Yukon departments to work collaboratively to strengthen internal and external trade.

#### Recommended response:

- Here in the Yukon, our economy depends on fair and predictable trade with United States partners.
- Tariffs imposed by the United States threaten jobs, increase costs for families and disrupt supply chains that have benefited both sides of the border, for decades.
- For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, out of a total Education budget for goods and services of \$8,040,034 only \$175,154 goes to US-identified suppliers. This O&M budget includes the following: professional contracts, supplies, program materials, non-consumable assets, hardware and software. This does not include capital.

#### Additional response:

- Although only a fraction of Education's budget goes to US-identified suppliers, the department will work collaboratively across Yukon government to prioritize spending on non-US identified suppliers, should this become a recommended measure.
- Additionally, the department will collaborate across Government of Yukon to implement any other related tariff or non-tariff response measures.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- On February 2, 2025, in response to tariff threats from the United States government, the Yukon government began reviewing territorial government procurement policies to include the option of excluding U.S. companies and minimizing the purchase of U.S. goods and services, where possible.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT15

Spring 2025

## Tariffs - US relations

Education

- A 25% US tariff on Canadian imports to the US began on March 4, 2025.

### Background:

- Education currently has contracts with 17 US-identified suppliers for the 2024/25 fiscal year with a total combined value of \$175,154.
  - Goods:
    - Books - \$4,000
  - Services:
    - IT-related software services - \$60,270
    - IT-related system development - \$18,900
    - Training Delivery - \$10,000
    - Education Related Services - \$81,984
- There is a contract with Apple Canada for \$1.1M. This is not included in the value above as it is with a Canadian company; however, the products could come from the US.
- Heating Fuel for \$2.4M. This is not included in the value above. The heating fuel companies are Canadian, the product itself could be originally Canadian but sold to the US to be refined and sold back to Canada.
- The Department of Education has no way of predicting where our other Canadian suppliers are purchasing their products from.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-05

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education plays a vital role in implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and we take this responsibility seriously. We are committed allies, supporting Truth and Reconciliation initiatives across all Yukon schools.
- The department is working to create a more inclusive public education system that meets the needs of Yukon First Nation students and offers all students the opportunity to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.
- This includes developing culturally appropriate early education programs and delivering curriculum that tells the full story of Yukon and Canadian history, including residential schools, treaties, the Indian Act, and other aspects of Indigenous history.
- Teachers are supported in integrating Indigenous knowledge into their classrooms, embracing First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being, and fostering environments where all students feel valued and a sense of belonging.

### Additional response:

- The establishment of the Yukon First Nation School Board marks a major step in advancing reconciliation, building on the vision set over 50 years ago in Together Today for our Children Tomorrow.
- In August, I celebrated the signing of a Letter of Agreement between Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon,

renewing our shared commitment to education in the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory.

- This agreement reflects our commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive education system that honours the values, culture, and history of Yukon First Nations people.
- The department of Education continues to work with Yukon First Nations, like Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, to achieve stronger co-governance of education through agreements under section 17.7 of their Self-Government Agreements.
- I want to highlight the progress the department has made on Call to Action 63: maintaining an annual commitment to Indigenous issues, including developing and implementing K-12 curriculum and learning resources on Indigenous history, the history and legacy of residential schools, and Indigenous peoples in Canada.
  - A new grade 5 Social Studies unit on the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools, developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations Elders, Knowledge Keepers, survivors, and educators, is launching this year. Educators recently participated in a three-day professional development in-service to support its delivery.
  - The grade 10 Indian Residential School unit has been revised, with training sessions offered to educators.
  - The recently announced *Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning Policy* empowers Yukon First Nation governments to develop, deliver, and assess accredited learning, enabling students to earn up to 12 elective credits towards graduation.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

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Education

- Locally developed courses such as Ancestral Technology, Youth for Dignity, Mentorship, Outdoor Education, Yukon First Nation Leadership, and Yukon First Nations Studies 12 enrich learning opportunities for all students.
  - I commend the teachers, facilitators, and especially the students who engage with this important and sensitive work with respect and curiosity. Their commitment gives hope that the next generation of Yukoners will have a deeper understanding of our shared history.
- 

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- The department's work in this area includes:
  - In 2021, a landmark framework agreement was reached with the Chiefs of 10 Yukon First Nations governments to establish a Yukon First Nation School Board.
  - In the 2024-25 school year, 11 schools are operating under the First Nation School Board.
  - Curriculum developed on Indian Residential Schools working with YFN and knowledge keepers for grade 10 social studies.
  - A Joint Education and Action Plan was developed for 2014-2024 and work is underway towards renewal of that plan for 2025-2035.
  - Working with individual Yukon First Nation governments on community-level education and funding agreements to improve educational outcomes for their citizens and learners on their Traditional Territories at local schools. The department has allocated approximately \$1.83 million total to use towards joint education priorities.
  - Cultural and language initiatives - First Nations Initiatives (FNI) Branch.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# DPT16

Spring 2025

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

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Education

- Establishing the Student Learning & First Nation Initiatives Division - Department officials worked with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish an Assistant Deputy Minister of Student Learning & First Nations Initiatives.
- Between 1903 and 1985, the Yukon had six residential schools in Carcross, Whitehorse, Dawson, and Shingle Point. The Lower Post School in northern British Columbia housed Yukon Indigenous students. Each school was operated by a religious order with funding from the federal government.
- The Government of Yukon supports Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project, and work is ongoing to identify missing children and search for unmarked gravesites.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

- Supporting optimal learning outcomes for students is a priority for the Department of Education

#### Recommended response:

- On March 21, 2025 the three territorial Ministers of Education sent a letter to federal Minister Hajdu stating concerns regarding changes to Jordan's Principle
- On March 22, 2025 federal Minister Hajdu announced Ottawa will increase funds for Jordan's Principle to support First Nations children through 2026. Operational changes announced in March remain in effect.
- The department is aware of changes to federal operating procedures related to requests under Jordan's Principle.
- The Department of Education does not directly apply to Jordan's Principle for funding and is not immediately impacted.
- The department is aware that these changes may impact educational partners, many of whom receive funding through Jordan's Principle to support Indigenous learners.
- Officials from Education and Health and Social Services are working with our partners to understand these potential impacts and will communicate with our federal counterparts.
- A follow up meeting with Jordan's Principle representatives will be scheduled after the April 28, 2025 federal election.

#### Additional response:

- While the Department of Education does not make Jordan's Principle funding requests, the department is aware of the following organizations that apply to Jordan's Principle:



- Child Development Centre
  - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation
  - Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- The department is working with partners to gain a better understanding of the types of goods and services they are applying for Jordan's Principle funding and how their requests may be impacted by the federal changes.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On February 10th, 2025, the department received a letter outlining that Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is implementing changes to operational procedures and processing requests for Jordan's Principle funding. These changes will likely impact educational partners who apply for and receive funding to support Indigenous students.

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#### **Background:**

- On March 13<sup>th</sup> virtual call among the three territorial Ministers of Education took place to discuss the expected impact regarding the operational changes to Jordan's Principle and the Inuit Child First Initiative funding programs.
- In response to the changes the three territorial Ministers of Education responded with a letter to Minister Hajdu outlining the potential impacts to the changes.
  - In 2024-2025 total funding allocated to the three territories for Jordan's Principle was \$242,508,252.95 (it is not broken down by territory). This does not include funding through the Inuit Child First Initiative.
- A meeting was held on April 3, 2025, with department of Education, Health and Social Services and Executive Council Office officials and Jordan's Principle fund representatives.
  - Confirmed that operational changes are in effect. An increase in funding was announced March 25th 2025 for one more year.

- Operational changes to Jordan's Principle fund remain in effect and will have an impact on organizations and individual families who apply for funding.
- Council of Yukon First Nation has shut down programs that provided food, children's clothing, short-term housing and other support for families due to lack of Jordan's Principle Funding (cbc.ca April 2, 2025, news article)
- Initial discussions with YFNED indicated that their Rural Food program will be funding until end of June 2025 and Mobile Therapy Units have funding until end of April 2025, current application to extend Mobile Therapy Unit past April 2025 is being reviewed. There remains considerable long-term uncertainty as the Jordan's Principle program is adjusted.
- Initial discussions with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation that their Nutrition Program may be impacted by the operational changes of Jordan's Principle.
- Changes to Jordan's Principle funding can be summarized as follows:
- Any new request must show:
  - How the requested product, service or support meets the distinct needs of the First Nation child, and
  - How the child either:
    - a. Experienced gaps or delays in accessing government services, or
    - b. Was denied an existing government service because of their identity as a First Nations child.
  - Each new request will be considered on case-by-case basis. An existing or previously approved request does not guarantee that a request for new funding will be renewed or approved.
  - Eligibility for Jordan's Principle continues to be for First Nations children under the age of majority in the province or territory of residence.
  - Parents and families can apply directly to Jordan's Principle.
  - Communities can continue to apply for Jordan's Principle, however there are a few changes that will impact group requests:
    - General administrative fees, including the application of an automatic 10% administrative charge, is no longer funded under Jordan's Principle
    - New group requests for Jordan's Principle funding beyond one fiscal year (i.e. multi-year requests) are no longer approved.

- Funding for the following items will not be approved unless such funding is required by substantive equality:
  - Purchase, construction or structural renovations of homes
  - Support for sporting events or elite/competitive sports related training, unless link to specific health, social or educational needs of First Nation child.
  - International travel, unless it is related to exceptional medical need of the First Nations child.
  - Non-medical supports such as travel costs, non-medical respite care, childcare, clothing, furniture and vehicles, unless accompanied by a letter of support from medical professional.
  - School related requests, unless linked to the specific health, social or educational need of the First Nations child. Supports to school boards off-reserve and private schools will be redirected to provincial school boards, or other existing provincial federally funded programs.
  - Automatic administrative fees within group requests, including salaries, services fees and overhead costs.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-09

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- The Student Support Services branch has improved how it delivers assessments and consultations, making support for students more accessible and efficient.
- In the 2024-2025 school year, regular training is being provided for learning assistance teachers and other school team members. This training covers the school-based team process, collaboration with Student Support Service staff, and the assessment referral procedure.
- The time required for assessments varies based on factors such as the complexity of the student's needs, assessment type and receiving parental or guardian consent. It also depends on the availability of the professional conducting the assessment.
- While a student is waiting for a formal assessment, there are many steps school staff can take to address a student's learning needs and support their success at school. Staff may implement many strategies recommended by the school-based team or Student Support Services staff during the consultation process.

### Additional response:

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

## Formal Assessments

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

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- As of April 15<sup>th</sup> 2025, there were 426 students on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Student Support Services is continuing to support schools with standardized documentation of these plans.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, Student Support Services has completed 49 educational psychology assessments as of April 15, 2025. Students do not have to have a formal assessment to receive learning support at school.
- The Education Act provides the framework for special education programs, including an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- CASA commitment: to provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators, or physicians. If the government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-16**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education: refer to RI03

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- Ready-to-Learn is being implemented at an additional five schools in the 2024-2025 school year.
- It is important to remember that this work is cumulative; the schools listed for each school year are newly added, building on the continuing work in the schools listed from previous years.
- Ready-to-Learn trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive and to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive, or social age.
- In fall 2024, the department began work on a reflection document of Ready-to-Learn to identify areas for improvement and areas of celebration that will be publicly available in spring 2025.

##### Additional response:

- Except in the rarest of cases, students do not come to school intending to be disruptive or harmful to others.
- Ready-to-Learn helps educators to understand brain development, functioning, and learning, and to understand that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- Ready-to-Learn is an approach that supports positive social change and wellbeing for all students and staff.

### Ready-to-Learn Schools

Education

- The Department is currently working on the implementation plan for the 2025-2026 school year which will include training opportunities for school staff.
- The department will continue to keep school communities informed, provide training opportunities related to the Ready-to-Learn approach, and share progress on its implementation.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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#### Background:

- Ready-to-Learn was developed by brain development and trauma expert, Dr. Bruce Perry, and is informed by more than 30 years of research. A key component of this initiative is teacher training in an evidence-based model called the Neurosequential Model in Education, or NME.
- The department continues to contract two professionals who have the expertise, experience, capacity, and capability to create a unified approach in schools across the Yukon.
- Two educators led a Neurosequential Model in Education (NME) certification program for 20 educators. This is a one-year program. Seven positions at the Department of Education will be certified in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT).
  - Schools that participated in the one-year certification were:

School	Number of Educators
Selkirk Elementary School	1
Grey Mountain Elementary School (FNSB)	1
Aurora Virtual School	1
Holy Family Elementary School	1

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# RI02**  
**Spring 2025**  
Education

## Ready-to-Learn Schools

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School	Number of Educators
Hidden Valley Elementary School	1
St. Francis Secondary School	2
FH Collins	2
Takhini Elementary School	3
Porter Creek Secondary School	3
Jack Hulland Elementary	4
Central Administration (Curriculum and Assessment)	1
Total	20

- Additionally, approximately 300 educators (teachers, administrators and educational assistants) have received the one day Ready to Learn baseline training.
- The department is planning to offer another 20 spots for the one-year certification in the Neurosequential Model in Education for the 2025-2026 school year.
- The Neurosequential Model in Education aims to educate teachers with foundational knowledge of neurosequential development and guide them in applying this understanding to the teaching and learning process.
- The department developed a series of seven short videos designed to provide insights into various aspects of the Ready-to-Learn initiative, including its practical application, student brain development, the significance of relationships, and an overview of the Neurosequential Model in Education.
  - These videos serve as a powerful tool to foster a deeper understanding of the Ready-to-Learn initiative among all school stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, and the broader school community.
- The Yukon First Nation School Board has stated its support for the Neurosequential Model in Education approach and is continuing to implement Ready-to-Learn in a few FNSB schools.



- FNSB has implemented their Whole Child Team approach to train their education staff, which uses the Neurosequential Model in Education principles as a baseline.
- The CSFY is implementing the Ready-to-Learn Neurosequential Model in Education at École Nomade in Dawson City.
- Staff development on positive methodologies to managing student behaviours and supporting students with diverse and special educational needs is a priority for the Department of Education.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals has also communicated the need for training and resources to support teachers to create inclusive classrooms.
- Ready-to-Learn Schools was launched as a pilot project at Takhini Elementary School in 2019.
  - In the 2022-23 school year, Ready-to-Learn continued at Takhini Elementary and was implemented at Selkirk Elementary, Jack Hulland Elementary, and Grey Mountain Primary, all in Whitehorse, and Nelnah Bessie John in Beaver Creek.
  - In the 2023-24 school year it was implemented at Hidden Valley Elementary, Holy Family Elementary, in Whitehorse, at Robert Service School in Dawson City, and Tantalus School in Carmacks.
  - The approach is being implemented in the 2024-2025 school year at Elijah Smith Elementary, Whistle Bend Elementary, and F.H. Collins Secondary in Whitehorse. École Nomade in Dawson City and J.V. Clark school in Mayo.
  - Every high school is also supported through the department's School-based Team Community of Practice.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education**

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Education

**Ready-to-Learn Schools: refer to RI02**

**Mental Health – Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

### **Value:**

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

### **Suggested response:**

- Reimagining inclusive and special education, commonly referred to as RISE, is an initiative designed to support sustainable long-term system changes to create better learning outcomes for all students regardless of ability. It aims to address the root causes of barriers to learning by providing more inclusive and culturally safe environments at all Yukon schools.
- In November 2021, the First Nations Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education approved the “Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education Work Plan”, which addressed the 2019 Auditor General Report on K-12 Education, the Review of Inclusive and Special Education as well as the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Review on Attendance.
  - The Department of Education has completed the 2021-2024 RISE Work Plan and are collaborating with education partners to develop the next phase.
- The final report for the Systemic Review on Racism is expected in the spring of 2025 from the Yukon Child & Youth Advocate Office. Once received, the department will review recommendations for consideration and incorporation into 2025-2035 RISE Workplan.

## **Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education**

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Education

- This new work plan will be shaped by recommendations from the communities of inquiries, implementing key initiatives from the previous work plan, while addressing any identified gaps.
- Department officials look forward to continuing this important work with education partners in a good way, with an aim to improve educational outcomes for all students.

### **Additional response:**

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

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

- Along with responding to the 2019 Auditor General Report on K-12 Education, the Review of Inclusive and Special Education as well as the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Review on Attendance, the projects within the RISE initiative also address many of the desired outcomes in the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners and the Joint Education Action Plan.

### Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

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Education

- There were initially eight Communities of Inquiry
- Community of Inquiry number 5 and 6 were combined into one as they were closely linked

Community of Inquiry #1	Engage with the community to co-construct definitions of inclusive and special education in Yukon and a vision of an “inclusive classroom”; include Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
Community of Inquiry #2  Originally this community of inquiry was to review policies that relate to inclusive and special education.	Review of the Response to Intervention Framework
Community of Inquiry #3	Explore effective professional collaborative development structures where educators can learn how to structure learning options that will benefit students through more inclusive classroom practice.
Community of Inquiry #4	Establish norms for engaging across differences and use these to shape the workplace culture at the Department of Education
Community of Inquiry #5/6 combined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Implement consistent competency-based Individual Education Plan (IEP) templates (and processes and structures [e.g. School Based Team]) that incorporate student voice, and create accountability structures around IEPs, Student Learning</li></ul>

### Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

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Education

	<p>Plans and Behavioral Support Plans.</p> <p>- Strike partnerships with Yukon First Nations, other government departments, and organizations to create coordinated and holistic supports for students and families.</p>
Community of Inquiry #7	Examine budgets, funding models, staffing allocations to determine how they can be better aligned with student needs and actions taken in response to the Review.
Community of Inquiry #8	Provide outdoor, experiential learning, cultural camps, community learning opportunities and other hands-on activities as a way of teaching Yukon students with learning differences.

- To date, the department has completed work under the 2021-2024 RISE workplan
- The department is currently working on a "What We Heard" document that outlines the recommendations from the community of inquiry.
- RISE workplan 2021-2024 and the recommendations from the community of inquiry will be used to inform the next ten-year RISE workplan 2025-2035.
- RISE workplan 2025-2035 will align with the Joint Education Action Plan and Integrated Outcomes Strategy.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# RI03**  
**Spring 2025**

## Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-03-17](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL07**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

### Value:

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

### Recommended Response:

- With the introduction of universal child care in April 2021 the Government of Yukon committed to supporting high quality early learning and child care that is accessible, affordable and inclusive.
- To support high quality early learning and child care, the Department of Education is following through with a commitment to review the Yukon's *Child Care Act*, which is a priority in my mandate letter.
- The review of the *Child Care Act* is focused on enhancing the legislation to better embody the principles of quality, affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility within the early learning and child care sector.
- On September 18, 2024, the Department of Education released the What We Heard Report from our most recent consultation and engagement to support the review of the *Child Care Act*.
- We will continue our collaboration with First Nation governments, early learning and child care providers, educators and the Child Care Board as this work progresses.

- We look forward to sharing more information about this during this sitting.

### **Additional Response:**

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



## Child Care Act Review

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The mandate letter directs the Minister of Education to continue to work to review the *Child Care Act* and tabling of an Act is anticipated for 2025.
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### Background:

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

#### Review of *Child Care Act*

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

#### What We Heard / Potential *Child Care Act* amendments

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EL01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Child Care Act Review

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Child Development Centre Funding**

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Education

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

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL07**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

## Child Development Centre Funding

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Education

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### Context – this may be an issue because:

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

#### Space

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

#### Organizational review and structural renewal

- In 2021-22, the department funded the Child Development Centre to undertake a review of services.
- The structural renewal recognizes the need for a new approach to service delivery that addresses the increasing number and complexity of children waiting for services.
- In 2023-24, increased funding was provided for administrative support and funding for phase two of their renewal, which includes funding for program support and to pilot a family partners project that provides much needed therapeutic and coordination support.
- Total funding for 2024/25 is \$5.3 million, an increase of approximately \$600,000, which funds the lease and supports the renewal for the entire year.
- Transfer payment agreements are already in place for 2025-26 for a total of \$5.3 million ensuring continued support for operations and the lease.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EL02**  
**Spring 2025**

## Child Development Centre Funding

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## **Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives**

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Education

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL07**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

## **Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives**

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Education

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

- In February 2025, we were able to extend the current agreements with the Government of Canada securing an additional five years of funding to continue work addressing quality in early learning and child care. Both the Canada – Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement are now in place until fiscal year 2030-2031 with the Infrastructure funding extended until 2026-2027.
- Investing in early childhood educators is one way we continue to support the growth and expansion of high-quality early learning and child care in the Yukon.

### **Additional response**

#### Partnerships

- On April 5, 2023, the department signed a three-year funding agreement valued at \$925,802 with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to offer a First Nations designed “Understanding the Early Years” course. Once successfully completed, participants receive a level one early childhood educator certificate.
- The course, rich in Yukon First Nations culture and history, supports the development of culturally competent early childhood educators.
- The department continues to fund Yukon University to provide enhanced course offerings in rural Yukon communities.
- The department is also providing education bursaries for post-secondary study, as well as an enhanced bursary, up to \$500, for

## Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

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Education

educators to access other learning and development opportunities. The department continues to contract with individuals and organizations to create and deliver workshops and training opportunities.

- The Department of Education is aware of changes to the nominee program, including the recently announced call for Expression of Interest for employers who want to apply to the Yukon Nominee Program. Officials will continue to ensure that the labour market needs of the early learning centres are addressed. A small proportion of Yukon's early childhood educators are part of the Yukon nominee program.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- As the department creates new licensed spaces and improves quality in programming, the cost of delivering universal child care will increase.

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### Background:

#### Quality Enhancement Funding, including cultural and inclusive supports

- Licensed programs and early childhood educators have access to funding to develop high-quality and culturally rich early learning programs and environments.
- \$100,000 is budgeted annually for early childhood educator bursaries and an additional \$100,000 for professional development organized by Early Learning and Child Care.
- \$255,892 is available annually to Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre, owned and operated by Kwanlin Dün First Nation, for a cultural connector program.
- As of January 2025, approximately 95 per cent of licensed centres are taking advantage of comprehensive health insurance benefit funding.

#### Learning and development

- The first Understanding the Early Years Course delivered by the Early Years Program at Yukon First Nation Education Directorate course rolled out in Dawson City on September 11, 2023, with 14 early child educators participating from the three local programs.



### Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

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Education

- By signing on to universal child care, all early learning child care providers have committed to collaborating on all improvement activities such as quality measurement, professional development for their staff, and collaboration with early learning specialists.
- Early Learning and Child Care launched the online early childhood educators learning hub on August 9, 2022. The department continues to develop and update this resource.
- Beginning in late August 2022, the Early Learning and Child Care branch began hosting open houses and monthly professional development opportunities for educators and program managers.
- Early Learning and Child Care funds Yukon University to offer early learning courses in rural communities. In winter 2024, there were 26 students from 8 rural communities taking early learning classes. This funding will continue in 2024-25.

#### Bursaries

- As of January 2025, 87 bursaries (57 part-time and 2 full-time) were awarded to early learning students.
  - Both of the full-time bursaries, were awarded to recipients from a Whitehorse French-language program.
  - Fifteen of the part-time bursaries went to recipients in rural Yukon.

#### Professional Diploma Pathways (PDP) Program

- The Professional Diploma Pathways Program ended in April 2024. More than 51 educators benefitted from taking early learning courses without any out-of-pocket expenses.

#### Other initiatives

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

## Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

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Education

### Technical advisory committee

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

### Other

- Quality Roots, a program currently funded by the Government of Canada and provided by Partners for Children a local not for profit, works with licensed early learning and child care programs to support quality in programming. Their funding from the Government of Canada expires on March 31, 2025.
- The Early Learning and Child Care Director meets regularly with a coordinator from the program. Recently conversations have focused on sustainability of the program and possibilities of funding from Early Learning and Child Care.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-02**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

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Education

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL04**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education has a three-year agreement covering the years 2023-24 to 2025-26 with the Government of Canada that will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- In February 2025, an agreement for an additional year of funding was secured for 2026-27, increasing the total amount to \$10.5 million from 2023-24 to 2026-27.
- As well, an increase in the carryforward amount was negotiated for 2024-25 from 10% to 100%, which will maximize the benefits to Yukon communities.
- This partnership with the Government of Canada will support a mutual vision of high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

### Infrastructure Funding for Child Care

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Education

- The department will be making an announcement in the upcoming weeks providing information on recently approved infrastructure projects.
  - Two major and two minor projects have been approved for funding which will both increase child care spaces and accessibility.
- These investments will support more families benefiting from affordable child care.

#### **Additional response:**

- The department is also looking forward to receiving more details on the Federal Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Loan Program, announced in the Federal Budget 2024, which will further increase access to early learning and child care.
- Investments to date, supported by funding from Canada, provide Yukon families up to \$8,400 in yearly savings on child care expenses, provides increased wages for early childhood educators and increased funding to operators of licensed early learning and child care programs.
- These investments support work to improve outcomes for all Yukon children.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

Education

#### Background:

- The Minister of Education signed the funding agreement with the Government of Canada on March 28, 2024. In February 2025, an additional year of funding was secured through the extension of the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement. Under the infrastructure fund Yukon will receive a total of \$10,497,870.
  - 2023/24 \$2,283,404
  - 2024/25 \$2,598,232
  - 2025/26 \$2,808,117
  - 2026/27 \$2,808,117
- The agreement states that Yukon can roll over 100 per cent in the first year and 10 per cent in the remaining years. Although the Government of Canada has indicated that the rollover can be negotiated. In February 2025, the Yukon was able to secure 100% carry forward for the 2024/25 annual contribution.
- The priorities identified for the funding include:
  - Increased access to Indigenous led early learning and child care.
  - Increased access to Francophone early learning and child care.
  - Increased access to early learning and child care in underserved communities in rural Yukon.
  - Enhanced accessibility for children with disabilities in existing early learning and child care programs.
- The Government of Yukon announced the Yukon's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Infrastructure Fund on November 20, 2024, with a deadline to apply of January 15, 2025 for both major and minor submissions.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion**

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Education

### **Value**

- The Department of Education continues to work with Yukon First Nations governments, partners, and stakeholders to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as it moves toward a future in which all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

### **Recommended response:**

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

## **Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion**

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Education

- The 2025-26 transfer payment agreement to support operational funding is estimated to be \$560,000.
- Officials are in regular contact with the Little Blue program, and we will continue to collaborate with them.
- I will share additional information as, and when, it becomes available.

### **Additional response:**

- The department's new three-year Early Learning and Child Care infrastructure agreement and one year extension with the Government of Canada will see \$10.5 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- The department is also looking forward to more details on the Federal Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Loan Program, announced in the Federal Budget 2024, which will further increase access to early learning and child care.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

#### Infrastructure funding

- The Government of Yukon signed an infrastructure agreement with the Government of Canada on March 31, 2024, and secured a one year extension in February 2025.

## Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

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Education

Under the agreement and with the extension, the Yukon will receive \$10,497,870 over four years, to support exclusively not-for-profit early learning and child care providers to create new spaces, mitigate aging infrastructure, and increase accessibility.

- The new fund launched on November 20, 2024 features two distinct streams.
  - **Minor Project stream:** Focused on accessibility upgrades and provides funding to start family day homes in rural Yukon.
  - **Major Project stream:** Supports comprehensive planning costs, such as business and feasibility studies, as well as the design, construction and renovation of existing infrastructure to create new early learning and child care spaces or improve existing infrastructure.
- This fund may present an opportunity for Little Blue to access infrastructure funding.

### Current situation

- Little Blue is currently housed in the Haldenby House constructed in 1903 with an addition built in 2008.
- In 2014 a structural assessment was completed and recommended several repairs with the biggest issue being the roof.
- The Early Learning and Child Care Director and the Dawson Society for Children and Families are meeting bi-weekly to support the Little Blue program. Early Learning and Child Care funded an audit to support the Society.

### Little Blue inspections

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

### Health and safety enhancement funding

- So far in 2024/25, Early Learning and Child Care has provided Little Blue with \$17,324 in additional funding to patch and paint the interior of the building, replace smoke detectors, and install emergency lighting.



## Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion

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Education

- In March 2024, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$21,061 in funding to paint the exterior of the building, fence and make upgrades to the backyard.
- In July 2023, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$3,150 in funding to have three trees removed from the property that were leaning over buildings.
- In March 2023, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$6,899 for roof repairs.
- In November 2022, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$1,525 to replace their hot water tank.
- In March 2021, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$1,985 for a kitchen hood fan and mold removal.
- In November 2020, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$1,842 for safety upgrades.
- In October 2019, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$4,260 to complete a mold/moisture impact assessment.
- In February 2018, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$4,830 to paint the child care centre.
- In August 2016, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$5,000 to replace their oil tank.
- In July 2014, Early Learning and Child Care provided Little Blue with \$37,500 for building improvements.

### Little Blue expansion

- On December 15, 2015, MLA Silver stated during question period in the Legislative Assembly that “A Liberal government would fund this facility. When will the government be making a decision on this request, or should it be added to the ever-growing list of projects the next Yukon government is going to have to address?”
- In a Yukon Liberal Party release on October 12, 2016, it was announced that during the all-party candidate forum “Silver also plans to remind Dawson residents of his long-standing commitment to find a permanent home for the Little Blue Day Care”.

### **Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion**

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Education

- At an election forum in Dawson City on October 17, 2016, then MLA Silver said that “his government would find a permanent home for the Little Blue Day Care”.
- In 2021-22, the Dawson Society for Children and Families received \$5,400 from the Department of Economic Development and the Community Development Fund (CDF) to update its 2014 feasibility report. Additionally, the Department of Education (ELCC) provided \$16,030 in funding to offset the consultant fee for “Feasibility – Little Blue to Big Blue”.
- In October 2021, the Dawson Society for Children and Families engaged Klondike Development Organization (KDO) to update the 2014 report. In February 2022, KDO submitted their update, ‘Little Blue to Big Blue Feasibility Update’ with the following findings:
  - The update supports the need for an expanded program and states: “The funding of childcare has improved significantly since 2014.”
  - “Under the current funding and fees framework, the proposed Big Blue facility can be viably operated and maintained over the long term.” It is worth noting that KDO did not consider the capacity of the Dawson Society for Children and Families to acquire land and construct the new building.
- In 2022-23, the Dawson Society for Children and Families applied for and received Community Development Fund funding to advance the next step of their building project, which involved hiring a professional contractor for the blueprints/design and cost estimates.
  - This step cost \$102,000, of which the Dawson Society for Children and Families received \$75,000 from the Community Development Fund, committed \$12,500 of its own finances, and the Department of Education Early Learning and Child Care branch committed and paid \$14,500.
  - The Dawson Society for Children and Families hired ORO Enterprises Ltd., a local Dawson City business, to complete the blueprints/design.
- The Dawson Society for Children is focusing their planning around Parcel K, next to the Old MacDonald Lodge site in Dawson City.

#### Community child care need

- According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, as of March 31, 2024, there were 261 children aged 12 and under in Dawson City. Early learning and child care is primarily

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EL05**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Little Blue Early Care and Learning Centre expansion**

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Education

for children aged 12 and under, with exceptions for children with diverse developmental needs, to age 16.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-06**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care**

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Education

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL07**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

### **Additional response:**

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EL06**  
**Spring 2025**

## Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care

Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

#### On-site child care

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

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Little Blue Learning Centre Expansion: refer to EL05**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06**

**Yukon Child Care Board: refer to EL08**

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- With the introduction of universal child care in April 2021, the Government of Yukon committed to supporting high quality early learning and child care that is accessible, affordable and inclusive.
- The review of the *Child Care Act* is focused on modernizing and strengthening legislation based on the principles of quality, affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility within the early learning and child care sector.
- Many of the items noted in the 2023-24 Yukon Child Care Report are long standing issues and the department intends to address many of these concerns through the review of the *Child Care Act*.
- The 2024-25 budget for Early Learning and Child Care is \$42.5 million not including infrastructure funding, with an additional \$515,000 invested in capital to support the development of a data management system. Among other quality initiatives, the funding is currently supporting:
  - Fee reductions for families up to \$8,400 yearly,

- Wage enhancements for more than 500 early childhood educators, and
  - As of March 2025, 79 licensed operators, including nine First Nations government owned and operated programs, representing 2,353 licensed spaces.
- The universal child care program, when combined with the subsidy program for lower income earners, means some families have no out-of-pocket expenses for child care. Additionally, teen parents continuing their education and grandparents with primary responsibility for their grandchildren receive free child care.
- The 2025-26 budget for Early Learning and Child Care is \$44.3 million not including infrastructure funding. This funding will continue to support affordability for families, quality initiatives including wage enhancements for educators, and accessibility to early learning and child care for Yukon's youngest learners.
- Since the implementation of universal child care in April 2021, and as of January 2025, more than 588 child care spaces have been created in Pelly Crossing, Whitehorse, Ross River and Dawson, and programs continue to expand and grow. All licensed programs are part of the universal child care program and receive funding from the Yukon government.
- The funding agreements signed with the Government of Canada in July 2021 continue to support development and expansion of the Yukon's universal child care system and early childhood educator workforce development.
- In February 2025, we were able to extend the current Canada-Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and the current Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement securing an additional five years of funding, approximately \$74.4 million, from

the Government of Canada. These agreements will run until fiscal year 2030-2031 and include a 3% funding escalator, beginning in fiscal year 2027. Work is now underway to develop an action plan to determine allocation for that funding that aligns with existing priorities and targets.

- We recognize that unforeseen inflation has resulted in financial pressures for some program operators. The ELCC branch is reviewing the funding model to identify any changes needed to alleviate financial pressures for operators.
- In the short term, the branch is also reviewing what operating expenses are deemed eligible for inclusion in the operational funding model, in order to provide additional financial support to operators.
- Early childhood educators play a critical role in providing education and care for young children in the Yukon. We have standards in place and a wage grid based on certificate level. We acknowledge that the wage grid may need to change over time to reflect higher levels of education and experience. We will continue our collaboration with First Nation governments, early learning and child care providers, educators and the Child Care Board as this work progresses.

### **Additional response:**

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



- The Department of Education is aware of changes to the nominee program and is working with the Department of Economic Development to ensure that the labour market needs of the early learning centres are addressed. A small proportion of Yukon's early childhood educators are part of the Yukon nominee program.
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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

### **Background:**

#### Federal Legislation on Early Learning and Child Care

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

#### Summary of Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Funding from Canada

- Under agreements with the Government of Canada, the Yukon government will receive approximately \$54.4 million from 2021 to 2025, to further enhance the universal ELCC program.
- In February 2025, five-year extensions to the agreements with the Government of Canada were signed ensuring an uninterrupted flow of funding from Canada to Yukon through March 31, 2031.
- Through these extensions, the Yukon government will receive approximately \$74.4 million from 2026-2031 to continue supporting high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible and inclusive.

#### Minimum wage increases and increased costs to operators

- On April 1, 2025, the Yukon's minimum wage increased from \$17.59 to \$17.94 and level three educator wages increased to a minimum of \$33.25 in Whitehorse and \$35.05 in rural communities. Many child care providers pay more than the minimum in order to recruit and retain staff.
- The wages for educators are tied to minimum wage increases whereby program operators must pay at least the minimum wage, and the Yukon government provides a wage top-up. For Whitehorse level 3 educators, Yukon government contributes 47 per cent of the mandated wage and in rural Yukon we contribute 49 per cent of the mandated wage. Child care providers absorb the costs of increases to wages.

### Affordability

- As of April 1, 2025, the average daily rate for child care is \$10.15 (\$12.50 for infants, \$10.00 for toddlers, \$9.45 for preschool, and \$8.65 for kindergarten).
- Parent fee increases are controlled to ensure parent fees remain affordable. Fees can only be adjusted on April 1 of each year. The maximum annual increase allowed is 3 per cent and if a centre's fees are greater than 10% of the territorial average, they can only increase by 1% that year.
- Parents must pay out of pocket for fee increases. Additionally, parents/caregivers may pay extra fees for optional services, like hot meal programs.
- The Yukon Poverty Report Card (for 2022 and published in February 2023) by Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition reported that the living wage had reduced from previous years due to the implementation of universal child care and families having to pay less for child care.

### Economy

- In 2020, the Centre for Future Work published a report on "The Role of Early Learning and Child Care in Rebuilding Canada's Economy after COVID-19" by noted economist, Jim Stanford. The report provides broad estimates of the economic benefits of a universal Early Learning and Child Care program, projecting:
  - Direct jobs and economic activity associated with provision of Early Learning and Child Care services.

- Increases in women's labour force participation and employment thanks to better availability of quality, affordable child care.
- Long-term benefits from improved capacities of children who participate in high-quality Early Learning and Child Care.

### Funding for operational and administrative expenses for Early Learning and Child Care program operators

- Quality Program Enhancement funding is provided for each space in a licensed centre. The amount depends on the space category – infants, toddlers, preschool, kindergarten, or school age.
- Additional funding is provided to operators to reduce their operational and administrative expenses and to support program needs. This funding provides for 37 per cent of program building expenses (such as rent/mortgage, insurance, electricity, heat, janitorial, etc.) in Whitehorse and 43 per cent in rural communities.
- Start-up funding is available for the creation of new licensed programs. Funding is also available to address health and safety concerns.
- Funding provided by the Yukon government to licensed programs has not increased since universal child care was implemented in 2021. Early Learning and Child Care has started reviewing the funding program to assess whether changes are required.
- From 2021-25, Government of Yukon has distributed more than \$100 million to child care centres directly to support the costs of operational expenses, employee benefits, wage enhancements, and space creation. Approximately 24% of this total is from federal funding agreements, while approximately 76% is territorial funding.
- Funding ranges from less than \$10,000 per centre to nearly \$1,000,000, depending on the number of licensed spaces, educators, and eligible operating expenses.
- From 2021-25, Yukon government has provided an average of approximately \$18,000 per licensed child care space.
- This is a significant investment that has had positive impacts for the care, well-being and early learning of Yukon's youngest children, the participation of women in the workforce, ability of caregivers to pursue education and bolstering our economy.
- We expect that this investment in universal child care and early learning will lead to future positive impacts on educational outcomes for our students.

#### Yukon enrollment versus licensed capacity as of March 31, 2025

Type of Program	# of Programs	% of programs	# of spaces	Space allocation
Yukon For Profit Programs	39	49%	1324	56%
Yukon Non Profit Programs	14	18%	591	25%
Yukon Family Dayhomes (includes 1 FNs owned)	17	22%	149	6%
Yukon FN Government Owned and Operated Centres	9	11%	281	12%
	79	100%	2345	100%

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

#### Recognition

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EL07**  
**Spring 2025**

## Universal Child Care

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-03](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Child Care Act Review: refer to EL01**

**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL02**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL03**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care: refer to EL06**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL07**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

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

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

### **Additional response:**

- The department engaged with the Yukon Child Care Board on the review of the *Child Care Act* from November 2023 to February 2024 and we will continue to work closely with the Board as this project moves ahead.
- In April 2025, we heard from the Board that they want to ensure adequate capacity to undertake their work and maintain a minimum number of board members at seven. This represents a continuation from the previous legislation.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2023-24 annual report, tabled on November 21, 2024 as per the requirement of the *Child Care Act* contained numerous recommendations for the Government of Yukon.
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### **Background:**

#### Yukon Child Care Board (YCCB)

- The Yukon Child Care Board is established under the *Child Care Act* to:
  - encourage the development and support of child care services,
  - make recommendations to the Minister on matters pertaining to child care,
  - review government policies, programs, services, or procedures in matters pertaining to child care,
  - advise on the planning, development, standards, coordination, and evaluation of child care services, and
  - hear appeals under the Act.
- The Board currently has eight members, which includes a First Nations representative from a rural community. On August 8, 2024, two members were reappointed for two-

## Yukon Child Care Board

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year terms and as of January 23, 2025, Clayton Keats is the new chair of the Board. A minimum of seven board members is required by the *Child Care Act*.

### Yukon Child Care Board annual report 2023-24

- The 2023-24 annual report is to be tabled during the fall Legislative sitting as per section 4(11) of the *Child Care Act*.
- The report is supposed to be provided to the Minister by June 30.
- The report noted that the Child Care Board is honoured to be a part of the work to review the *Child Care Act*, stating:  
“The Yukon Child Care Board is honoured to be part of this work and dedicates itself to another year of collaboration, creativity, and commitment.”
- The Yukon Child Care Board made four recommendations for 2023-24:
  - Develop an Early Childhood Educator Registry
    - The Department of Education through the new Early Learning and Child Care Act will introduce a register of early childhood educators.
  - Create a clear definition of quality and the means of measuring it
    - The Department of Education through the new Early Learning and Child Care Act will introduce an early learning framework – part of the early learning framework will be to identify quality indicators for licensed early learning and child care programs.
  - Increase staffing in early learning and child care centres
    - Early Childhood Educator’s in Yukon are among the highest paid in Canada. ELCC provides funding to licensed early learning and child care operators to offer a benefit program to their Early Childhood Educator’s at little to no cost. ELCC, in collaboration with Yukon First Nations Education Directorate offers an Understanding the Early Years course to increase the number of level 1 certified educators, especially in rural Yukon, to increase the staffing of licensed early learning and child care programs.
  - Meet all commitments made in the Canada-Yukon Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements.



- The Dept of Education makes every effort to follow through on the commitments made in the Canada-Yukon Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements.
- The Yukon Child Care Board also noted where they believe that progress on their 2022-23 recommendations has not advanced adequately.
- Items the Board noted, within their annual report with no action include:

- **Yukon government officially adopts and mandates the B.C. Early Learning Framework**

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

Early Learning and Child Care is currently using the British Columbia Early Learning Framework as the foundation for educator professional development, it is referenced in monthly educator newsletters and copies are provided to centres and educators free of charge. The British Columbia Early Learning framework is also used by Yukon schools from kindergarten to grade 3 and in the early learning program at Yukon University. Requiring centres to base programming on an early learning framework will be reviewed while working to modernize the *Child Care Act*.

- **Yukon government mandates a specific number of professional development hours that all educators must complete** - the Director has no authority to mandate professional development hours but hopes to do so in a modernized *Child Care Act*. That being said, centres are encouraged to have professional development days and funding is not interrupted if they close for that purpose. Additionally, Early Learning and Child Care staff provide monthly professional development directly to educators and bursaries continue to be offered.
- **Yukon Government develop focused and intentional ways in which to support the exceptional challenges of programs that are in rural parts of Yukon** – Early Learning and Child Care provides additional funding to rural programs as a part of universal child care. Funding is provided to Yukon University expressly to allow for additional early learning courses to be offered in rural communities, such as a

- project in Mayo that is supporting educators to work towards their Early Childhood Educator diplomas. Early Learning and Child Care also has meetings with rural operators to discuss challenges they face and for rural programs to learn from each other.
- Yukon Government hires a person from a Yukon community to be a specific liaison for the programs in community – given the vastness of the territory it would be difficult for one person to accomplish this task. Rural communities have assigned and consistent staff who work with rural programs individually.
  - Yukon Government adds Level 4 and Level 5 for educators who hold actual early learning diplomas (Level 4) and further education in early learning such as a degree, Masters, or PHD accreditation – Recognizing higher levels of education will be explored in new legislation, specifically within regulations. The practice of providing certificates to individuals without an early learning background ceased in 2022.
  - The Yukon Child Care Board also noted that they would like to see:
    - Yukon Government rewrite the inspection reports used for spot inspections to mirror an Early Learning and Child Care lens – all inspectors are early childhood educators and inspections are conducted through an Early Childhood Educator lens. Early Learning and Child Care will have additional discussions with the Yukon Child Care Board to determine what they envision.
    - Yukon Government make inspection reports of programs more easily accessible to the public – Early Learning and Child Care is hoping to address this through the review of the act. Currently, there is no legislative authority to publish inspection reports. They are, however, available to the public at the Early Learning and Child Care office and programs have to make their reports available at their programs.
    - Yukon Government undertake a collaborative review of the inspection process – Early Learning and Child Care hopes to address inspections during the review of the *Child Care Act*.
    - Yukon Government renames the term inspector – current legislation refers to the term inspector – this could be revisited during development of the new *Child Care Act* but the term is consistently used across Canada.
  - Early Learning and Child Care staff meet with the Board regularly to share information.
  - Yukon Child Care Board members participated in the 2024 Early Learning and Child Care Conference and the Chair of the Board made opening remarks.

# Session Briefing Note

Yukon Child Care Board

Tab# EL08  
Spring 2025

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-14

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

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Education

#### Value:

- The Department of Education is dedicated to strengthening community involvement to ensure that Yukoners are supported throughout their learning journey – from cradle to career.

#### Recommended response:

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education provides advice on system-wide education matters, and the Department of Education values the input received from this group.
- Following the committee's advice, membership was expanded to include service providers such as the LDAY Centre for Learning and Autism Yukon; youth organizations such as BGC Yukon, Territorial Youth Committee (formerly Communities Building Youth Futures), and the Bringing Youth Toward Equality – Empowering Youth Society; as well as groups supporting learners and youth, including the Child Development Centre, Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's Office and l'Association franco-yukonnaise.
- The committee last met on January 23, 2025. The department actively seeks the committee's perspectives and advice on educational initiatives to shape the path forward.

#### Additional response:

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education typically meets quarterly. Information about the committee is available on Yukon.ca.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

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Education

#### Background:

- In the 2024-25 school year, the committee's work focused on the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education, strengthening its collaboration with the Territorial Youth Collective and supporting the Territorial Youth Strategy priorities.
- The committee's work during the 2023-24 school year focused on the Integrated Outcome Strategy, the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies, and Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.
- The committee, as of April 2024, includes (31 representatives):
  - Educators (4, 1 vacancy),
  - Yukon Association of Education Professionals (2)
  - Association of Yukon School Administrators (1)
  - School Council Chairs (3, 1 vacancy)
  - First Nations Education Commission
  - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (2)
  - Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards & Committees (1)
  - Catholic Education Association of Yukon (1)
  - Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) (1)
  - First Nation School Board (1)
  - Yukon University (1)
  - Child Care Board (1)
  - Child Development Centre (1)
  - Child and Youth Advocate Office
  - Association franco-yukonnaise (1)
  - LDAY Centre for Learning (1)
  - Autism Yukon (1)
  - BGC Yukon (1)
  - BYTE – Empowering Youth Society (1),
  - Communities Building Youth Futures (CBYF) (1)
  - Yukon Parent Advisory Committee (1 vacancy)
  - Youth Representative (2 vacancies)
  - Education officials, including the Deputy Minister (chair) and ADMs

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

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

### Additional response:

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

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- Private schools charge fees for students to access programs and services offered by the school, and no grants or contributions can be made to a private school by the Minister, the Commissioner in Executive Council, a school board, or a council.

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**For School Capacity: Refer to HOT11/SI06**

**Value:**

- Education works collaboratively with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon to support the learning needs of French Minority Language students and the path for the administration of French Minority Language education in the territory.

**Recommended response:**

- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon's leadership and vision are crucial in shaping the future of education in the Yukon, and the Department of Education is eager to hear about the initiatives and goals in their new strategic plan.
- The department is pleased to report that, for a second year, French Minority Language students have access to an in-person French-language program of instruction in Dawson.
- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, the Department of Education, and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in have established an effective working relationship, and officials will continue to navigate and approach the work ahead together.
- The CSSC Mercier graduation rate for the 2023-24 school year was 100%.

**Additional response:**

- The 2024-2025 Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) extends from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 and has a value of \$10,692,804 with funds withheld for Yukon government personnel employed at Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools in the amount of \$9,651,558. The net value of the TPA is \$1,041,246.



## CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon

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Education

- When broken down by fiscal year, instead of school calendar year, for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the funding breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of three schools from April 2024 to March 2025 of - \$7.15M
  - Board governance and administration - \$941K
  - Francophone recognition - \$1.4M (20% lift, paid by YG)
  - Federal funding - \$1M (flows through YG to CSFY)
- The 2023-2024 Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) extended from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 and had a value of \$10,419,811 with funds withheld for Yukon government personnel employed at Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools in the amount of \$8,745,662. The net value of the TPA was \$1,674,149.
- The 2023-2024 fiscal year funding is broken down as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of two schools from April 2023 to June 2023 and three schools (includes Dawson programming) from July 2023 to March 2024 of \$6.6M
  - Board governance and administration \$917K
  - Francophone recognition \$1.3M
  - Federal funding \$1.5M

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon grew significantly in the last few years by adding a program of instruction in Dawson and taking the lead in managing the Garderie du petit cheval blanc.
- The November 2025 school board election has the potential to overlap with the 2025 Yukon general election which will be held on or before November 3, 2025.

### CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon

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Education

#### Background:

- As of December 2024, CSSC Mercier is at 107% of its operational capacity of 150 students, and École Emilie Tremblay is at 73% of its operational capacity of 302 students.
- As of February 2025, Department of Education's data indicates that there are 402 students enrolled in Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools for the 2024-2025 school year.
- For the 2023-2024 school year, 388 students were enrolled in Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools.
- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon was created in 1996 and is responsible for education in French as a first language throughout the territory through the following schools and programs:
  - Three schools:
    - École Émilie-Tremblay Elementary School, four-year-old kindergarten to grade 6;
    - Paul-Émile-Mercier Secondary School Community Centre, grades 7 to 12; and
    - École Nomade School, virtual and homeschooling program, five-year-old kindergarten to grade 12.
  - One Program:
    - Programme Confluence - a French first language program in Dawson, for students four-year-old kindergarten to grade 7.
    - The program also offers services to children under the age of 4.
  - One early learning and child care program:
    - Garderie du petit cheval blanc

#### In-person French Minority Language program of instruction in Dawson

- The department is continuing to work with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, as the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon

## CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon

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Education

moves forward with their implementation of the French Minority Language program in Dawson.

- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon rents space at 486 King Street in Dawson for the in-person French Minority Language program of instruction.
- As of December 31, 2024, 14 students were enrolled in the Programme Confluence: pre-K to grade 5.
- Under the terms of the agreement, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon will provide an in-person French Minority Language instruction program in Dawson for a minimum of three years during the period 2023-24 to 2025-26.
- Before the end of school year 2024-2025, The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon will assess the ongoing need and suitability of the program.
- A letter of agreement between the Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in was signed on August 30, 2024. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon subsequently shared information with Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon regarding this agreement.
- Funding for 2024-25 and 2025-26 will follow the existing Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon funding agreement.
- The government is not constructing a school facility for the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon in Dawson as part of the agreement.
- Department officials continue to meet with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon officials regularly.

### Garderie du petit cheval blanc early childhood education and child care

- In September 2023, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon officially became manager of the Garderie du petit cheval blanc, an establishment offering early childhood education and after-school programs.
  - This transition, supported by the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon school community and the organization previously managing the day care, ensures the establishment's future.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EP03**  
**Spring 2025**

**CSFY – Commission scolaire  
francophone du Yukon**

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-03-18](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

**School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP05**

**School Governance and Associations: refer to EP08**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The First Nation School Board governs eleven schools across the Yukon, marking a historic step for Yukon First Nations and their citizens.
- The board empowers Yukon First Nations to reclaim greater responsibility for administering and managing education programs for students in their communities.
- As Minister of Education, I will continue to collaborate with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board trustees while exercising my oversight authority for Yukon education.
- I remain committed to working on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations to address their educational priorities for their citizens.

#### **Additional response:**

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

### **School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board**

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Education

- The board oversees 11 schools—nine in rural communities and two in Whitehorse—including the original eight schools and three added through February 2023 referendums.

#### **Additional response - Funding:**

- In December 2024, the Department of Education finalized a two-year Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) with the First Nation School Board to provide stable operational funding in the amount of \$33.4 million per year with \$24.2 million being withheld for salaries and heating fuel and \$9.221 million flowing directly to FNSB. This is for 830 students in 11 schools.
- The increase of \$5.404 million is adjusting the budget associated with the funds being flowed to FNSB, and includes board governance and administration, community committees, Whole Child Initiative and Yukon First Nations Language Initiatives in response to the 2019 Auditor General's Report.
- Interim TPAs ensured the board had operational funding during negotiations.
- The 2024-25 Budget and supplementary estimates include funding for the operation of all 11 schools.
- School Board TPAs are aligned with the school year and run from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- The department is working with the board to develop a long-term funding formula to ensure equitable funding between school authorities and consistent service levels for K-12 education programs.

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

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

- The First Nation School Board has developed and begun implementing its own Literacy and Numeracy strategies during the 2023-24 school year. The department supports and celebrates these successes.
- The Department of Education works closely with Yukon First Nation governments to develop Education Agreements that support improved outcomes for First Nation students.
  - The department is committed to working with the First Nation School Board on Education Agreements for the schools they operate.
- Three school authorities operate schools in Yukon: The First Nation School Board; the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY); and Yukon Education.
- All school authorities operate within the established curriculum, legislation, regulations, and policies, while maintaining significant autonomy in how education is delivered.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is considerable interest in how the First Nation School Board operates the 11 schools under its authority and the impact this has on all Yukon students.
- The November 2025 school boards election has the potential to overlap with the 2025 Yukon general election which will be held on or before November 3, 2025.

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#### **Background:**

- In December 2024, a two-year TPA was signed with the First Nations School Board to provide stable funding, supporting operations and governance.

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- The two-year TPA with the First Nations School Board ends on June 30, 2026 and provides \$33.4 million in funding each year as follows:
  - Annual operational support and operations and maintenance of eleven schools \$25.7M – this includes the same cost factors and drivers as the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, or CSFY, with a minor difference for rural remoteness.
  - Annual Board governance and administration of eleven schools of \$2.7M.
  - Discretionary grant for Indigenous recognition \$3.4M each year of the agreement
  - Annual funding for the governance of community committees \$179k.
  - Discretionary grant for Whole Child Initiative and Yukon First Nation Language Initiatives in response to the 2019 Auditors General report in the amount of \$1.4M each year of the agreement.
- There were interim TPAs in effect between June and December 2024.
- The negotiation team met a number of times through August and September, On September 20, 2024, the First Nation School Board submitted a funding proposal to support the TPA negotiation discussions.

#### By Fiscal Year:

- When broken down by fiscal year, instead of school calendar year, for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the funding breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eleven schools for April 2024 to March 2025 - \$25.4M.
  - From April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 there were 852 students enrolled and from July 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 there are 830 students enrolled.
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools - \$2.7M
  - Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report - \$4.2M
- For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the funding breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eight schools (675 students) for April 2023 to June 2023 and 11 schools (852 students) from July 2023 to March 2024 \$23.1M
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools of \$2.7M.



### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$6.6M.
  - One-time funding for governance of community committees \$113k.
- The breakdown for the 15-month TPA (which ended June 2024) with the FNSB included:
  - Operational support and operations and maintenance of eight schools \$29.3M
  - Board governance and administration of eight schools of \$3.3M.
  - Discretionary grant for Indigenous recognition \$4.8M.
  - One-time funding for governance of community committees \$450k.
  - Discretionary grant for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$3.125M.
- The TPA was amended to include funding to support the three new schools as well as to extend the expiry date past June 30, 2024, while negotiating the new TPA.
- The following schools are operated by the First Nation School Board (FNSB):
  - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, Old Crow, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.
  - Johnson Elementary School & Watson Lake Secondary School, Watson Lake, Liard First Nation.
  - Ross River School, Ross River, Ross River Dena Council.
  - St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
  - Nelna Bessie John School, Beaver Creek, White River First Nation.
  - Grey Mountain Primary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
  - Takhini Elementary School, Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
  - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing, Selkirk First Nation.
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross, Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
  - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, Kluane First Nation.

### School Board – FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board

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Education

- JV Clark School (Mayo) electors voted in 2022 to not have their school operated by the FNSB.
- An interim funding agreement was in place to ensure a successful transition for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The total amount of this agreement was \$13,094,188 (to March 31, 2023) and represented base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
- For 12 months of the funding agreement that ended on June 30, 2024 provided the FNSB with \$27,322,346 for the operation, administration, salaries and strategic initiatives for the original 8 schools along with the School Board for the 2023-24 school year.
  - The previous funding agreement was updated to include the 3 additional schools and any enrolment changes in early 2024.
- Following the establishment of the First Nation School Board, the Minister of Education appointed an interim governance committee based on recommendations of the Chiefs Committee on Education.
- This committee oversaw operations of the school board until November 2022, when school board trustee elections took place.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-18**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

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Education

**School Governance and Associations: refer to EP08**

**School Board – FNSB – Yukon First Nation School Board: refer to HOT10/EP04**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- The *Education Act* outlines a process for school communities to decide whether they will be governed by a school board or directly by the Department of Education.
- The department provides information about this process, and each school community decides whether to join a board.
- I would like to recognize the Chief Electoral Officer, Max Harvey, and his team at Elections Yukon, who work tirelessly to oversee the democratic process in communities across the Yukon.
- I would also like to recognize school board trustees and school council members for their dedication to supporting student success.

#### Additional response:

- I encourage any school councils and community members considering forming or joining a school board to contact the Department of Education. The First Nation School Board, for example, took several years to establish.
- School council vacancies after an election or during a term are common. They can be filled by the current or incoming school council through nominating individuals or holding a by-election.

## School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

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Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is significant interest in school board and council elections, as well as the referendum process. Recent media attention and a record voter turnout in the spring 2024 school council elections highlight this interest.
- November 2025 school board elections have the potential to overlap with the 2025 Yukon general election which will be held on or before November 3, 2025

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### Background:

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

#### 2024 School council elections

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

#### Joining a school board

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

### School Board and Council Elections and Referendums

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Education

#### Leaving a school board

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

#### Expanded Voting

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

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-03**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response

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

### Additional response:

- Under the Education Act, a member of a school council can only be disqualified for
  - their absence from meetings
  - using information gained through their position to gain a pecuniary benefit
  - ceasing to be an elector in the attendance area
  - being a judge of a court other than a justice of the peace court or a youth court
  - being employed by the school

- 
- School councils participate in the development of school-based policies, rules and procedures and shall consider any advice provided to it by the school administration and staff.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There have been reports in the media and a human rights complaint made, calling for the removal of a Holy Family school council member.

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#### **Background:**

- According to the *Education Act*, the chair of a school council may exclude someone from a meeting who, in the opinion of the chair, is guilty of improper conduct at that meeting. This decision by the chair can be overruled by the school council via resolution.
- The authority to determine whether an elected school council member is qualified to remain a member rest with a judge. The criteria for the disqualification of a school council member are specific and listed in the *Education Act*.
- Holy Family school council held a meeting in June 2024 where a school council member is noted to have made comments that ran counter to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification (SOGI) policy where it was stated that marriage is between a man and woman” and that “homosexuality and pride are deadly sins.”
- After this comment was made by a school council member, a teacher at Holy Family left the meeting. The teacher feels that the comment violated the Department of Education’s SOGI policy.
- The teacher complained to the Department of Education asking for the removal of the school council member and was informed that the Department does not have the authority to remove an elected council member.
- The teacher indicated that the *Education Act* allows for an application to the court to determine a removal. The court actually would determine whether the disqualification section applied.
- The teacher also said the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification policy does not adequately address what should happen when it is violated. The teacher does

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EP06**  
**Spring 2025**

## School Council Code of Conduct

Education

not feel supported by the Department of Education and is upset that there have been no consequences (such as the removal of the school council member) and has since indicated that they have filed a human rights complaint.

- The Department of Education supported Holy Family's administration and school council to create a code of conduct.

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## **School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process**

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Education

### **Education Appeal Tribunal: refer to SI03**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- Most issues or disagreements in school communities can be resolved through respectful and constructive discussion.
- We encourage all school community members to work collaboratively and use restorative approaches to resolve disputes directly with those involved before escalating the matter to higher levels.
- Under the *Education Act*, parents and students can appeal decisions that significantly affect a student's education, health, or safety. In some cases, these appeals can be brought to the *Education Appeal Tribunal*.

#### **Additional response:**

- The *Education Act* requires each school board or council to establish a dispute resolution process for handling local appeal.
- Privacy laws protect students and staff involved in disputes. If an issue concerns the behaviour of another student, teacher, or staff member, the information that can be shared publicly is limited.
- The Department of Education has developed a *School Council Dispute Resolution Procedure Policy*, which serves as a template for school councils. Information on this policy and the dispute resolution process for Yukon schools is available on Yukon.ca.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EP07**  
**Spring 2025**

## **School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process**

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Education

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### **Context - this may be an issue because:**

- Disputes arise in schools and issues often become public via social media.
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### **Background:**

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

### **Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### School Governance and Associations

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Education

**School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP05**

**School Board - FNSB - Yukon First Nation School Board: refer to  
HOT10/EP04**

**School Board - CSFY – Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon:  
refer to EP03**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional response:

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

### School Governance and Associations

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Education

- I want to thank all current and past members of school councils, school boards, and associations for their hard work in making school communities better places. Your dedication is deeply appreciated.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Recent court cases and controversy over school council members opposing the Department of Education's *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy* may lead to questions about how the department supports and collaborates with school boards and councils.

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#### Background:

- Yukon has 30 public schools:
  - 2 operated by the Francophone School Board (*Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon*, or CSFY)
  - 11 by the First Nation School Board (FNSB)
  - 17 by Yukon Education (the department), with local oversight from elected school councils.
    - This includes 3 Catholic schools.
- The Education Act:
  - Governs school board creation, adding schools to a board's education area, and outlines board powers and duties.
  - Allows school community electors to decide if a school is governed by a school board.
- Associations:
  - The Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) is a non-profit representing school councils; 13 school councils are AYSCBC members.
  - The Catholic Education Association of Yukon (CEAY) represents the 3 Catholic school councils.
- Key events:
  - In 2023-24, a CEAY member, who serves on a school council, made statements opposing the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy, sparking controversy and calls for resignation. The Department of

## School Governance and Associations

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Education

Education does not condone these statements but has no authority to compel resignation or compliance.

- Education officials and a consultant from the ARC Foundation are collaborating with CEAY to develop SOGI procedures, ensuring inclusivity across all public schools, including Catholic schools.
- In 2020, a committee representing Education, AYSCBC, CEAY, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate created a resource tool clarifying the roles and responsibilities of school councils, the Department of Education, and Yukon First Nations.
- In 2020, the government settled a lawsuit with CSFY about the board's roles and responsibilities.
- School council duties and powers (*Education Act*, primarily Section 113):
  - Review and approve school growth plans.
  - Develop school-based policies.
  - Participate in principal hiring.
  - Advise on matters such as:
    - School calendars, staffing needs, renovations, programming, discipline policies, student transportation, and locally developed courses.
- School board duties and powers (*Education Act*, primarily Section 116):
  - Conduct schools according to the *Education Act*.
  - Hire, dismiss, and manage staff, including principals and teachers.
  - Review and approve school growth plans.
  - Establish policies for school administration and operation.
  - Provide educational programs, including locally developed courses.
  - Advise the Minister on school closures and transportation services.

### Joining a school board:

- Education officials, the FNSB, and Elections Yukon established a process for schools to join the FNSB after its first year, as permitted by the *Education Act*.
- A referendum can be initiated by a school council or 20% of electors in the attendance area.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# EP08**  
**Spring 2025**

## **School Governance and Associations**

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Education

### Leaving a school board:

- The Minister can approve or deny requests to withdraw from a school board or join another.
- A fair process, such as a referendum with a clear majority, is required.
- The Minister would establish a new attendance area, allowing the school to form a council under Yukon Education.

### **Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## Yukon Parent Advisory Committee

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Education

### Value:

- The wellbeing, safety, and protection of students is of utmost importance while they are in the care of Yukon schools.

### Recommended response:

- The Hidden Valley Elementary School Parents Advisory Committee is transitioning to a Yukon-wide Parent Advisory Committee, which the department is now working to advance.
- The department is establishing this Yukon-wide committee to support ongoing work to make schools safer. It will provide families with a space to share their concerns and ideas to enhance student wellbeing and safety.
- The next steps include consulting with school councils, school boards, Yukon First Nations, and other educational partners, creating terms of reference, and inviting people to join the committee.

### Additional response:

- Parents and guardians are essential partners in education, and the committee will play a key role in advancing efforts to create safe and caring school environments.
- Communication is essential for outlining priorities to make and keep Yukon schools safe, and a diverse committee ensures a well-rounded understanding of school safety needs.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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Education

#### Background:

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

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-30**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Value:**

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

**Recommended response:**

- On April 1, 2024, Canada announced a \$1 billion investment over five years to create a National School Food Program.
- The new National School Food Policy outlines principles and objectives to support the vision of every child having access to nutritious food in school.
- In February 2025, the Government of Yukon signed a bilateral agreement with Canada for National School Food Program funding for 2024-25 to 2026-27.
- Investing in school food programs reflects our commitment to students' health and wellbeing, ensuring they have access to nutritious meals that support learning.

**Additional Response:**

- While the April 1, 2024, budget announcement detailed a \$1 billion investment over five years, the bilateral agreement covers a three-year period.
- The Yukon will receive \$2.26 million for 2024-25 and \$2.55 million annually for 2025-26 and 2026-27, with 100% of the 2024-25 funds rolling over into 2025-26.
- Eligible expenditures include food purchases, staffing, infrastructure for food preparation and storage, transportation, equipment, logistics, program capital and operating costs, quality assurance, administrative and overhead costs, and other program delivery expenses.

- The Government of Yukon is not required to match the federal investment.
  - The Year 1 (2024-25) Action Plan approved by Canada includes working with partners, including school boards, school councils, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Yukon Food for Learning Association to set the foundation for school food program enhancements that will be rolled out across the Yukon in Years 2 and 3 (2025-26 & 2026-27).
  - Details of the Years 2 and 3 Action Plan and the implementation of Yukon school food program funding will be shared once the Years 2 & 3 Action Plans are finalized.
  - We value and appreciate our partners for their ongoing work in supporting Yukon students.
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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- As the Yukon is still negotiating a bilateral agreement and associated action plans, there may be questions as to the status of the National School Food Program funding.
  - Several provinces have signed bilateral agreements with Canada for the National School Food Program funding, including Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, PEI, Ontario and New Brunswick.
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### **Background:**

#### Future of School Food Programs Working Group

- The Future of School Food Programs working group has been meeting since 2022 to identify areas for improvement in the delivery of school food programs in the Yukon and to propose options for implementing a universal school food program in the Yukon.
  - The group is co-chaired by the Yukon Food for Learning Association. The working group includes members representing:
    - Yukon Food for Learning Association
    - Department of Education (including Department officials, teachers and administrators)
-

- Department of Health and Social Services (Health Promotion, Environmental Health Services)
- Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Agriculture)
- Yukon First Nations Education Directorate
- Liard First Nation
- Kluane First Nation
- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- Yukon Food Security Network
- School council members

### Yukon School Food Programs

- School food programs in Yukon schools are currently administered and funded through a combination of funding from the Yukon Food for Learning Association and Yukon First Nations Education Directorate with funding from Jordan's Principle.
- Yukon Government provides \$137,000 annually to the Yukon Food for Learning Association. Schools can apply for funding to support a school food program or to buy kitchen equipment to support their school food program.
- The Yukon First Nations Education Directorate receives funding from Jordan's Principle to administer school food programs in Yukon schools for Indigenous students. In schools that lack capacity for meal preparation, food is prepared in commercial kitchens off-site and then delivered to the schools.
- Porter Creek, St. Francis of Assisi, F.H Collins, and CSSC Mercier secondary schools all have commercial kitchens. All schools have some capacity to deliver food and nutrition programs to students through smaller kitchens or Home Economic rooms.
- The commercial kitchens at Porter Creek Secondary School and CSSC Mercier are made available through a special request for user groups to access through the Joint Use Agreement with the City of Whitehorse.
- In the 2023-24 budget the Government of Yukon announced a one-time financial enhancement of \$500,000 to strengthen existing school food programs.

- The Yukon Food for Learning Association received \$450,000 to distribute to all Yukon schools and Yukon First Nation Education Directorate received \$50,000 to support school feasts.
- This funding was a crucial part of the government's efforts to further support nutrition programs in all Yukon schools and help ease the financial burden on families with school aged children.

### Yukon's Rural and Urban School Kitchen Spaces Assessment Project

- The Yukon Food for Learning Association has contracted Kobayashi and Zedda Architects to produce a comprehensive report on the state of kitchens in all Yukon schools.
- The consultant will develop a functional space plan and identify the requirements for a commercial kitchen space needed to deliver a full-service food program delivery model in Yukon schools where student meals can be prepped on site daily.
- This contract is underway, with an expected completion date of spring 2025.
- This report will inform options for moving forward to enhance school food programs in Yukon schools.
- Upgrading current infrastructure to meet commercial kitchen standards is a complex process that will involve extensive design and planning.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-02-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives**

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Education

Education Agreements: refer to FN02

JEAP Agreement Renewal: refer to FN03

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education works with Yukon First Nations:
  - on a government-to-government basis,
  - at the community level, focusing on education for their citizens and within their Traditional Territory, and
  - collectively, at the Yukon-wide level with various education partners.
- The department will continue to work in partnership with First Nations governments to improve educational outcomes for students through:
  - The Joint Education Action Plan.
  - Community-level Education Agreements that support community priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan.
  - Negotiating and implementing 17.7 agreements and supporting agreements, such as the recently signed Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Letter of Agreement, to strengthen the co-governance of education in Traditional Territories.
  - Responding to the 2019 audit, including the work to Reimagine Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).

## **Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives**

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Education

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

### **Additional response:**

- As of the start of the 2024-25 school year, 11 schools across the Yukon are operated by the First Nation School Board. This marks a historic step in Yukon First Nations' journey to reclaim educational responsibility—a journey that began over 50 years ago with *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*.
- This collaboration between Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon advances reconciliation, supports First Nations students, and enriches all Yukon students with knowledge of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

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

## Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives

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Education

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

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# FN01**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon-wide Initiatives**

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved



#### Value:

- The Department of Education is working with First Nations and educational partners to improve educational programs, services, and outcomes for all Yukon students.

#### Recommended response:

- Yukon First Nation governments are essential partners in supporting First Nations students and fostering all Yukon students' understanding of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- The Department of Education continues to work with individual Yukon First Nation governments on community-level education and funding agreements to improve educational outcomes for First Nation citizens and learners on their traditional territories at local schools.
- For 2025-26, the budget for Education Agreements is \$1.83 million to support Yukon First Nation governments in furthering joint education priorities at the community level.

#### Additional response:

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

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 audit found that the Department of Education has not done enough to collaborate with Yukon First Nations. The Chiefs Committee on Education said

Education needs to collaborate more effectively during the Public Accounts hearing in January 2022.

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### Background:

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

### Other examples of local collaboration:

- The department has worked collaboratively with Yukon First Nations on a number of programs, units, camps, and resources for Yukon schools, including Yukon First Nations Credit policy to support credits for on the land and locally delivered education programs. The grade 5 Indian Residential School unit and the revised

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# FN02**  
**Spring 2025**

## Education Agreements

Education

grade 10 Indian Residential School unit have been finalized and educators received training on the resources this past January and September.

**Approved by:**

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

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Education

#### Value:

- The Department of Education wants to ensure all Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offering all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.

#### Recommended response:

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

## Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

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Education

approximately \$1.83 million to support this work with 14 Yukon First Nations.

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

### Additional response:

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

## **Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal**

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Education

- The First Nation School Board is provided the following funds to support the implementation of the JEAP:
    - \$1.5 million for language teachers in the schools
    - \$853,500 for Yukon First Nation Language Initiatives
    - \$604,965 for Whole Child Initiative
    - \$3.4 million lift for indigenous students
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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

- The four priority areas in the Joint Education Action Plan, or JEAP, remain relevant, and they will continue to be prioritized and addressed through collective and community-level agreements. Those priority areas are:
  - K-12 Culture and Language
  - Authority, Control and Responsibility
  - Sustainability, Supports and Success
  - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap
- The Department of Education combined the two previous Transfer Payment Agreements with the Council of Yukon First Nations (one for Education Initiatives, one for the First Nation Education Commission) and added more resources for JEAP for a one-year term agreement for \$735,000 (up from \$435,000 combined annual amount from the two previous 3-year agreements). This now flows to the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) as per the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) request, instead of CYFN.

### Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal

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Education

- Work continues in this regard, for example:
  - Transfer Payment Agreements with Yukon First Nations, allocating over \$1.83 million among the 14 Yukon First Nations.
  - Signed a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2020 with the Chiefs Committee on Education. The Data Working Group was formed to collaborate and establish arrangements to enable and expedite the sharing of Yukon First Nation student aggregated data for the purpose of improving the delivery of education programs and improving student outcomes.

#### JEAP Renewal Progress

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

## **Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Agreement Renewal**

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Education

- First Nations governments and Government of Yukon approval processes, timelines and next steps were also topics of discussion at the leadership meeting.

### Student performance data reporting

- The Data Sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between CCOE and the Department of Education established a Data Working Group. This group has representation from Yukon First Nations, the Department of Education and CCOE technical staff.
- The MOU has lapsed; however, the Data Working Group continues to meet regularly and continues to share aggregated Yukon First Nation student performance data and to ensure a role for Yukon First Nations in the review and quality assurance process for such data.
- In the past, there have been issues in producing relevant reports on Yukon First Nations student performance data and sharing this data with Yukon First Nations.
- To address these issues and more effectively support Yukon First Nations data requests, the department has developed a Yukon First Nation dashboard containing various datasets. This dashboard has been provided to Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation Education Directorate.
- Department officials are working collaboratively with the Data Working Group and Yukon First Nations, within the ATIPP Act, to develop solutions for sharing data with Yukon First Nations while respecting privacy laws.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## **Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools**

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Education

**JEAP Agreement Renewal – please see FN03**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education continues to deliver language and culture programming in Yukon schools.
- The Government of Yukon allocates \$1.19 million annually to the Yukon Native Language Centre to support Yukon First Nations language revitalization.
- To strengthen language programs in schools, the department supports Yukon First Nations language teachers through a pilot program that allows two teachers to pursue full-time study to improve their language fluency. This aligns with the Breaking Trail Together priority for professional development of Yukon First Nations professionals.
- The department is collaborating with Yukon First Nations on bilateral government-to-government Education Agreements to support the delivery of culture and language in schools.
- Through these discussions, new approaches are being explored to deliver Yukon First Nations language and culture in schools and connect schools with communities. For example, Porter Creek Secondary School is piloting a language coordinator role to enhance language, culture, and land-based learning opportunities within the school and community.

## **Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools**

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Education

### **Additional response:**

- In collaboration with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada, the department is advancing the Joint Education Action Plan.
- These efforts include sharing resources with Yukon First Nations and fulfilling obligations for language instruction.
- Through renewal of the Joint Education Action Plan, we are working to ensure Yukon First Nation Language Teachers receive equitable support and recognition within our education system. This has been identified as a priority for all parties.
  - Until that legislation can be amended, I would like to note that over the past decade, the wage scale disparity between teachers and Yukon First Nations Language Teachers has significantly reduced to between 5-7%. This progress reflects the ongoing commitment to recognizing and valuing the crucial role that Yukon First Nations Language Teachers play in our educational system.
  - Encouragingly, approximately one-third of our language teachers are also certified teachers. As a result, they receive compensation on the teacher pay scale.
- The department is reviewing the Yukon First Nations K-12 Language Framework and Action Plan to align efforts in supporting language revitalization and fostering appreciation among future teachers and learners.
- The recently approved *Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning Policy* may provide additional pathways for language learning.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

### Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools

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Education

- Enhancing language and culture education is a priority and a key pillar of the Joint Education Action Plan.
  - The Office of the Auditor General of Canada's 2019 audit report recommended that the department do more to support the inclusion of Yukon First Nation cultures and languages in schools.
  - FNSB and CYFN have requested amendments Education Act to include in the definition of 'teacher' to include First Nations Language Teachers and provide them with the same level recognition as other teachers.
- 

#### Background:

- The JEAP renewal presents an opportunity to discuss funding for language, heritage and culture with Yukon First Nations and federal ministers. This issue also aligns with discussions and interests from other provinces and territories.
- The Department of Education is developing a funding strategy for Indigenous education based on the Joint Education Action Plan, Collaboration Framework, and Education Agreements with Yukon First Nations.
- The Council of Ministers of Education of Canada's (CMEC) Indigenous Education Plan 2023-27 outlines priorities on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. Recent discussions include shared provincial and territorial interest in increased federal funding support for Indigenous languages.
- The Yukon government transferred the Yukon Native Language Centre to the Council of Yukon First Nations in 2018 to aid in the revitalization of First Nation languages, with support for First Nations language teachers.
- The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People includes a foundational value: "Culture, Language, Spirituality and Relationship with the Land", which guides work in this area.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-04**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- Educators involve parents and students in the learning process by providing ongoing, meaningful feedback to support student growth.
- Students are assessed on the learning standards outlined in the curriculum and are supported in improving their proficiency in each standard.
- All school authorities – the Department of Education, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and the First Nation School Board—follow the same K-12 curriculum and reporting structure. However, classroom approaches to meeting and assessing learning objectives may vary.
- Students in grades 10 to 12 continue to receive percentage scores and transcripts to support post-secondary school applications.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

further changes with respect to literacy and numeracy assessments as per the strategies.

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

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**For Gender Identity and Health Curriculum see Tab CU05**

**For Locally Developed Courses see Tab CU09**

### Value:

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

### Recommended response:

- All schools are expected to teach all learning standards outlined in the curriculum, including those related to sexual health.
- Curricular support resources approved for use in Yukon public schools are evaluated based on several factors, including alignment with public school policies and the Education Act, curricular fit, and appropriateness of content for age and grade level.
- Parents who wish to not have their child receive the recommended classroom instruction for sexual health topics must arrange alternatives to meeting these learning standards in consultation with the school.
- Such alternatives must be agreed upon by the student, their parents or guardians, and the school, and students are required to demonstrate their knowledge of the learning standards through an approved process.

### Additional response:

- Catholic schools may provide religious education programs and lessons that supplement the curriculum with the teachings of Catholic

values; however, they must not provide teachings about sexual orientation or gender identity that conflict with Yukon laws or Department of Education policies.

- The Catholic Episcopal Corporation and the Department of Education remain committed to reviewing resources and supporting educators in delivering Catholic education in compliance with departmental policies.
- Catholic schools have the right to offer religious education programs and lessons that teach Catholic values and worldviews. However, they must not deliver teachings that contradict the Department's sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) policy.
- Support for educators teaching Catholic worldviews includes helping them present concepts (such as marriage) in a comparative way—informing students about the Catholic perspective and others, without requiring students to conform to any particular view.
- This expectation was made clear to the Religious Coordinator at St. Francis, who agreed to ensure Catholic educators at the school are aware of and supported in this approach when teaching the Morals and Ethics course.
- There is no place for homophobic or transphobic teachings in the Yukon's public school system.
- The Department of Education takes seriously all concerns raised about the content of educational resources available for use in Yukon schools

## Curriculum Resource Material at Catholic Schools

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Education

and addresses them in accordance with established guidelines and policies.

- The Department is committed to ensuring that multiple worldviews are taught in a respectful way that supports SOGI policies and inclusion for all students.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- During budget debate on April 25, 2025, the opposition challenged Minister McLean regarding the approval of the Catholic resource *In Search of the Good* and cited passages from the textbook that appeared to conflict with SOGI policy.
- A letter from Bishop Vila addressed to all parents and caregivers with children in Catholic schools was sent to Catholic school principals and superintendents for distribution. While the letter was dated September 17, 2024, it was distributed through the school messenger system in mid-January 2025. The letter stated the Diocese was working in collaboration with the Department of Education to supply a Catholic sexual health program and curricula, as the current public-school curriculum, “are not approved by the Catholic Church and do not teach nor promote Catholic teachings, values, and morals on matters of human sexuality and relationships.”

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### Background:

- The department provides schools with a catalogue of curriculum resources, all of which are approved for use in Yukon schools.
- The bishop’s letter mistakenly referenced the Better to Know website as a Yukon Curriculum Resource. The website is a public sexual health resource available to people of all ages that contains a link to Yukon Curriculum Resources for schools found on the yukon.ca website.
- Classroom resources to support the instruction of the Comprehensive Sexual Health Education curriculum, are available on the yukon.ca website at [Comprehensive Sexual Health Education](#) under Teachers’ Resources. These resources outline the age-appropriate lessons available for each grade level.



## Curriculum Resource Material at Catholic Schools

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Education

- Grade K to 3
  - Grade 4
  - Grade 5
  - Grade 6
  - Grade 7
  - Grade K to 12
  - Comprehensive sexual health education overview
- Yukon schools have some autonomy to select secondary curricular resources, but these materials must be approved by Yukon administrators.
- As for all learning areas, parents or caregivers may arrange for alternative delivery of the curriculum, as exemplified in our homeschooling option.
- Alternative delivery does not allow students to “opt-out” of learning about these topics. It is expected that students will, in consultation with their school, demonstrate their knowledge of the learning standard(s).

### Purchase of Curriculum Resources

- The Department of Education has been providing Catholic Schools with resources to support the teaching of the K-12 curriculum, including specific materials for the Catholic program.
- As an example, the department has provided resources to support an approved locally developed course that includes Catholic context.
  - The Department of Education has guidelines and procedures for developing locally developed courses.
  - These guidelines include assessing personal and systemic biases and ensuring education materials address the following questions:
    - Are various viewpoints represented fairly and respectfully?
    - If a viewpoint is favoured, does it do so without invalidating or discriminating against other viewpoints?
    - Does the resource “inform but not conform” regarding Catholic teachings and worldviews?

## Curriculum Resource Material at Catholic Schools

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Education

- A school board/authority and the Minister (or delegate) must approve locally developed courses as per the Education Act.
- The department has also provided a textbook to support the teaching of the Catholic Elementary curriculum, as requested by school administrators and teachers.
- The curriculum materials budget for each school is determined based on the number of students, with allocations varying by grade level. An additional funding adjustment is provided for dual-track programs, such as religious or language programs. For Catholic schools, this adjustment includes a \$2.00 per-student allocation specifically for the purchase of Bibles.
- For the 2023-24 school year, \$1,898 was budgeted for bible purchases for the three Catholic schools.
- The purchase of the bibles came from the Curriculum Material Credit Allocation (CMCA).
  - This budget is managed by the Coordinator, Resource Services, but spending is authorized by the school administrators.

### 2024 textbook conflict history

- In March 2024, the Department of Education heard concerns in an anonymous letter that a textbook being used by St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School did not align with the Department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy.
- After a thorough review with St. Francis staff members and a Curriculum Consultant from the Department, the textbook, that was mentioned in the anonymous letter, "Called to Happiness: Guiding Ethical Principles", was not recommended as some language conflicted with the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy.
- A new textbook was selected for classroom use in Grade 12 Morals and Ethics course at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School.
  - The new textbook, "In Search of the Good," is published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# CU02**  
**Spring 2025**

## Curriculum Resource Material at Catholic Schools

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-28](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### Value

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

### Recommended response:

- Last fall, the Department of Education announced the approval and introduction of the *Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural, and Language Learning Policy*.
- This policy recognizes and honours Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge Keepers as teachers of their culture, language, history, and traditions.
- It provides a pathway for Yukon First Nations governments to plan and deliver courses or experiences that allow students to earn credits towards the Indigenous graduation requirement outlined in British Columbia's graduation program.

### Additional response:

- The policy came into effect on September 30, 2024, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. It represents a significant step in advancing truth and reconciliation and strengthens the role of Yukon First Nations in shaping education programs for Yukon students.
- Yukon First Nations will have full control over who delivers and assesses student learning for these credits.
- This policy responds to long-standing calls to action, including those outlined in *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* and reports such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.
- Yukon students must continue to meet all other programming requirements in British Columbia's graduation program.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

### Background:

- The desire of Yukon First Nations to deliver their own programming for credit was affirmed at the May 2023 First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) meeting, where an early draft of the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural and Language Learning Policy was shared and substantive feedback on the draft policy was received and incorporated.
- In July 2023, the British Columbia Ministry of Education released a new process for First Nations in British Columbia to develop First Nations Authorized courses, or to apply to be providers of “external credentials”.
- Based on this new process, conversations took place between Education and the British Columbia Ministry of Education to develop a credit-granting process to allow Yukon First Nations to develop and deliver education programming for credit that would also meet the British Columbia requirements.
- A revised Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning Policy was shared with FNEC at their February 8, 2024 meeting, and additional feedback was received and incorporated into the policy.
- At the FNEC meeting on May 9, 2024 the decision was made to move forward with finalizing the policy.
- On September 27, 2024 the President of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals requested the department to hold off on implementation of the policy.
- The department responded, on September 27, 2024, that the department will be moving forward with implementation because this policy does not impact the

employment relationship or increase workload of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals bargaining unit members.

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

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-31**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### First Nation Programming in Schools

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Education

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- Culturally inclusive and welcoming learning environments are essential for supporting student success.
- All Yukon schools follow the *Cultural Inclusion Standards in All Schools*, developed by the First Nations Education Commission.
- Yukon's kindergarten to grade 12 curriculum is designed to reflect the local context of each community.
- In October 2024, the department was pleased to launch the grade 5 Indian Residential School unit, which supports grade 5 Social Studies by teaching the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools in the Yukon and across Canada.
- To ensure educators are prepared to deliver this sensitive but essential content, the unit's release included a mandatory three-day training session for teachers.
- The grade 10 Indian Residential School unit was also revised in October 2024, and educators participated in a training session to support its implementation.
- Both units were developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations Elders, Knowledge Keepers, residential school survivors, and educators.

## First Nation Programming in Schools

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Education

### Additional response:

- The Department of Education has introduced the Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Cultural, Language, and Traditional Knowledge Learning Policy.
  - This policy gives Yukon First Nations governments full control to develop, deliver, and assess accredited learning, enabling students to earn up to 12 elective credits toward graduation.
- The department continues to build relationships with Yukon First Nations and collaborates to create additional materials, resources, and supports for culturally inclusive programming.
- Ensuring Yukon educators have access to professional learning opportunities and resources to incorporate this learning into their classrooms remains a departmental priority and is key to delivering the modernized curriculum successfully.
- Education consultants are available to schools to provide guidance on localizing resources that reflect Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.
- The First Nation School Board plays a vital role in guiding new and culturally rich approaches to delivering K-12 curriculum and programming, which can benefit all Yukon schools.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

- Recommendation #109 from the 2019 audit is: "The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient



### First Nation Programming in Schools

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Education

classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages.”

- The Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives branch and the Curriculum and Assessment unit have worked with Yukon First Nations to develop curriculum materials and deliver training and support to Yukon educators relating to how students learn about Yukon First Nations cultures, languages, and histories, such as:
  - A new grade 5 unit about residential schools launched in October 2024 with supported training.
  - Draft sample units for K-12 educators, integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
  - Updated grade 10 Residential School Unit has completed training for grade 10 teachers.
  - Many approved locally developed courses that give value to the local context of communities.
- The Cultural Inclusion Standards in all Yukon Schools are being integrated into School Growth Plans.
  - They were developed at the 2016 Yukon First Nation Education Summit and approved by the First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) in April 2016 and have been introduced to school principals. School principals participated in discussions and planning for the standards at the 2017 Yukon First Nation Education Summit.
- The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) has worked with the department over the past few years on several initiatives related to the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP), including these standards.
- In September 2021, a new Indigenous Academy started operating out of F.H. Collins Secondary – a cooperative effort between the school, school council, First Nations, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.
- The Academy is based on a similar program from School District 23 in British Columbia and is a "learning community" where several core subjects are taught through a primarily Indigenous worldview with wrap-around supports provided for students.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# CU04**  
**Spring 2025**

## First Nation Programming in Schools

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-27](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## **Gender Identity and Health Curriculum**

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Education

### **SOGI – Inclusion: refer to SP12**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- Yukon's Physical and Health Education curriculum includes age-appropriate learning standards on physical literacy, health and active living, social and community health, and mental wellbeing.
- The Department of Education works with educators, health experts, and community members to ensure the use of up-to-date practices that create inclusive school environments for all students.
- Families are encouraged to learn about curriculum topics and are invited to discuss these topics with their child's teacher or school principal.

#### **Additional response - Curriculum:**

- Students begin learning about sexual identity in Grade 4, with lessons covering the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty, including those related to sexuality and sexual identity.
- Teachers receive resources and professional learning to ensure they use appropriate language and best practices for teaching these topics inclusively.
- Yukon's curriculum, resources, and professional learning align with the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy, which promotes respectful and appropriate behaviour for all students, including 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

## Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

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Education

### Additional response – SOGI policy:

- To further support 2SLGBTQIA+ students, the Department of Education updated its SOGI Policy, as part of the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred the updated SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.
  - This review asks the Advocate's Office to assess the policy's current impact and implementation and to make recommendations for ensuring inclusive and safe school communities for all students, staff, and community members of all sexual orientations and gender identities.
- The department continues to engage with students, educators, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community to implement and evaluate the updated SOGI Policy effectively.

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### Context – this may be an issue because:

- Questions about the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy are expected.

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### Background:

- Yukon government initiatives that relate to gender identity and safety in schools include:
  - The LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan committed the Department of Education to updating the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.
  - The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People aims to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit+ People.
  - The Department of Education's current work is to update its policies and processes on safe and caring schools.

### Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

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Education

- The work of the Communities of Inquiry in response to the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and the Review on School Attendance are creating new definitions of Inclusive and Special Education.
- The department's continuing partnership with ARC Foundation, a charitable foundation supporting SOGI-inclusive educational practices in K-12 school settings; to continue to implement the tools and resources of the SOGI 1,2,3 program to create more inclusive schools for students.

#### Curriculum

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

#### Letter from Bishop to school families

- Bishop Vila sent a letter to Catholic school families (via School Messenger) in January 2025. The letter says the department is working on a Catholic sexual health program. It also says parents can opt out of sexual health classroom instruction for their children.

## Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

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Education

- At this time, the Department of Education and the Catholic Diocese have not entered into conversations about alternate sexual health curricula for Catholic schools.
- The bishop's letter mistakenly referenced the Better to Know website as a Yukon Curriculum Resource. The website is a public sexual health resource available to people of all ages that contains a link to Yukon Curriculum Resources for schools found on the yukon.ca website.
- Classroom resources to support the instruction of the Comprehensive Sexual Health Education curriculum, are available on the yukon.ca website at [Comprehensive Sexual Health Education](#) under Teachers' Resources. These resources outline the age-appropriate lessons available for each grade level.

### Resources

- All schools are provided with, and have access to, the Better to Know curricular support resources created by Health Promotions, Health and Social Services, in collaboration with multiple partners.
- Multimedia teaching resources for grades K to 3 are available for use in Yukon Schools.
- Grades 4-7 Better to Know resources, previously known as Sexual Health and Relationship Education (SHARE), were previously reviewed. The revised resources were available to teachers beginning in the 2022-23 school year.

### Professional learning

- All Yukon Education schools that had a Professional Development Day on August 17, 2023, received professional development in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Inclusive educational practices to support their roles and responsibilities in the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy.
- The Departments of Education and Health and Social Services follow best practices in comprehensive sexual health education as taught by Options for Sexual Health (OPT BC) in Vancouver. Health and Social Services employs Certified Sexual Health Educators who have been trained through OPT BC. Many Yukon educators have received training for teaching classroom lessons from Certified Sexual Health Educators.

### Gender Identity and Health Curriculum

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Education

- Since September 2017, Education and Health and Social Services have held workshops at the majority of Yukon schools. Topics included:
  - Better to Know, or BTK (previously SHARE).
  - Comprehensive sexual health curricular competencies for various elementary grade levels; and
  - Grade K-12 comprehensive health learning standards.
- We have organized and delivered (and continue to do so) professional development workshops open to all Yukon educators on sexual health education in collaboration with Health Promotions at Health and Social Services. We have also worked with Health and Social Services to deliver professional development workshops to the nursing community who are involved in K-12 education.
- Educators most recently engaged in professional development on sexual health resources in January 2024.
- We have implemented new training, developed through work on the Safer School Action Plan, in all schools to enhance student safety and raise awareness about appropriate adult behaviour.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-13**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Graduation – High School Adult Diploma**

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Education

### **Value:**

- Adults have options to attain a high school diploma in the Yukon.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education is aware that as of March 31, 2024, Canada's General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency tests are no longer available.
- Yukoners who are 18 years old or older can achieve their high school diploma. There are two paths to consider depending on the age of the learner.
- An adult learner aged 18 to 20 can earn a regular British Columbia Dogwood graduation diploma by taking courses at: Aurora Virtual School, the Individual Learning Centre, Yukon University or a different learning institution. Adult learners under the age of 21 have the right to attend public school and work towards a Dogwood graduation diploma.
- An adult learner over 21 years of age can earn a British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma, or Adult Dogwood, through courses at these same institutions.
- To get started, adult learners can either contact their previous high school guidance counsellor or contact a curriculum consultant at the Department of Education.

### **Additional response:**

- Yukon University, Aurora Virtual School and the Individual Learning Centre offer programs to help adult learners prepare for post-secondary academic studies or take courses towards attaining an Adult or regular Dogwood Graduation Diploma.



### Graduation – High School Adult Diploma

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Education

- Yukon adult learners, aged 18 to 21, looking to upgrade their skills for better employment opportunities and life options can access online courses through the Aurora Virtual School or at the Individual Learning Centre in Whitehorse.
  - The University Access Pathways program at Yukon University is also an option for adult learners to upgrade their skills for employment opportunities or to access post-secondary academic studies.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is a lack of awareness of how adult learners in the Yukon can access a high school diploma outside of a regular public school. The 2024 federal cancellation of General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency tests may raise concerns.
- 

#### **Background:**

- Adult learners under the age of 21 have the right to attend public school and work towards a Dogwood graduation diploma.
- Adults over the age of 21, who wish to continue learning, may request permission from the department to attend regular public school, or take courses from a different institution that offers online options or Yukon University.
- All adult learners are encouraged to contact either their previous high school guidance counsellor or a curriculum consultant at the Department of Education to help them create a path forward.
- The Adult Dogwood diploma program combines public secondary and post-secondary courses. To graduate, adults (21+) need:
  - Language Arts 12
  - Math 11 or 12
  - Three additional Grade 12 electives (or Grade 11 Social Studies and two Grade 12 electives)

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# CU06**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Graduation – High School Adult Diploma**

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Education

- Students must complete at least three courses after enrolling in the Adult Dogwood Graduation Program.
- Adult Dogwood learners are not required to complete the Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessments in order to graduate.
- The British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma was introduced in the 1960's under British Columbia's Adult Basic Education program.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Graduation – High School Dogwood Degree**

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Education

### **Adult Graduation Diploma (High School): refer to CU06**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- To graduate with a Dogwood Diploma, students in grades 10 to 12 must follow the British Columbia Graduation Program, including completing four credits in an Indigenous-focused course.
- All Yukon school authorities—Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and Yukon private schools—follow the same graduation requirements.
- Students must earn a minimum of 80 course credits and complete the British Columbia Provincial Graduation Assessments in numeracy and literacy to graduate with a Dogwood Diploma.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Indigenous-focused course graduation requirement took effect in the 2023-24 school year, and all Yukon schools ensure students have access to courses that meet this requirement.
- A key graduation component for all students, is completing the British Columbia literacy and numeracy assessments in grades 10 and 12, which evaluate overall skills in literacy and numeracy rather than proficiency in a specific course.
- Changes to the grade 10 Social Studies curriculum, to include education about the Holocaust and genocide, will be taking effect in the 2025-26 school year. Yukon has already supported teacher training on these topics in anticipation of the update.

## Graduation – High School Dogwood Degree

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Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

### Graduation – High School Dogwood Degree

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Education

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended Response:

- Teaching literacy is complex, and no single approach works for all students.
- Educators need a well-developed 'toolbox' of strategies and approaches informed by current research and data.
- The implementation of the Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy, announced in fall 2023, is ongoing.
- Both the Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy and the First Nation School Board's Literacy Strategy place a strong emphasis on the structured literacy approach.
- I'm pleased to see that the Yukon has recently shown improvement in literacy, as demonstrated by the grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessment data.
- As these literacy strategies continue to be implemented, I expect we will see further improvements in literacy outcomes.

#### Additional Responses:

- Literacy support teachers are in place in many K-7 schools to enhance classroom instruction.
- New resources have been introduced to support the implementation of structured literacy approaches in primary and intermediate grades.

- Classroom support, professional development, and training sessions are ongoing this school year to help educators implement structured literacy programming effectively.
  - A rural education consultant is providing ongoing literacy support to Yukon Education-operated rural schools.
  - The Department of Education remains committed to supporting educators by offering training and resources to strengthen their instructional practices.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions about Yukon's literacy approach have been raised in a Public Accounts hearing, due to a submission from Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, as well as in past budget debates.
  - While literacy support teachers have already been implemented in many schools, there are delays as we support the collective bargaining process of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP).
- 

#### **Background:**

##### The Yukon Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy Working Group

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

### Implementation status

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

### Literacy and Curriculum

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

### Reading Recovery

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



### Literacy

Education

- Schools have a choice whether to utilize the centrally operated FTE for Reading Recovery and/or Early Literacy support teacher.
- The use of the centrally operated FTE will be guided by the literacy strategy.

#### Tracking literacy progress

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

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value

- The Department of Education values the importance of offering courses for students that respond to the needs of the local community and First Nations.

### Recommended response:

- Yukon's curriculum, based on British Columbia's, is designed to allow teachers to adapt and incorporate local and Indigenous content from kindergarten through grade 12.
- The department recognizes the significant value of local and Yukon First Nations content in education and supports students' access to locally developed courses throughout their educational journey.
- I am pleased to share that the First Nation School Board has developed its first locally developed course on Food Sovereignty.
- This course is an outstanding example of curriculum grounded in community, traditional knowledge, and practical experience.

### Additional response:

- Locally developed courses are often created by Yukon teachers, frequently in collaboration with Yukon First Nations.
- Teachers are encouraged and supported to use culturally inclusive approaches in delivering all courses.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

- Current approved locally developed courses include but are not limited to: Food Sovereignty, Ancestral Technology 10 & 11, First Fish 10, Climate Change 10 and 12, Yukon First Nation Leadership 10, and Outdoor Education 10.

### Locally Developed Courses

Education

- On April 17, 2024, the Act to Amend the Education Act (Bill No. 307) passed by unanimous consent and removed the 20 per cent limit for locally developed courses.
- These courses, no longer limited to 20 per cent of a student's educational program, are applicable towards elective graduation credits, and some can also meet the Indigenous studies graduation requirement and the grade 11 Arts Education or Applied, Design, Skills, and Technology requirement.
- The Department of Education has guidelines and procedures for developing locally developed courses.
- The development of a locally developed course may vary in cost depending on the course; it also takes human resources and time.
- A school board/authority and the Minister (or delegate) must approve locally developed courses as per the Education Act.
- Resources to support the delivery of these courses are covered under the school's budget and/or the Curriculum and Assessment Resource Budget for Yukon Education Authority operated schools.
- First Nation School Board and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools that develop courses will utilize their budgets to support the delivery of the course within their schools.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

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

### Recommended Response:

- Addressing student numeracy needs is a complex task, and no single approach or resource can address the many factors influencing numeracy outcomes.
- Yukon Education's numeracy strategy aligns with the First Nation School Board's strategy and provides a framework for improving numeracy outcomes across the territory.
- In response to a recommendation in the strategy, a K-12 numeracy education consultant has been hired to support educators with best practices for numeracy instruction and to lead the strategy's implementation.
- The department is very pleased to see that the Yukon has shown improvements in numeracy proficiencies, as demonstrated in the grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessment results.

### Additional Responses:

- Numeracy support teachers are in place in many K-7 schools to enhance classroom instruction.
- A rural education consultant provides ongoing support to Yukon Education-operated rural schools, complementing the efforts of the numeracy consultant.
- Following recommendations in the numeracy strategy, several Yukon Education-operated schools offered numeracy camps during the

summer for students entering grades 4 to 6. These camps provided an experiential and holistic approach to numeracy instruction.

- The Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy working group has recommended strengthening culturally responsive approaches to teaching numeracy while continuing to explore numeracy interventions and screeners to better inform teaching practices. This work has begun this school year, with additional recommendations expected.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

- On September 8, 2023, the Department of Education released A Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy and Plan.
- Implementing new numeracy support for teachers in K to 7 schools may be delayed as collective bargaining concludes with the Yukon Association of Yukon Education Professionals.
- While collective bargaining was underway, the numeracy consultant and other educational consultants continued to support educators in their classrooms.
- Training and support for Mathology, a newer mathematics resource, has been ongoing, in collaboration with the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone de Yukon. The working group supports the continued use of this resource.
- Most recently, teachers engaged with professional learning on best numeracy practices at the January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 professional development day.

### Tracking literacy and numeracy progress

- The BOEHM and Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessments provide data on student's numeracy at primary levels.

### Numeracy

Education

- The BOEHM assessment will be discontinued and Education is collaborating with YFNED and FNSB on alternative assessments.
- The Mathology resource includes assessments for teachers to use, with instructional supports to address any gaps in student learning.

#### Assessments and data

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

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education actively plans and provides professional development opportunities for all Yukon educators, aiming to improve student outcomes by supporting professional growth.
- Educators participate in training and professional development sessions each school year. These professional development sessions include mandatory training on Department of Education policies and sessions on Yukon First Nation history, culture, and beliefs; numeracy; literacy; Ready-to-Learn; sexual health education, Universal Design for Learning, and more.
- The department allocates \$475,000 annually to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to support professional development activities, curriculum implementation, and other key priorities.

### **Additional response:**

- Throughout the school year, the department collaborates with various partners to provide comprehensive professional development for educational staff.
- Training topics include Ready-to-Learn schools, the Safer Schools Action Plan, mental health and wellness, sexual health, literacy, and numeracy.
- During the most recent professional development day in January 2025, educators participated in sessions on topics such as cyber security and Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP). Additional professional development options were available, focusing

## **Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training**

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Education

on literacy, numeracy, and specialized teaching areas such as industrial arts and music.

- In January 2025, educational assistants from Areas 1 and 2 engaged in separate professional learning tailored to their specific roles and responsibilities.
- FNSB and CSFY chose to provide their own training for EAs on this day.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background**

- Under ss. 46 (2) of the *Education Act*, in each school year there must be: 15 hours for professional development for school staff and 15 hours for non-instructional purposes specified by a School Board or School Council for its school.
- These hours are equivalent to three department-led days, and three School Board or School Council-led days, each school year.
- The department's Curriculum and Assessment consultants plan various sessions during the department-led professional development days.
- Upon request from a school, the Curriculum and Assessment consultants are available to facilitate professional development during school-led professional development days.
- The most recent professional development day was in January 2025. Educators engaged in a variety of learning in areas of literacy, numeracy, specialized sessions for music, trades, and physical education educators; along with ready to learn training.



## **Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training**

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Education

- The January PD Day offered educational assistants' sessions specific to their roles. These sessions allowed EAs to choose sessions including, but not limited to:
  - Session from Autism Yukon
  - Session from Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon
  - Session from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of the Yukon
  - Session on trauma informed care
  - Session on the ready to learn approach
  - Session on sensory regulation
  - Session on ADHD
  - Session on anxiety in schools
  - Session on assistive technology
  - Session on working with students who engage in self-injurious behaviours,
  - Session on augmentative and alternative communication for students who need speech and language supports
  - Sessions on supporting students who live with type one diabetes
  - Session on gross motor skill development
  - Session on supporting students who are deaf and hard of hearing
  - Session on supporting students who are blind or low vision
  - Session on best practice methods to teach students new skills
- Under Article 12 of the YAEP collective agreement, the department contributes \$475,000 annually to the Professional Development Fund for training and development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.
  - A Joint Trust Fund Management Committee with YAEP and department members (including the ADM of Schools, and Director Curriculum & Assessment) sets the parameters for eligible activities for Deputy Minister approval each year, with funding administered by the YAEP's Professional Development Committee.
- Support for Indigenous language fluency is offered throughout the year, including through courses, resources and site visits offered through Yukon Native Language Centre. For example, there was a 2023 workshop that offered three days of

### Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training

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Education

immersive on-the-land language activities and presentations on the deep connections between land and language.

- A Community of Inquiry, formed as part of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education, has been exploring ways to enhance inclusive practices in classrooms and apply a culturally based perspective.
  - We are currently reviewing recommendations from this Community of Inquiry to determine the best strategies for future implementation through professional development.

#### Professional Development Catholic Schools

- There is a committee that collaboratively develops professional development for the Catholic schools, and they organize one annual professional development day.
- Membership on the PD committee for the Catholic schools typically includes Religious Education Coordinators, at least one administrator, teachers, and often a clergy member.
- Annually, the three Catholic schools in Whitehorse organize a joint professional development (PD) day. The event is supported by school councils, who allocate one of their three non-instructional days for this purpose.
- This committee is responsible for planning the day and selecting its theme.
- Curriculum and Assessment consultants are not involved in the planning or implementation of Catholic school-led professional development days.
- Typical practice includes a mass, often a mass is scheduled for the start of the PD Day.
- While attendance at mass is not a professional development requirement, staff have been encouraged to attend by the professional development committee and school administrators as educators in Catholic Separate Schools.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-01**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The Department of Education provides all early kindergarten to grade 12 students with a modern curriculum that follows best practices from across Canada and the world while incorporating the Yukon's context and Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing, and being.

### Recommended response:

- All three school authorities – Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – follow the same curriculum.
- The curriculum incorporates core competencies, which include intellectual, personal, social, and emotional proficiencies.
- It emphasizes understanding and applying concepts rather than memorizing isolated facts.

### Additional response:

- The curriculum is student-centred, focusing on hands-on, personalized learning that integrates career and financial education with applied skills, design, and technology.
- Flexible learning environments are tailored to local contexts through place-based education, with collaboration from Yukon First Nations and schools to develop community-specific courses.
- Literacy and numeracy are integrated across all subjects and not limited to English and mathematics.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# CU12**  
**Spring 2025**

## Yukon's Curriculum

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-28](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Business Continuity - Emergency Preparedness (Strike Action)**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

### **Additional response:**

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

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Matters regarding continuity of services, specifically closure of schools, are a public concern. As such, the Department of Education developed a business continuity plan to address possible labour disruptions.

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### **Background:**

- A Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals was ratified on January 23, 2025 and will be in effect until June 30, 2027. The previous Collective Agreement expired on June 30, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement between Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Yukon Employees Union expired on December 31, 2024.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR01**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Business Continuity - Emergency Preparedness (Strike Action)**

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-28](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Community Housing for Teachers**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- Working within available resources, the Department of Education assists staff in securing housing in rural communities. This is challenging and complex work as housing supply is limited, especially in rural communities.
- As of January 9, 2025, there are 51 Yukon Housing Corporation units in the communities leased to teachers, across all three school authorities.
- An additional three units are leased by the department and sublet to teachers in a rural community. As well, three additional units are leased by the department for the First Nations School Board from Yukon Housing Corporation for short-term education staff accommodation needs in Pelly Crossing, Ross River and Old Crow.
- All other staff have secured private housing, which they either rent or have purchased themselves.

### **Additional response:**

- Teachers' ability to receive extensions on staff housing gives them security and confidence.
  - The Department of Education, Yukon Housing Corporation and the Public Service Commission created a solution in alignment with policy, where the department will recommend extensions annually on behalf of any teachers subject to renewal.



## Community Housing for Teachers

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Education

- This solution ensures that teachers will not receive notices of term end and supports the department's rural recruitment and retention strategy.
  - A review of the policy's effectiveness is currently underway by the Public Service Commission and the Yukon Housing Corporation.
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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

- The Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) manages Yukon government staff housing units in accordance with GAM Policy 3.30 Staff Accommodation.
- The policy for staff housing was revised in May 2019 with respect to eligibility, tenancy agreements, duration, rental rates, and assignment.
- In communities outside Whitehorse, there may be staff units provided by YHC. If this is not available, staff are required to find their own private accommodation.
- For communities that do have private market housing, we work with the school principal and contacts in that community to refer staff to available private housing.
- When YHC staff housing is not available in a community the department may provide an employee with improvements on terms and conditions of employment for a specific period (for example, rent subsidy or additional relocation assistance). The department agrees to consult with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- As of January 9, 2025, the number of Education employees, including all three school authorities, leasing staff housing in Yukon communities is as follows:

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR02**  
**Spring 2025**

## Community Housing for Teachers

Education

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

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-23**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The ongoing national labour shortage and limited housing options, particularly in rural communities, continue to impact overall school staffing recruitment efforts.
- For the 2025–26 school year, the Department of Education is taking many strategic recruitment actions:
  - Advertising was placed on Yuwin, Employment Central, LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
  - Department of Education officials attended the following career fairs:
    - Simon Fraser University on September 9, 2024,
    - Lakehead Orillia Faculty of Education on November 8, 2024,
    - Laurentian University on January 20, 2025,
    - University of Alberta on January 22, 2025,
    - University of British Columbia on January 24, 2025,
    - The Bachelor's Degree of Education/Master's Degree of Education Job Search Fair which features Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, St. Francis Xavier University and Université Sainte-Anne on January 25-26, 2025,
    - University of Regina on January 27, 2025,
    - Université de Moncton and University of New Brunswick on February 5-6, 2025, and

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Virtual information sessions with Queen's and Nipissing Universities and the WestCoast Career Fair, a virtual fair for students from Simon Fraser University, University of Victoria, and University of British Columbia.
- The Department of Education's Human Resources team will attend an Outdoor Education Job Fair and Conference in Banff, Alberta in May 2025.
- These steps support our recruitment efforts.
- The Department of Education works to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- On November 13, 2024, the department launched a recruitment video which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
  - This video will be used as part of recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities in French Immersion, Pre- and Post-Intensive French, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- In April 2025, the department will launch two recruitment videos which highlight Yukon Education programming across the Yukon.
  - These videos will be used as part of our recruitment marketing efforts to promote educator opportunities.
- The CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million for a three-year commitment from 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26 to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon.
- As per the CASA, the department will also provide a one-year training plan program for educational assistants and teachers on call in

## School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

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Education

collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, LDAY Centre for Learning, and Autism Yukon.

- The department is dedicated to working collaboratively and in the best interests of both Yukon learners and Yukon educators. This includes hearing diverse perspectives, considering research and best practices, and exploring different opportunities while considering the needs of Yukoners. The department is committed to getting this work done.
- The Department of Education is streamlining the process that the Teacher Qualification Board uses to formally place new employees at the appropriate level of the pay grid. The department values the skills and experiences that educators bring, from within and outside of the territory, and constantly seeks to ensure that our processes reflect this throughout every stage of a new employee's journey.

### **Additional response:**

#### 2025-2026 School Educator Recruitment

- To expedite the hiring and onboarding process, the Department of Education's Human Resources branch returned to the Apply to Education recruitment platform, which streamlines job postings to reach the target educator audience and creates a smoother on-boarding process.
- 93% of school boards and authorities across Canada choose Apply to Education as their recruiting platform. This platform will be the primary site for all three school authority educator vacancies.
- During the transition period, there were some educator job postings on both recruitment platforms. This was due to either an extended job posting closing date or an until filled posting.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- The Yukon government career page will redirect applicants to the educator job postings, for all three school authorities, on the Apply to Education site, and will provide instructions on how to apply.

#### Temporary vacancy management

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by administrators, and I commend our administration teams for their ability to effectively adjust where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:
  - temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments,
  - adjustments to student learning groups; and
  - the use of teachers on call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of superintendents to schools under the authority of Yukon Education, or regrouping students, will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.
- If the *Civil Emergency Measures Act* is invoked, employees from areas across the Yukon government could be redeployed to other tasks and responsibilities. Classroom operations in the school system do not constitute an emergency under the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*.
- Departmental central administration or board employees, who are eligible for a Yukon Teaching Certificate, can request a temporary assignment to a teaching position to assist with teacher shortages.

#### Rural recruitment

- Recruitment for education staff and office administration is often a challenge in rural communities.

### School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

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Education

- This is especially true when recruiting for less than full-time positions, which is often the case as per the staffing allocation.
- Staffing allocations are based on the number of students, with special provisions made for small, rural schools.

#### Creation of a new annual rural retention allowance:

- On January 23, 2025, after a successful ratification vote for a new collective agreement, dated July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, a new annual rural retention allowance for all the YAEP bargaining unit members, excluding teachers on call and employees working in Whitehorse, has been implemented for the full three-year period:

Community	Annual Amount
Carcross	\$945
Haines Junction, Teslin, Carmacks	\$1,166
Watson Lake, Dawson City	\$1,785
Mayo, Ross River, Pelly Crossing, Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, Faro	\$3,010
Old Crow	\$13,610

#### Psychological wellbeing

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
  - Health, safety and wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace;

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- An Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
- Conflict Management Services, formerly known as the Respectful Workplace Office, as another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

#### Raising workplace concerns

- Educators who have concerns related to their work should bring them forward through the appropriate channels. These channels include:
  - The school's administrative team
  - The Office of the Superintendents
  - The Human Resources branch of the Department of Education
  - The Yukon Association of Education Professionals

#### Employee supports for Yukon government staff (including educators)

- The employee and family assistance program (EFAP) is provided for all Government of Yukon staff and educators. EFAP can provide all Yukon government employees with confidential, expert support for various personal and workplace challenges.
- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available through Telus Health at 1-844-880-9142 or via the Telus Health One platform.
- Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act (PIDWA) – Employees can raise concerns under this legislation, though the process involves multiple steps. Educators can learn more about their rights and obligations by enrolling in the self-paced online PIDWA for Yukon Government Employees course on YG Learn (Course #1253).
- Conflict Management Services (formerly the Respectful Workplace Office) is available through the Public Service Commission.



### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Investigations Office – Public Service Commission.
- Workplace injury claims – Submit a claim through the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.
- Yukon Association of Education Professionals – Provides support and advocacy for educators.
- Critical Incident Debriefs – Coordinated through the Human Resources branch, Department of Education.

#### Responding to Reports of Harassment from External Parties

- Employees are responsible under the General Administration Manual 3.48 Workplace Health and Safety to report hazards and incidents to their direct supervisors. This includes reports of harassment from external parties.
- The supervisor is responsible for investigating the report with assistance from the human resources branch and Corporate Health and Safety.
- The focus of the investigation is to determine whether harassment may have occurred and the likelihood of it occurring again to determine what mitigations can be established.
- The supervisor and employee both have responsibility to review and adhere to the mitigation strategies.

#### May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day

- The Department of Education is following their established human resource processes to review the matters and address the concerns raised by some of the Committee members. We are looking into the past correspondence to identify what follow-up happened.
- On April 2, 2025, the human resources branch met with the signatories of the May 16, 2023, letter and will take appropriate next steps.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

#### Teachers on call (TOCs)

- As of April 24, 2025, there are 283 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon Education Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 33 pending applications.
  - Please note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.
  - Also note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs have accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education Authority school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of February 16, 2024, there were 220 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon School Authority and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 24 pending applications.
  - Please note that these numbers include the First Nation School Board.
- The department continues to actively recruit teachers on call and recognizes that demand for coverage continues to be a challenge.
- The department continues to evolve its recruitment efforts to attract candidates for teacher on call roles and to support staff in accepting assignments as they are available. For example, the department has enhanced their promotion of teacher on call opportunities specific to each community and are continuing to take steps to improve the experience that teacher on call candidates have throughout each step of the recruitment process.
- The department has increased advertising for TOCs on Yuwin, Employment Central, and other recruitment sites.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- The department sent targeted communications to former teachers on call, retirees, candidates from the Apply to Education registry, and applicants from educational assistant competitions.
- The department is working with leaders in community schools to schedule in-person recruitment days, to promote teacher on call opportunities and provide information to community members who may be interested in applying.
- During the 2023–24 school year, the Department of Education's human resources team partnered with three schools to host school open houses, at Robert Service School in Dawson, and École Selkirk Elementary School and Holy Family Elementary School in Whitehorse.
- For the 2024–25 school year, the department is scheduled to host school open houses at Robert Service School in Dawson.
- The Golden Horn Elementary School Council decided to join a central teacher-on-call open house and not have a school-based open house.

#### Teacher Certification – Internationally Educated Teachers

- Teachers working in Yukon public schools must be certified in the Yukon.
- To obtain certification in Yukon, teachers must have a teacher qualification document from another Canadian jurisdiction. This requirement does not apply for Yukon Native Teacher Education Program or the Bachelor of Education After Degree program at Yukon University.
- Each territory and province in Canada has specific certification requirements, which internationally educated teachers must meet to teach in a Canadian jurisdiction.

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy**

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Education

- Many provinces and territories are participating in Pathways to Teach Canada. This is a platform for internationally educated teachers seeking a license to work as a teacher in Canada.
  - Pathways to Teach Canada gives internationally educated teachers access consistent, fair, transparent and timely access to assessments of training and language proficiency.
  - To be eligible for a Yukon teacher certificate, a teacher must be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or hold a work permit.
  - Internationally educated teachers can reach out to [teachercertification@yukon.ca](mailto:teachercertification@yukon.ca) to discuss options that meet their needs.
  - Because of the Yukon's Teacher Certification Regulations, with the requirement for teachers educated outside of the Yukon to be certified elsewhere before applying, Yukon is an observer member on
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

#### **Background:**

- Teachers on call fill in as needed when staff are absent from work for short periods of time. Teachers on call come from a range of educational backgrounds. They became part of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals in 2018, and their rate of pay is subject to negotiation in collective bargaining.
  - Similar to other jurisdictions across Canada, the department has experienced challenges in hiring qualified teachers.
  - The department does not have rules preventing staff with jobs in one school from applying for other vacancies in the summer, which can result in a “domino effect” of postings. This also affects teachers on call availability, as some teachers on call are successful in competing for vacant positions and are subsequently removed from the teachers on call list.
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## Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT12/HR03

Spring 2025

### School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy

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Education

- Teachers on call were sent from Whitehorse to communities throughout the 2023–24 year to support school needs and have continues to be sent during the 2024–25 school year, as needed.

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-29](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

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

#### Additional response:

- As of April 24, 2025, Yukon Education Authority schools were 98.61% staffed.
- The First Nation School Board is responsible for their own human resource services, including recruitment.
- The department provided schools with their enrollment projections and staffing allocations in March 2025. Based on these projections, and using the Staffing Allocation Handbook, administrators worked with their Superintendent to complete their school's 2025–2026 staffing plans.
- The department has made a significant investment of 81 new full-time positions over three years, between 2023 and 2026.

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

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- The 5.8 full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the 2025-2026 Main Estimates are allocated to Whistle Bend Elementary School, in response to increased student enrolment.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

#### Maximum class sizes

- To provide consistent service levels in all schools, maximum class sizes by grade level are set out in the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals; staffing allocation is primarily based on student enrolment and class sizes.

#### Student population increase:

- An increase in students sometimes requires an increase in staff to maintain consistent service levels across schools. School staffing plans are made after the allocation is received and may result in jobs needing to be posted or for employees to be redeployed.

#### New positions as per CASA:

- CASA committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers and creating new school wellness specialist positions between the 2023–2026 school years.

#### Layoffs:

- There were no layoffs in any Yukon schools, inclusive of First Nation School Board, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and Yukon Education schools during the 2023–2024, 2024-2025, and there will be none for the 2025-2026 school years.
- Any layoffs of employees hired under the *Education Act* will occur in line with the Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, and the approved Layoff Directive.

- The Layoff Directive was agreed to by the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals in February 2024.

### School Staffing Allocation Handbook and allocation formulae:

- The School Staffing Allocation Handbook was developed to allocate teacher and other school staff positions consistently and transparently. Enrolment, school size, grades taught, rural location and programs of choice (French immersion) are factors.
  - To ensure equitable and standard service levels in all Yukon schools, each school receives a base number of FTEs through the allocation formula, regardless of how many students are enrolled at the school.
  - Other resources may be allocated to support specific initiatives, such as Yukon First Nation language teachers, religious education, French programming (Intensive French) and English language learners. These differentiated resource allocations have their own allocation formulas or models.
  - Additional FTEs may be provided to schools to support specific initiatives like literacy, numeracy, and early Kindergarten.

### Reconciliation Staffing:

- The following are prioritized through the staffing allocation handbook:
  - For the 2025–2026 school year, Reconciliation Staffing will continue as recommended by a Community of Inquiry stemming from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
  - The recommendation from the Community of Inquiry aligns with Government of Yukon priorities, such as, Breaking Trail Together, and the People Plan, alongside the department's Joint Education Action Plan.
  - Reconciliation Staffing is a small step to recognize the systemic inequities and colonialist practices that have negatively impacted Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous students. It reallocates the 10.0 FTE of Achievement Equity staffing to recognize schools based on two factors:
    - Those that have significantly above average populations of Yukon First Nations or other Indigenous students; and



# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR04**  
**Spring 2025**

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

- Those schools where multiple Yukon First Nations are represented.

As of March 6, 2025, the 2025-2026 Teacher Allocation by School Authority and School are

Yukon Education Authority - Elementary	
Del Van Gorder School	8.50
Khàtìnas.àxh Community School	9.10
Christ the King Elementary	29.80
Elijah Smith Elementary School	25.30
Golden Horn Elementary School	19.50
Hidden Valley Elementary School	15.00
Holy Family Elementary School	16.00
Jack Hulland Elementary School	25.00
Selkirk Elementary School	31.50
École Whitehorse Elementary School	35.00
Whistle Bend Elementary School	23.20
<b>Elementary School Totals</b>	<b>237.9</b>
Yukon Education Authority - Secondary	
J.V. Clark School	9.30
Robert Service School	21.00
Tantalus Community School	11.00
F.H. Collins Secondary School	55.90
Porter Creek Secondary School	46.80
St. Francis Secondary School	34.80
Wood Street Centre	8.00
Individual Learning Centre	7.00
Aurora Virtual School	7.00
Teen Parent Centre	1.70
Young Offenders Facility	1.00
Youth Achievement Centre	0.50
Yukon School Athletic Association	1.00
<b>Secondary School Totals</b>	<b>205.0</b>
Central Administration	
Itinerant Teachers	4.80
<b>Yukon Education Authority Totals</b>	<b>447.7</b>

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR04**  
**Spring 2025**

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

<b>First Nation School Board</b>	
Chief Zzeh Gittlit School	7.00
Eliza Van Bibber School	9.00
Ghùch Tlâ Community School	10.80
Johnson Elementary School	10.50
Kluane Lake School	2.10
Nelna Bessie John School	2.00
Ross River School	10.60
St. Elias Community School	13.50
Watson Lake Secondary School	10.20
Grey Mountain Primary School	8.20
Takhini Elementary School	15.50
<b>First Nation School Board Totals</b>	<b>99.40</b>

<b>Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon</b>	
École Émilie-Tremblay	18.30
CSSC Mercier	13.90
Programme Confluence	3.00
<b>Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon Totals</b>	<b>35.20</b>

<b>Summary</b>	
Yukon Education Authority	447.7
First Nation School Board	99.4
Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon	35.2
<b>All Three School Authorities</b>	<b>582.3</b>

As of April 24, 2025, the Learning Assistant Teacher and Educational Assistant allocations are:

School	2024-2025 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2024-2025 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)
Aurora Virtual School	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Christ the King Elementary	17.50	19.68	4.0	6.0
Del Van Gorder School	5.00	5.00	0.93	0.93
École Whitehorse Elementary School	11.00	11.00	3.14	5.0

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR04

Spring 2025

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

School	2024-2025 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2024-2025 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)
Elijah Smith Elementary School	21.00	21.40	3.5	5.0
F.H. Collins Secondary School	18.00	20.30	4.60	5.0
Golden Horn Elementary School	9.00	9.00	3.78	3.5
Hidden Valley Elementary School	16.00	15.00	4.02	4.02
Holy Family Elementary School	13.00	15.10	3.8	5.6
Individual Learning Centre	0.00	3.00	0.00	0.00
J.V. Clark School	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.0
Jack Hulland Elementary School	17.00	19.50	5.45	6.0
Khàtinàs.àxh Community School	3.00	3.00	0.84	1.0
Porter Creek Secondary School	16.00	15.50	4.43	3.0
Robert Service School	11.00	10.27	2.00	3.0
Selkirk Elementary School	21.00	25.50	2.74	5.5
St. Francis Secondary School	12.00	14.75	3.00	2.0
Tantalus Community School	8.00	9.00	1.04	2.0
Teen Parent Centre	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whistle Bend Elementary	13.00	15.00	1.50	3.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>213.75</u></b>	<b><u>235.00</u></b>	<b><u>51.27</u></b>	<b><u>62.55</u></b>

School	2024-2025 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2024-2025 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)
Student Support Services	8.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>8.0</u></b>	<b><u>10.0</u></b>	<b><u>0.0</u></b>	<b><u>0.0</u></b>

\*\*CASA EA allocation included in Student Support Services and reassigned to schools to support additional needs of students.

School	2024-2025 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2024-2025 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)
FNSB - All Schools	46.75	46.75	11.38	14.38
CSFY - All Schools	16.0	16.0	4.13	4.13
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>62.75</u></b>	<b><u>62.75</u></b>	<b><u>15.51</u></b>	<b><u>18.51</u></b>

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR04**  
**Spring 2025**

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

\*Actual hours worked, and budget is being utilized to support additional hiring based on the needs of students.

	2024-2025 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 EA FTE Allocation (Includes CASA)	2024-2025 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)	2025-2026 LAT Allocation (Includes CASA)
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>284.5</u></b>	<b><u>307.75</u></b>	<b><u>66.78</u></b>	<b><u>81.06</u></b>

### School Staffing Proposals or Requests:

- All staffing proposals from one school must be looked at through the greater educational ecosystem lens, and in some cases how a request would then apply to all schools under all school authorities.
- All submitted staffing proposals will undergo a thorough review and evaluation process.
- The review and evaluation will be based on alignment with strategic goals, adherence to the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, and the approved budget.
- After review and evaluation, the department will collaborate with each school council to determine which proposals are most suitable.
- As of April 24, 2025, the following school councils and/or schools submitted staffing proposals:

School	School Authority	Proposals or requests for additional Teachers, EAs, LATs, ELL, School Wellness Specialists, etc.
FH Collins Secondary School Council	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request for additional teachers to allow for internal coverage when teachers are away or sick.</li></ul>
Whistlebend Elementary School Council	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request for equity regarding Confidence and Supply Agreement as FTE was allocated prior to WhistleBend allocations</li><li>• English as Additional Learners Support through teacher allocation is being provided</li></ul>

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR04**  
**Spring 2025**

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

Education

School	School Authority	Proposals or requests for additional Teachers, EAs, LATs, ELL, School Wellness Specialists, etc.
Robert Service School with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation support	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for equity regarding Confidence and Supply Agreement, their school was not allocated a Learning Assistant Teacher</li></ul>
École Whitehorse Elementary School	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for an English Language Learner allocation (students will be assessed in May 2025, adjustment will occur in September 2025)</li></ul>
École Selkirk Elementary School	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for additional Educational Psychologist time</li></ul>
Wood Street School	Yukon Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for an additional full-time equivalent teacher for a new program</li></ul>
Gadzoosdaa Student Residence	Student Learning and First Nation Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Request for two additional full-time equivalents (FTEs) to supervise students and an additional management team member</li></ul>

- During the 2025-2026 school year, the department of Education will develop a staffing proposal or request process for all school authorities and central administration divisions and branches.

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-25**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Recruitment and Onboarding for Teachers on Call and Educational Assistants**

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Education

### **Value**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- Compensation, training and orientation are priorities of the Department of Education to ensure teacher on call and educational assistants are valued and supported in contributing to their school community.
- The Department of Education's human resources branch works closely with the Public Service Commission to ensure employees are onboarded and compensated in a timely manner.
- To expedite the hiring and onboarding process, Department of Education's Human Resources branch returned to the Apply to Education recruitment platform, which streamlines job postings to reach the target educator audience and creates a smoother onboarding process.
- The department continues to take steps to improve and streamline the experience of TOC candidates throughout each step of the recruitment process.

### **Additional response:**

- The department continues to recruit teachers on call. While the number of applicants submitting applications this year is not extensive, it is larger than experienced in previous years, and the department believes that this is due to the enhanced promotion of TOC opportunities.

## **Recruitment and Onboarding for Teachers on Call and Educational Assistants**

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Education

- As of April 24 2025, there are 283 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon Education school authority and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 33 pending applications.
  - Please note: These numbers do not include the First Nation School Board as they have taken on full hiring responsibilities this year.
  - Also note: As of November 8, 2024, 10 TOCs had accepted temporary full-time positions with a Yukon Education school either as an Education Assistant or Teacher.
- As of February 16, 2024, there were 220 registered TOCs hired throughout the Yukon Education school authority and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon schools, with 24 pending applications.
  - Please note that these numbers include the First Nation School Board.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Teacher on call and educational assistant shortages are continued topics in media coverage with concerns expressed by both the Opposition and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

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### **Background:**

- Teachers on call are hired on a school-year basis. Within the collective agreement, hiring a teacher on call on an indeterminate basis effectively implies 'continuous service'. 'Continuous service,' as defined in the collective agreement, does not apply to teachers on call. This type of potential change is considered significant and would be best suited to collective agreement negotiations.
- All teachers on call and educational assistants review the Student Protection Policy during their on-boarding process.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# HR05**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Recruitment and Onboarding for Teachers on Call and Educational Assistants**

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-29](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Value

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

### Recommended response:

- The Public Service Commission leads the collective bargaining process for the Yukon government.
- Representatives from the Department of Education, the First Nation School Board, and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon participated on the employer's bargaining team.
- The recently ratified 3-year collective agreement is fair, balanced and fiscally responsible, and supports our ongoing efforts to attract and retain highly qualified educators in the Yukon.

### Additional response:

- Teachers, educational assistants and teachers on call voted to ratify the Yukon Association of Education Professionals collective agreement on January 23, 2025.
- A few highlights from the new collective agreement are:

### Yukon First Nation Language Teachers

- Two Yukon First Nation Language Teachers may be selected for the Yukon First Nation Language training program, with a stipend equivalent to one hundred percent of their salary for one year.
- Yukon First Nation Language Teachers are now entitled to preparation time.
- There is also an annual allowance for Yukon First Nation Language Teachers who are not currently compensated on the Teacher Pay Grid of \$5,000 for the full three-year period.

### Teacher Priority Hiring:

- The new priorities are:
  - a) Persons of Yukon First Nations ancestry;
  - b) Another Canadian Indigenous ancestry;
  - c) Indeterminate teachers with three or more years of continuous service in the same school;
  - d) Other indeterminate teachers;
  - e) Other applicants.

### Creation of a new annual rural retention allowance:

- On January 23, 2025, after a successful ratification vote for a new collective agreement, dated July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027, a new annual rural retention allowance for all the YAEP bargaining unit members, excluding teachers on call and employees working in Whitehorse, has been implemented for the full three-year period:

Community	Annual Amount
Carcross	\$945
Haines Junction, Teslin, Carmacks	\$1,166
Watson Lake, Dawson City	\$1,785
Mayo, Ross River, Pelly Crossing, Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, Faro	\$3,010
Old Crow	\$13,610

### New Salary and Pay Grids:

- Ten percent (10%) Teachers on call salary grid increase, applied before the General Wage Increase;
- Seven percent (7%) Educational Assistant salary grid increase, applied before the General Wage Increase;

### General Wage Increases:

- Effective July 1, 2024 an eight point fifteen percent (8.15%);
- Effective July 1, 2025 a three percent (3.0%); and,
- Effective July 1, 2026, a three percent (3.0%).

### Professional Development:

- The annual employer contribution increased from \$460,000 to \$475,000 on September 1, 2015, and this rate remains in effect.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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### **Background:**

- The new collective agreement is in force from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027.
- The previous agreement was in force for a three-year period, July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2024.
- On March 5, 2024, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals issued a notice of intent to commence bargaining.
- The Government of Yukon's representatives met with representatives of YAEP in September and early October 2024 to establish a renewed collective agreement.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR06

Spring 2025

## YAEP Collective Bargaining

Education

- On October 4, 2024, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals informed the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board that negotiations had broken down and requested a declaration that a deadlock existed.
- On November 6, 2024, the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board established a conciliation board to provide non-binding recommendations to both parties.
- The Conciliation Board provided recommendations to the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals on December 18, 2024. Both parties accepted the recommendations.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- Sustained communication between the Department of Education and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals contributes to an enhanced relationship between the parties, and positive outcomes for school educators.

### Recommended response:

- Effective and efficient consultation improves the relationship between the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and the Department of Education.
- Consultation is a process for seeking and providing information, exchanging views, discussing issues to address or resolve them. This process is done in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- Consultation is based on an open commitment, by both parties, to the sharing of information and to listening to each other's opinions, observations, and recommendations, prior to decisions being made by the Department of Education.

### Additional response:

- On September 30, 2016, the Department of Education and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals agreed in writing to joint principles regarding consultation.
- With the ratification of the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Department of Education officials will restart consultation with YAEP on Department of Education policies, procedures or initiatives that impact their bargaining unit members' employment relationship.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns regarding the department's failure to consult with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals have been expressed by the opposition.

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#### Background:

- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals communicated publicly that the Department of Education does not meet their consultation obligations under the collective agreement (for example, educational assistant allocation).
- The agreed-upon joint principles of consultation are:
  - Engaging in consultation early in any review/change process and providing comprehensive information to the other party about the proposed decision.
  - Providing the other party with a timely and real opportunity to provide their views and opinions on a proposed decision.
  - Remaining open to suggestions and providing considered responses to issues and questions raised.
  - Considering and reviewing any suggestions or opinions made by the representatives; and,
  - Responding to requests for information in a timely manner.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### Value

- Effective employees are important in ensuring student success at school.

### Recommended response:

- We must respect the confidentiality of the collective bargaining process and are unable to speak to specific items under negotiation.
- The Public Service Commission leads the collective bargaining process for the Yukon government.
- After reviewing the items for this round of collective bargaining, it was determined that a representative from the Department of Education would be an invited guest to the employer's bargaining team.
- The representative will speak to specific education-related items, as needed.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

- The Collective Agreement between Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Yukon Employees Union expired on December 31, 2024.
- The Collective Agreement was previously ratified for a three-year period, January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024.
- Depending on their role, Department of Education employees are members of the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals (YAEP) or the Yukon Employee Union. Employees who support the work of the Department of Education's central administration are employees of either the Yukon Employees Union., Section M – managers, or Confidential Excluded.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HR08

Spring 2025

YEU Collective Bargaining

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-23

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



#### Value:

- Attendance areas support the governance and operation of schools, the school council election process, assist with developing bus routes, and help to effectively allocate resources that are determined by enrolment.

#### Recommended response:

- Students in Yukon Education schools are generally expected to attend the school in the attendance area where they live.
- In exceptional circumstances such as ensuring siblings can attend the same school or addressing situations that significantly affect a student's education, health, or safety, Yukon Education may allow a student to attend a school outside their attendance area, provided there is space available.
- Parents can find attendance area information on Yukon.ca when registering their children for school.

#### Additional response:

- The department reviews attendance areas when there are demographic changes, when a new school or residential area is planned or expanded, or when a school joins a school board.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School is Whitehorse's newest attendance area. It includes the subdivision's city boundaries and parts of the previous Takhini Elementary School attendance area.
- The Whistle Bend attendance area is helping manage student enrollment growth in elementary schools at the north end of Whitehorse.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Attendance areas were adjusted when Whistle Bend Elementary school started operation for the 2024-2025 school year.

#### Background:

- The *Education Act* requires that every school be assigned to an attendance area (for school councils) or an education area (for school boards).
- Students may be resident in multiple attendance or education areas since the areas can overlap.
- Any school joining the First Nation School Board (FSNB) requires the dissolution of its attendance area, and in Whitehorse that area needs to be redistributed to the remaining attendance areas.
- Attendance areas were dissolved in 2023 for the communities that voted to join the First Nation School Board: Eliza Van Bibber School, Ghùch Tlà Community School, and Kluane Lake School.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The Aurora Virtual School (AVS) provides hybrid (blended), distance and online learning opportunities to Yukon students.
- AVS also acts as an administrative hub on behalf of Yukon Education to ensure that home education students, Yukon Montessori students, and other students accessing private education models are accounted for in the Student Management System.

### Recommended response:

- Aurora Virtual School serves four main categories of students:
  - Home education students - students whose parents choose to provide them with a home education program and register their home education plans. These students follow a home education plan and do not receive distance education courses. Home education students receive eligible reimbursements of up to \$1200 per year from the Department of Education to purchase educational resources to support their plans.
  - Home education with distance education courses - students whose parents provide them with a home education program through distance education courses. These students are registered with Aurora Virtual School, which coordinates their distance education courses and pays for them. The majority of these students are at the elementary school level. They may also receive eligible reimbursements of up to \$1200 annually for educational resources.
  - Distance learners - students registered full-time at Aurora Virtual School or at another Yukon school who also participate in distance learning courses offered through Aurora Virtual School. Aurora

Virtual School staff typically arrange and facilitate these distance courses.

- Blended/Hybrid students - An individualized blended program based on student profile, usually involving some online learning and/or significant in-person tutorial times in person. This program is designed to support students who have had their schooling disrupted due to attendance issues. The primary goal of this program is to provide a flexible and supported model through which students work to remediate and build numeracy and literacy skills – with the hope of supporting students in re-engaging in mainstream school. This alternative program often involves a combination of online instruction, in-person support and co-curricular experiential activities – usually students who cannot access alternatives like the Individual Learning Centre due to age, geography, Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) limitations and/or health concerns.

### **Additional response:**

- Aurora Virtual School students have not traditionally been included in the overall monthly enrolment reports, but for 2025, the Department of Education is investigating the development of a separate report.
- As of January 2025, 145 students are registered for homeschooling with Aurora Virtual School. The department is working to design a report to include recent enrolment history and numbers for Home School, Montessori, and Wild School programs.
- Rural principals can use Aurora Virtual School to provide more course options for their students (approximately 20-30 students a school year).

- Whitehorse schools leverage Aurora Virtual School to support students accessing courses, specifically when they cannot meet specific needs (approximately 150 students a year).
  - The department provides financial support for resources for students enrolled in home education.
  - Financial support for resources was introduced in 2015 as a supportive measure but is not required by the Education Act or Department of Education policy.
  - There has been no increase in the amount (\$1200 per child per school year) since the fund was created.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Families, particularly in rural communities, may be interested in options for their students to take courses if specific courses are not offered in the community school without opting for home education.
  - For students under 16 years of age, Aurora Virtual School has become a de facto alternative for students who cannot access schooling in a mainstream context.
- 

#### **Background:**

- The mandate of Aurora Virtual School is to provide students (home-educated or otherwise) with Yukon distance learning courses and programming provided directly by Aurora Virtual School rather than by schools from outside of Yukon.
- Regarding homeschooling specifically, in Yukon, parents must register homeschooled children with Aurora Virtual School by September 30th each year and submit a Home Education Plan for each child.
- Aurora Virtual School will **register** the child of any parent who wishes their child to be educated at home. Aurora Virtual School has no authority to approve or supervise the educational program of a homeschooled child.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP02**  
**Spring 2025**

## Aurora Virtual School

Education

- The Yukon Francophone School Board/Commissions scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) manages a homeschooling program in French called École Nomade. Participants must register with the program École Nomade.
- Department of Education financial support for resources may be available to parents of students who attend Montessori, home school, Wild School, Aurora Virtual School, or online distance education.
- The department has an annual budget of approximately \$300,000 for financial support for resources.
- The services include support and resources for families that are: homeschooling; travelling and wish to continue the academic progress of their child; or living in rural communities and cannot access French First Language programs.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-30**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools**

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Education

### **Value:**

- Rural schools should have the resources and training they need to deliver early kindergarten programming that supports a child's transition to kindergarten through a literacy-rich, play-based early learning environment.

### **Recommended response:**

- Education continues to work with rural school communities, Yukon First Nations, and the First Nation School Board to enhance early kindergarten programs in their communities.
- Other than Robert Service School and Johnston Elementary, all rural Yukon schools offer full-time optional early kindergarten programs.
- The Department of Education is prepared to support early kindergarten programming in Dawson when there is community readiness and will continue to work with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Robert Service School on this matter.
- The department will also continue to support the First Nation School Board with early kindergarten in Watson Lake should they require it.

### **Additional response:**

- Early kindergarten supports critical skill development and a successful transition into the school years by providing more time for students to engage in the kindergarten curriculum.
- The department is currently conducting a review of the early kindergarten policy and will finalize the review this spring.
- The department will continue to monitor the needs for offering early kindergarten in Whitehorse in the longer term.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

### Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools

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Education

- Enhanced early learning and child care programs were key areas identified during the Standing Committee on Public Accounts hearing on the Office of the Auditor General's report on K-12 education in January 2022 as supporting better student outcomes.
  - YAEF continues to challenge that an early childhood therapy assistant (ECTA) should be replaced with educational assistants as early childhood therapy assistants are not part of the YAEF collective bargaining agreement.
- 

#### Background:

- Early Kindergarten is offered in all Rural schools except Watson Lake and Dawson City.
- In Whitehorse, there is early childhood education programming at Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- When more student support is required in early kindergarten classrooms there is the support of an educational assistant and/or an early child therapy assistant.
- Early childhood therapy assistants are currently under the direction of the Child Development Centre (CDC) and are trained by various early learning specialists at CDC.
- Early childhood therapy assistants often work with families and children in early kindergarten prior to the child attending early kindergarten.
- Hiring for ECTA's was delayed this year due to CDC being challenged by YAEF on whether or not ECTA's should be under YAEF union.
- CDC was waiting for decisions to be made regarding this matter before hiring staff; but hired staff upon realizing that the process would be longer than expected.
- An updated list of current ECTA's was provided late January 2025. There are ECTA's hired in Haines Junction, Carmacks and Faro. No support required in Teslin, Pelly, Mayo, Carcross, Burwash, and Beaver Creek.
- The early kindergarten policy required a review of the policy after the first year of implementation.
  - The department has gathered input from educators, administrators, YAEF, and First Nations partners on the early kindergarten policy.



### Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools

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Education

- This information is in the process of being reviewed to inform updates to the early kindergarten policy and is delayed due to YAEP collective bargaining.
- A working group to provide recommendations for assessment practices for early kindergarten was formed in January 2023.
- The group consisted of members from Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Early Learning and Child Care, Curriculum and Assessment, rural teachers, the Child Development Centre, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
- The group has provided recommendations for the review of the early kindergarten policy and is currently working on measures for assessment of the early kindergarten program.
- The next task for this group was to explore assessment options for Early Kindergarten. This was put on pause during YAEP negotiations.
- Kindergarten and early kindergarten programs are both optional for parents. Early kindergarten programs are for children four years of age as of December 31st for that year.
- An early kindergarten program policy was approved in 2021 that:
  - Provides guidelines that support high quality early kindergarten programming in all rural schools in Yukon.
  - Establishes parameters for early kindergarten programs to ensure consistency in programming.
  - Allows for flexibility to accommodate local needs.
  - YAEP has questioned whether an early childhood therapy assistant should be replaced with educational assistants as ECTAs are not part of the YAEP collective bargaining agreement.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-28**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

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Education

**Safer Schools: refer to DPT12**

**Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: refer to DPT04**

### Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is the department's first priority.

### Recommended response:

- Each school must have its own Emergency Plan, with detailed procedures for emergencies and other unforeseen events. School staff are trained and prepared to care for students in response to such events.
- When safety issues arise, the department works closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other agencies to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- As a key action in the Safer Schools Action Plan, the department provided updated communication guidance for when, and how schools should communicate with parents, internal staff, and other agencies, such as the RCMP, about incidents that occur at school.

### Additional response:

- Schools practice emergency drills regularly, including fire drills, earthquake drills and lockdown procedures.
- The Department of Education has several communication platforms to communicate quickly with families, including email, text message or telephone. The department uses the contact information that is on each student's record.

## Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

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Education

- The department also reminds parents that they should tune in to the radio rather than try to contact the school should an emergency arise to keep phone lines available for emergency use at the school.
- 

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is often public and media attention on school safety issues.
- 

### Background:

- Each fall, school principals prepare their School Emergency Plans, including coordination with the RCMP and other agencies, evacuation routes and alternate sites, and security protocols to quickly respond to unforeseen events and emergencies.
- Schools provide an updated plan to their superintendent or School Board executive directors by October 15. A hard copy of each plan is filed with the administrative assistant for the superintendents and executive directors.
- During any emergency, the priority is to ensure the safety of students and staff. Once student and staff safety has been addressed, communicating with parents and guardians will be prioritized.
- After an incident, the department supports school staff through critical incident debriefing and the Employee and Family Assistance Program. Restorative approaches, with an emphasis on addressing harm and building relationships after an incident, are used. Support and collaboration from the RCMP, medical and other government and non-government agencies is also provided.
- The department has licensed School Messenger, a unified communication platform. It automates contact with parents about emergencies via text, voice and email.
- Schools may also use the Aspen student information system to share information only with parent/guardian email addresses.
- In the fall of 2021, guidelines for communications were developed to assist school administrators in responding to incidents or allegations of assault and abusive or criminal behaviour.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP04**  
**Spring 2025**

## Emergency Procedures and Public Notices

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Education

- The department offers training for school staff to identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours, and how to provide effective support and redirect behaviours, including Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports and Violence Threat Risk Assessment.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-15

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan: refer to HOT01/SO01**

**Modular Classrooms: refer to SO06**

**School Capacity: refer to HOT11/SI06**

**For enrolment numbers see Figures at a Glance: refer to DPT06**

### **Value:**

- The Department of Education monitors student enrolment to help school administrators and school communities plan for changing trends and meet their short, mid, and long-term needs.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Yukon's population is increasing and anticipated to continue growing over the years to come.
- We are prioritizing work on long-term capital planning, including the replacement of Whitehorse Elementary School.
- The new Whistle Bend Elementary School helps to address enrolment growth in the north end of Whitehorse, and the department has previously added portables at Hidden Valley Elementary, Selkirk Elementary, and Golden Horn Elementary.

### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education works with the two Yukon school boards – the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – to assess their enrolment pressures and determine their long-term school capacity needs.
- If enrolment at a school nears program capacity, we work with the school administration and council to find ways to accommodate all students.
- If needed, we work with families on a case-by-case basis to place students at schools where space is available.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Concerns have been raised about schools perceived to be overcrowded, portable procurement, and long-term capital planning for schools.
- 

### Background:

- The department is working to address short, medium, and long-term student enrolment growth by taking the following actions:
- In the short-term: ensuring consistent use of new attendance areas and sending students to other area schools if their grade level is full. In such a case, transportation support is provided with busing, or as a subsidy if busing is not available.
  - For the 2024-25 school year, twelve students from the F.H. Collins catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at F.H. Collins due to the timing of student registration.
  - F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed to accommodate a school expansion in the future; as of January 2025, the school is at 99 per cent capacity and modular expansion will support students for the 2025-2026 school year.
  - In the medium-term: adding portables to increase the number of classroom-sized spaces available, and by monitoring attendance areas and the number of students who live in a school's attendance area to align with the school's enrolment capacity.
  - In the long-term: confirming approved school projects through the Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan and continued long-term facilities planning for schools through the capital planning process.
- The number of students that can be enrolled in a school is based on the number of classroom spaces and classes at each grade at the school, and the maximum class size allowed for those grades.
- School administrators manage their school's spaces on an ongoing basis by maximizing the use of classrooms, and reorganizing students into split-grade classrooms when there are not enough students in one grade to fill a class. Collective agreements determine the maximum number of students in a classroom.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP05**  
**Spring 2025**

## Enrolment at Yukon Schools

Education

- Education and the First Nation School Board have clarified enrollment processes for students who wish to attend schools under the First Nation School Board or transfer to another school (e.g., in Whitehorse).

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-30**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved.

### Value:

- The Department of Education believes that support from community partners can play a role in enhancing education programming in Yukon schools.

### Recommended response:

- The Every Student, Every Day initiative supports schools and communities in creating innovative projects that encourage student attendance and engagement while improving results for Yukon students.
- For the 2024-25 school year, the initiative funded 31 projects in 24 schools across the Yukon, with a total of \$400,000 in funding.
- These projects range from enhancing curriculum through experiential learning tools, such as kick-sleds and science, technology, trades, engineering, arts and mathematics (STTEAM) resources, to supporting popular school clubs and activities that keep students engaged in their school communities.
- Applications for the 2025-26 school-year are now closed, with \$200,000 in funding available for eligible projects. Applicants can expect to learn the results of their proposals in late-May.

### Additional response:

- The Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon (formerly the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society), is an independent registered Yukon society that operates separately from the Victoria Gold Corporation.
- The funding amount available each year includes the Department of Education's annual contribution of \$100,000 and the fundraising efforts of the Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon.



- In May 2024, the Department of Education signed a new memorandum of understanding with the Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon to formalize the partnership and ensure ongoing support for the initiative.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Victoria Gold Corporation entered receivership in July 2024. Since then, there have been questions about the future of Every Student, Every Day.
  - There is a commitment from the Society to continue with the program for the 2025-26 school year.
- 

#### **Background:**

- The Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society changed their name to Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon in March 2025.
- Since 2012, Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon (formerly the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society), a charitable organization, has partnered with the Government of Yukon and Yukon businesses to support the Every Student, Every Day (ESED) initiative.
- The Society is a separate legal entity from Victoria Gold Corporation and continues to fundraise and support Every Student, Every Day initiatives.
- The Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon and the Department of Education signed a new 3-year MOU in May 2024.
- The financial provision of the agreement state that the Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon will contribute “an amount raised through fundraising” and that Education will contribute \$100,000 annually to the Every Student, Every Day fund.
- A committee of Department of Education staff and volunteers representing the Society review applications and select successful projects annually.
- To date, ESED has raised and distributed more than \$1,000,000 to support over 230 community-based projects that reduce barriers to school attendance.
- The Government of Yukon increased its annual contribution to ESED in the 2024-25 fiscal year to \$100,000.

- The department's Corporate Sponsorship and Donation Policy is available on the open government site at <https://open.yukon.ca/information/publications/education-policies>
- While the recognition of sponsors is permitted, students or department employees must not be subjected to advertising in schools or on department property.
- Sponsorships and donations must support the goals and objectives of the school's curriculum and instruction and must be in line with the policies, beliefs, and practices of the Department of Education.
- In January 2025, the Every Student, Every Day Society Yukon approved 100,000 to contribute towards the Department of Education's annual contribution for the 2025-26 school year.
- In the Supplementary #1 for 2024-25 budget there was a decrease of \$300,000 related to the Every Student, Every Day initiative.
- As part of the MOU the society will now be distributing the Every Student, Every Day program funds to the recipients, resulting in a decrease in expenditures and recoveries of \$300,000.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-08

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **French Immersion – Programming, Enrolment and Staffing**

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Education

### **Value:**

- The Department of Education offers French second language programs to students, and we work with our partners and school communities to address the long-term needs of these programs.

### **Recommended response:**

#### Programming

- Currently, the overall student demand for French Immersion programming is being met.
- The Government of Yukon plans to continue École Selkirk Elementary School as a 'dual track' English program/French Immersion school.
- The department has committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs with the French Second Language Advisory Committee.
- The French Second Language Advisory Committee includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.

#### Early French Immersion (Kindergarten):

- Early French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, offered at Whitehorse Elementary school and École Selkirk Elementary school.
- For the 2024-25 school year the department offered one class (18 kindergarten seats) at Selkirk Elementary school and three classes (54 kindergarten seats) at Whitehorse Elementary school, for a total of 72 seats.

## **French Immersion – Programming, Enrolment and Staffing**

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Education

- Kindergarten registration for French immersion was open from February 4 to February 16 for the 2025-26 school year. Kindergarten registration for English programs remains open.

### French Immersion teacher recruitment:

- The department continues to monitor and plan for enrolment in French Immersion including the recruitment of qualified French language teachers. French language teachers are in high demand across Canada. Recruiting for these positions remains a challenge.
- The department attends job fairs both in person and virtually at post-secondary institutes where there are qualified French language teachers, to help with targeted recruitment efforts.
- The department has increased advertising on job boards in post-secondary institutions that offer French language education programming.
- On November 13, 2024, the department launched a recruitment video, which specifically highlights French language education programming across the Yukon.
  - This video will be used as part of recruitment marketing efforts, to promote educator opportunities in the Yukon for French Immersion, Pre- and Post-Intensive French, Core French and positions with Commission scolaire Francophone du Yukon.
- The department has continued with pooled competitions and early posting for teaching positions in French Immersion elementary schools, thanks to the dedication of school administrators and superintendents.

## **French Immersion – Programming, Enrolment and Staffing**

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Education

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is considerable interest in French second language programming and there may be questions about access to this programming, particularly in early grades.

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### **Background:**

#### Programming

- All Yukon schools under all school authorities, including those offering French Immersion, are expected to follow British Columbia curriculum and graduation programs.
- French Immersion elementary schools may follow different philosophies for teaching reading; however, they are both expected to follow British Columbia curriculum.
- The balance of instructional time between the two languages may differ at Selkirk and Whitehorse Elementary, but the long-term learner outcomes are the same.
- French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, and is offered at Whitehorse Elementary School, Selkirk Elementary School and F. H. Collins Secondary School.
- Retention in French Immersion tends to decline in high school, and current forecasts indicate that the program at F.H. Collins Secondary will be sufficient to meet the demand.
- Whitehorse Elementary School is a 'single track' school offering only French Immersion programs. Selkirk Elementary School and F. H. Collins Secondary School are 'dual track' schools meaning that both French Immersion and English language programs are available.

#### Early French Immersion (Kindergarten) registration for 2025–26 school year:

- The kindergarten registration information night was held virtually on January 22, 2025, for the 2025–26 school year.
- Registration closed on Sunday, February 16, 2025 and parents whose child was offered a space needed to accept it by February 28, 2025.

## French Immersion – Programming, Enrolment and Staffing

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Education

- If the demand for Early French Immersion registration exceed capacity, the department uses a lottery system for admission to these programs and/or review the number of seats available.
- For the 2025-26 school year the department will continue to offer one class (18 kindergarten seats) at Selkirk Elementary school and three classes (54 kindergarten seats) at Whitehorse Elementary school, for a total of 72 seats.
- As of February 20, 2025, there are no students on the waitlist for French Immersion for the 2025–26 school year.
- As of February 20, 2025, Selkirk Elementary school has no kindergarten seats available for the 2025-2026 school year and Whitehorse Elementary school has 5 seats available for the 2025-2026 school year.
- By the end of March 2025, every parent will get an email that officially confirms their child's spot in a school.

### Early French Immersion 2024–25 school year:

- For the 2024–25 school year, French Immersion seats are still available to families wishing to enroll their child at the kindergarten or grade 1 levels.
  - As of February 20, 2025:
    - Whitehorse Elementary School has 1 seat available in kindergarten and 15 seats in grade 1 for the 2024-25 school year.
    - Selkirk Elementary School has 0 seat available in kindergarten and 8 seats in grade 1 for the 2024-25 school year.
- Since 2015–16, when the demand for Early French Immersion registration began to exceed capacity, the department has used a lottery system for admission to these programs.
- Every year since the lottery process has been in place, all students who desire a place have been able to enroll in French Immersion in kindergarten or grade 1.

### French Second Language Advisory Committee:

- The French Second Language Advisory Committee was formed in 2010 to strengthen French as a Second Language education in the Yukon.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP07**  
**Spring 2025**

## **French Immersion – Programming, Enrolment and Staffing**

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Education

- This advisory body includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.
- Education has committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs and a vision statement has been created in spring 2023 in collaboration with the French Second Language Advisory Committee.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-02-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

- The Department of Education offers various supports to families when students leave their communities to attend school.

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education works with staff and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee to provide a safe, caring, and enriching living environment for rural students in Grades 10 to 12 who attend school in Whitehorse.
- Gadzoosdaa Student Residence received 56 applications for the 2025–26 school year.
- The residence has capacity for 37 residents, leaving 19 applicants on the waiting list.
- The top priority for admission is given to students from communities with limited Grade 10, 11, and 12 programming.
- All top priority applicants have been approved for residence for the 2025–26 school year.
- The department is committed to ensuring the program is well-resourced, meets current needs and values, and remains student centred.
- The annual operating budget for 2024-2025, including personnel, is \$1.499 million.
- The 2025-2026 budget is \$1.513M and includes increases to personnel under the new collective agreements.

#### Additional response:

- Staffing and recruitment are key pillars of the program's renewal to support strong relationships and stability for students and staff.
- A working group is implementing the recommendations from the July 2023 *Renewal Results and Recommendations* final report, which was



presented to the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee and the Department of Education.

- For the 2024-25 school year, staff positions have been filled as one-year term positions to provide stability for eligible candidates while allowing flexibility to address the renewal recommendations. Additional positions will be considered as part of the working group's ongoing efforts.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Concerns have been raised about staffing levels and student safety at the residence.
  - Some members of the public may raise concerns about their child not being able to stay at the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence.
- 

### **Background:**

#### Staffing concerns

- In the fall of 2022, some staff at Gadzoosdaa felt that there was not an adequate staffing allotment to support programming for students in residence. Concerns related to permanent staff were covered with casual staff in the short term.
- Departmental staff met with Gadzoosdaa Residence staff and the Advisory Committee to better understand their challenges with service delivery and resourcing.
- Additional staff supports were immediately put in place to ensure effective program delivery. These additional supports will remain in place until the program renewal is completed.
- A program renewal, led by IRP Consulting with input from the Advisory Committee, Yukon First Nations, and the Department of Education was completed July 2023.
  - It looked at areas such as the mandate of the residence, staffing, culturally relevant programming, and student transportation.
- Financial and human resource allocations at Gadzoosdaa have been and continue to remain stable.

- Budget staffing levels have been as follows:
  - 2022 – Present - 11.8 FTEs with additional 80 hrs biweekly to support staff through AOC until the renewal work is completed
  - 2019 to 2022 - 11.8 FTEs
  - 2012 to 2018 - 10.8 FTEs
- As of January 21, 2025, 36 students are registered for the second semester of 24-25 school year from the following communities:
  - Atlin - 1
  - Carcross/Tagish – 7
  - Carmacks – 4
  - Dawson – 8
  - Faro – 5
  - Haines Junction - 9
  - Teslin – 1
  - Old Crow/Whitehorse – 1

## Gadzoosdaa Student Residence Eligibility Criteria – Admissions Priority

- Student will be considered and prioritized for Gadzoosdaa student residence based on the following criteria:
  1. Students whose community offers limited 10,11 or 12 programming:  
Beaver Creek, Carcross, Kluane Lake, Old Crow, Ross River, Teslin.
  2. Students whose community offers a full 10, 11 or 12 program and further academic courses are required:  
Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Watson Lake
  3. Students whose community does not provide speciality programs such as:  
ACES, Sports School, Wood Street, Indigenous Academy.
  4. Students who are residents of Atlin, B.C. who have enrolled in a Whitehorse school full time.

#### Transportation allowances for rural students attending high school in Whitehorse

- Students who are required to live outside their home community to attend school in Whitehorse may be provided with accommodation at the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse, and/or travel subsidies to help offset travel costs to and from home communities during the school year.
- Rural students coming to Whitehorse to attend high school are reimbursed for the cost of travel to and from their home communities during the school year.
- The following principles are now being applied to travel subsidy requests:
  - Students staying at Gadzoosdaa Student Residence because a specific secondary school program is not available in their community, will be entitled to a travel subsidy for expenses they incur for travelling to, and from their home community during the school year, up to the maximum amount payable under Student Transportation Regulations (\$13 per day).
  - Students moving to Whitehorse and staying in a private residence because a specific secondary high school program is not available in their community, and they were not able to stay in the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence are entitled to a travel subsidy. This does not apply if students are living with one or both parents in Whitehorse.
  - Students who choose to come to Whitehorse to attend high school when a high school program that is appropriate to their needs is available in their community will not be entitled to a travel subsidy.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### **French Immersion Programming, Enrolment and Staffing: refer to SP07**

##### **Value:**

- The Department of Education works with families and school communities to ensure we are effectively managing student enrolment, teacher allocations, and learning spaces, starting with the kindergarten registration process.

##### **Recommended response:**

- Families begin to register for kindergarten each year in February. This year registration began on February 4<sup>th</sup> and will remain open.
- Families can register for kindergarten in schools operated by Yukon Education, the First Nation School Board, or the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon.
- Registration for kindergarten for French Immersion closes on February 16, 2025. All other registrations will remain open.
- Each year, Education allocates spaces for kindergarten students based on student enrolment forecasts, staffing allocations, and enrolment trends.
- If the number of students exceeds the number of spaces available at a school, the Department works with the school authority to determine next steps and to contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.

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##### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- French Immersion (FI) programming continues to be in high demand, particularly for kindergarten.
- Questions may arise about enrolment in First Nation School Board (FNSB) schools across the Yukon.

### Background:

- Children are expected to attend their attendance area schools.
- With Whistle Bend Elementary School opening in September, pressure has been relieved for English kindergarten spaces especially in the north end of Whitehorse.
- After processing student enrolment forms, the department contacts parents and guardians in March to confirm school assignments for their children. Parents and guardians then fill out additional forms at that school to finalize registration, including showing proof of their child's age.
- Registration is first-come, first-serve for schools with fewer available spaces than students enrolling. The exception to this is for French Immersion, where a lottery is completed if necessary.
- If the department cannot accommodate all in-area students at an attendance area school, the department works with the school authority to determine next steps and contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.
- The department may adjust classes to accommodate more students at the school (for example, adding an additional student to a class or making a kindergarten/grade 1 combined class), or work with the family to assign their child to another school with space.
- Parents in Whitehorse register online or by contacting the Department of Education. The department continues to work with the First Nation School Board to ensure processes are clear for kindergarten registration at First Nation School Board schools.
- Parents in rural communities can register their kindergarten aged children by going to the school in their community.

### Out-of-attendance area requests:

- Parents are asked to register their child in their attendance area school before making a request to have their child enrolled in a different school.
- To request attendance at a school outside their attendance area, students must complete an out of area form and receive written permission from the Superintendent or Executive Director.

### Catholic school programs

- Catholic students are prioritized for registration in the three Catholic schools.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP09**  
**Spring 2025**

## Kindergarten Registration

Education

- Both Catholic elementary schools have a separate attendance area to determine which school students should register for based on their residence.

### French Immersion programs:

- For the Early French Immersion programs at Selkirk Elementary and Whitehorse Elementary, registration is open for two weeks. When demand exceeds capacity for these programs, the department may run a lottery to fill the programs.
- If spaces are available, the department continues to take registrations after the opening week on a first-come, first-serve basis until space is filled.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-28**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- Significant planning and preparation go into establishing school calendars.

### Recommended response:

- The department is working with school councils, school boards, and school administrators to create a multi-year calendar of key school dates to help school communities and families plan around key dates of the school year.
- The department publishes school calendar key dates and a summary of individual school calendars on Yukon.ca when they are finalized or changed.
- School calendars are adjusted when needed, including after the school year has started, to accommodate unexpected events such as the Queen's Day of Mourning in 2022.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Requests for key dates for future school years are common as the information is used for business planning outside of government.
- The Minister of Education received a letter from the Selkirk Elementary School Council, dated March 31, 2025 and tabled in the legislature by the NDP, that raised many concerns they have around instructional time requirements and professional development, and requested meetings in fall 2026 to discuss those concerns and the following school year calendar.
- There are legislative and collective agreement obligations with the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals that must be adhered to when determining school calendars.

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### Background:

- The 2025-2026 key dates for Whitehorse schools are:
  - First day of school for students - Monday, August 25, 2025
  - Winter break - Monday, December 22, 2025 to Friday, January 2, 2026

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP10**  
**Spring 2025**  
Education

## School Calendars

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- March break - Thursday, March 5 to Friday, March 20, 2026 (extended break to accommodate Whitehorse Arctic Winter Games)
  - Last day of school for students - Friday, June 12, 2026:
- The 2025-2026 key dates for Whitehorse schools were made publicly available and updated on Yukon.ca on January 31, 2025.
- The 2025-2026 school calendar for all Yukon schools was published on Yukon.ca on March 31, 2025.
- Under the *Education Act*, the Minister, or the school board, sets the school calendar dates on or before March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. For Yukon Education-operated schools, the Minister will consider advice from school councils.
- The school calendar dates include the school opening date, number of days of school operation, length of the school day, and number of minutes of instruction in a school day.
- Each school year includes:
  - 950 instructional hours for students
  - 15 hours for non-instructional purposes determined by individual schools, school councils and school boards
  - 15 hours for professional development for school staff who are *Education Labour Relations Act* employees
- School boards may offer additional hours of professional development at their own discretion.
- In communities where there is more than one school (Whitehorse and Watson Lake), school calendars must be the same. This helps manage busing costs and assists families with children attending more than one school.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-02**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Value:

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

### Recommended response

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

- The Department of Education has used the School Messenger platform for many years for timely communication with parents and staff.
- School Messenger is used daily by most schools to communicate student absenteeism for safe arrival practices.
- School Messenger was particularly helpful during the pandemic when notifying families of COVID exposures.
- Messages sent through School Messenger require an associated email address and messages sent to school communities come from an account called [publicschools@yukon.ca](mailto:publicschools@yukon.ca), which allows people to respond to a message with any questions.
- The Department uses School Messenger to communicate safety, upcoming events, and general education-related information to students' families and school staff. These messages can be initiated by the deputy minister, assistant deputy minister of schools, superintendents, and the Communications Branch when a need is identified,

and School Messenger is an appropriate tool to utilize. Often the use of School Messenger is a part of a communications plan.

- Recent examples of communication sent via School Messenger include updates on drinking water testing in schools, sharing information from the Yukon Residential School Missing Children Project, invitations to important meetings, and circulating available emotional and mental health supports.
- The use of School Messenger is also identified for use in procedures such as Yukon School Post-Incident Communication.
- Individual schools (principals) also use School Messenger to communicate with their students' families and school staff. These announcements can include such things as unexpected school closures or important upcoming special events.
- Recipients have the ability to stop receiving all email, text, and phone messages distributed through our School Messenger service.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-18**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Gender Identity and Health Curriculum: refer to CU05**

**Curriculum Resource Material Review – Catholic Curriculum: refer to CU02**

**School Council Code of Conduct: refer to EP06**

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

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

### **Holy Family Principal's letter:**

- The Department of Education is working with the Holy Family School Council to ensure a smooth transition while recruiting for a short-term principal position.
- The department cannot provide comments on personnel matters. We take concerns raised by school staff seriously. All students, staff, and families have a right to be safe and feel safe in their school community. That

includes respecting and upholding policies like our Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.

- We recognize that there are differences in perspectives within the Catholic community, and we will continue to work towards bridging gaps and working with the School Council and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to foster a positive and collaborative relationship.

#### **Action plan:**

- The Women and Gender Equity Directorate conducted a survey to assess implementation of the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan from September 14 to October 27, 2023. It released the results of the survey on April 15, 2025.
- Education is grateful for the feedback from participants, and the What We Heard Report will guide our efforts going forward.
- We are also looking forward to the results of the Child and Youth Advocate Office's engagement on SOGI inclusion in Yukon schools. This engagement is still underway, and we anticipate receiving results in the fall.
- The Department of Education updated its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) policy in August 2023 as part of the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- The department remains committed to additional work, including clarifying gender identity inclusion in sports.
- The department is reviewing how to best support schools in implementing the policy as part of the ongoing SOGI policy review.

#### **Yukon Child and Youth Advocate review**

- In June 2024, the Government of Yukon referred to the SOGI Policy to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office for a comprehensive review.

- This ongoing review asks the Advocate's Office to assess the policy's current impact and provide recommendations to ensure inclusive and safe school communities for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

#### ARC Foundation:

- In fall 2023, the department contracted the ARC Foundation, a charitable organization, to help educators implement the SOGI Policy and foster more inclusive schools using the tools and resources of the SOGI 1 2 3 program.
- The ARC Foundation Executive Director, the Regional Program Manager (Indigenous Dialogues Lead) and their Yukon representative met with department officials on March 28, 2025, to provide an update on their work to support SOGI inclusion in Yukon schools.
  - Discussions included: what is working well, review what additional support is needed, and identify opportunities to improve collaboration to strengthen support for SOGI inclusion in schools. In addition, there were opening discussions about teacher training during Welcome Week.
  - ARC Foundation representatives also met with education partners, including YAEP and FNSB.
- The SOGI Policy requires schools to develop school-based procedures and guidelines. Schools, school boards, and councils are supported by the department and guided by best practices from the ARC Foundation.
- As Minister of Education and Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, I remain fully committed to implementing the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and have encouraged both departments to collaborate on this priority.

### **Gender and sexuality alliances (GSAs):**

- The SOGI Policy requires administrators to make their best efforts to facilitate the formation of clubs, such as Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs), when students or staff request this support.

### **Catholic school parent concerns about textbook:**

- While Catholic schools have the right to teach religious education programs aligned with Catholic values, they must not provide teachings on sexual orientation or gender identity that conflict with Yukon laws or Department of Education policies.
- Catholic schools in the Yukon are public schools, and Catholic educators are public servants. All schools and teachers must adhere to Yukon laws and Department of Education policies.
- Homophobic or transphobic teachings have no place in the public school system.
- The Department of Education remains committed to working with the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to jointly review instructional resources and materials that uphold Catholic values while aligning with Yukon law and department policies.

### **Education Act Amendments response:**

- In spring 2022, the Government of Yukon supported amendments to the Education Act to promote equity and non-discrimination, ensuring all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- The department continues to encourage and support schools in meeting their legal obligations to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

## **SOGI Inclusion**

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is considerable interest in how Yukon schools are offering safe and inclusive environments to 2SLGBTQIA+ students, including the SOGI policy's statement that schools will recognize people's correct pronouns, as declared by the individuals themselves. This requirement applies to students who have not made official changes to their name or gender in school records.
  - The principal of Holy Family Elementary school stepped down from the position, alleging that the local bishop frequently oversteps his authority while the department does little to support her or address the Bishop Vila's behaviour. This has resulted in media coverage, and protests (in support of the former principal) by the school community.
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### **Background:**

#### Number of schools with GSAs

- On February 19, 2024, Minister McLean was asked in the Legislative Assembly by the Leader of the Third Party how many schools in the Yukon have Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs).
- Our survey shows that:
  - All four high schools in Whitehorse have GSAs.
  - Aurora Virtual School has a virtual GSA.
  - Robert Service School (Dawson City) has a GSA.
  - Other Yukon Education, FNSB and CSFY schools have a range of student-led, educator-supported activities that promote equality and non-discrimination. Examples include student councils, diversity clubs, and monthly litanies that promote belonging and inclusion.
  - The Yukon First Nation School Board reported proactive and culturally appropriate school-based processes to welcome and include 2SLGBTQIA+ learners and their families at the school. All schools have safe spaces and designated safe humans. The First Nation School Board expressed commitment to ensuring meaningful engagement with local Elders and Knowledge Holders in all of their communities to guide their work in a good way.
  - A notable exception is the Wood Street Centre, which has no student clubs because students are kept busy with intensive programming.

## **SOGI Inclusion**

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- One school with a small student population reported that a student survey revealed that students were not interested in a GSA at the time.

### LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan survey

- On April 15, 2025, the Women and Gender Equity Directorate released a What We Heard Report: Progress on the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
  - The report reflects what was learned from a targeted online survey for 2SLGBTQIA+ Yukoners and self-identified allies that took place in the fall of 2023.
  - The survey was designed to gauge the government's progress on the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- Key findings related to schools:
  - The changes that had the biggest impact included:
    - Safe spaces such as rainbow rooms and GSAs
    - SOGI policy update and other improvements
    - The correct use of pronouns or names, as well as gender diversity education
  - Key remaining concerns included:
    - Ongoing issues with bullying, homophobia and transphobia
    - Some schools and educators were not complying with the SOGI policy
    - The perception that nothing had changed
  - Key barriers included:
    - Teachers do not have enough education and support, as well as inadequate safe spaces in schools
    - Bathrooms, changerooms and sports teams that exclude transgender people or are gendered
    - Gendered activities and words
    - Bullying
  - 53.3% of 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents said they agreed that they believed that their school, or their child's school adequately supports 2SLGBTQIA+ students, and 21.7% disagreed with that statement.
- The WGED survey period was from September 14 to October 27, 2023.
  - The contract with the ARC Foundation to support SOGI inclusion is from August 17, 2023, to August 15, 2026.



## **SOGI Inclusion**

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- All educators in Yukon Education schools received SOGI training at Welcome Week in August 2023. This was the launch of implementing SOGI 123 in Yukon.
- The Child and Youth Advocate's survey about SOGI inclusion in Yukon schools is open through April 2025. Information about how to participate is on the Advocate's web page.

### LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and SOGI Policy

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

## **SOGI Inclusion**

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

### Education Act

- Amendments to the *Education Act* make it a legal requirement for Principals to ensure that initiatives and activities in schools are inclusive of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- School administrators have been provided with information about their legislative responsibilities as well as reference materials and resources.
- Counsellors and administrators have been provided with local and national SOGI and Gender and Sexuality Alliance information.
- At the beginning of the 2023-24 school year the Department of Education provided professional development training to administrators and teachers on the requirements of the *Education Act* and the SOGI and Safe and Caring Schools policies.
- Several Yukon schools have Gender and Sexuality Alliances and other 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives.

### Catholic school parent concerns about textbook

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

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP12**  
**Spring 2025**  
Education

## SOGI Inclusion

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

### Catholic school concern about school council meeting comments

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

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-15**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Technology - Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Schools**

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Education

### **Value:**

- Teachers and students need to be aware of the benefits and potential pitfalls associated with the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education recognizes the recent notoriety associated with artificial intelligence has generated many questions and concerns.
- The department understands both the benefits and challenges with the use of AI in the classroom, and the department's goal is to have digitally literate students who can use artificial intelligence in a safe and responsible manner.
- The department has collaborated closely with our counterparts in British Columbia and has shared resources for the responsible use of artificial intelligence with students, parents, teachers, and school leadership.

### **Additional response:**

- The department's guidance on artificial intelligence aligns with Yukon government's use of artificial intelligence; the main points are cautions about exposing personal information, and to critically evaluate information generated with artificial intelligence for bias, inaccuracies, and fairness.
- Students need to learn about artificial intelligence in the classroom, in connection to curriculum, so that they are better equipped to make responsible decisions on their own.

## **Technology - Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Schools**

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Education

- Several professional development sessions for teachers have focused on the safe and responsible use of AI in the classroom. These have been well-attended and generated robust discussions.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Several secondary teachers from Whitehorse's three largest high schools wrote a letter to their principals looking for guidance and consistency with how artificial intelligence should be used within Yukon schools.

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### **Background:**

- Artificial intelligence has become a popular news topic since Chat GPT, Bard, and Co-Pilot broke into mainstream media stories approximately 2 years ago.
- Department of Education staff sat on a technical table with their counterparts at the British Columbia Ministry of Education to learn more about how other districts are handling this matter.
- The department is pleased to see the *Digital literacy and the use of AI in education*: supports for British Columbia schools guidance released in 2024. The department has reviewed this guidance and find that it will work well for the Yukon as we follow the British Columbia curriculum already.

### **Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## **Technology - K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools**

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Education

### **Value:**

- The Department of Education is continually working to integrate educational technology into school programming and ensure that it is secure, reliable, and equitably accessible.

### **Recommended response:**

- Online and digital learning technologies and resources are essential for modern, blended, and flexible learning.
- The Government of Yukon has budgeted \$2.5 million for education technology for Yukon students in 2025-26.
- The school IT budget follows a five-year plan, with annual fluctuations based on fiscal year projects.
- The Department of Education continues to invest in modernizing school cybersecurity, providing access to computing devices, improving IT infrastructure, and increasing bandwidth to support contemporary learning needs.

### **Additional response:**

- Students without access to a personal device can use a school-provided device for their learning.
- The department donates some retired computing devices to the Computers for Schools Yukon recycling program for K-12 students.
- The increasing availability and utility of artificial intelligence (AI) presents learning opportunities. While there are many factors to consider, the department emphasizes transparency and academic integrity while embracing AI's benefits.
- The Department of Education has adopted the British Columbia guidelines for AI use in schools.

### Technology - K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools

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Education

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Improved access to technology has led to a significant increase in students' use of devices and digital tools.

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#### Background:

- In 2024-25, the department budgeted \$2.5 million in education technology to modernize learning in Yukon schools, including investing in upgrading school computing devices, infrastructure, and bandwidth access. In 2025-26 the department budgeted \$2.5 million to advance these initiatives.
- Online and digital learning technologies and resources are part of a blended learning approach for students and teachers.
- With increased enrollment, new schools and an increase in the overall demand for technology, the department continually assesses technological needs, including the provision of computing devices.
- During the summer of 2024, department IT staff visited 35 locations across the territory to perform technical maintenance and IT support. This annual maintenance prepares the hardware, infrastructure and systems that support over 7,500 students and staff.

#### Mobile devices for students

- The department is using a phased approach to implement network improvements that will advance the connectivity of education-owned and personal computing devices to enhance learning.
- In 2020-21, the department partnered with Yukon First Nation governments for the purchase of 712 laptops to support First Nations students. These devices were delivered to participating First Nation governments and to student citizens.

#### Connectivity, wireless and bandwidth

- Students have internet access when at school through school wireless networks. For those students who do not have internet access at home, school administrators can consider arranging other options, either within the school or elsewhere in their community when face-to-face learning is interrupted.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SP14**  
**Spring 2025**

## Technology - K-12 Technology in Yukon Schools

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Education

- The department continues to work to improve bandwidth via network upgrades. Education's service standard is one megabit per second (Mbps), per student.
- The department continues to enhance and modernize school networks and wireless capacity each year to ensure they have the capability to meet demands.

### Learning technology

- The Information Technology and Support Services branch continues to develop and enhance a robust suite of web-based learning tools to support blended learning.
- The Department of Education continues to develop and enhance K-12 cybersecurity for students and their personal information.
- Classrooms are embracing new and robust modern learning tools. However, the K-12 cybersecurity technology may block untested technology and devices when at school.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-30**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



#### Value:

- Catholic Separate Schools are Yukon public schools and any Catholic school policies must comply with the policies in effect for all Yukon public schools.

#### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon works with the Catholic school communities and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse to deliver public school programs and religious education at the Yukon's three Catholic schools.
- The relationship between the Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation is outlined in the Education Act and a 1962 agreement that remains in effect.
- St. Francis Secondary, Christ the King Elementary, and Holy Family Elementary follow the same curriculum, laws, and policies as other Yukon schools.
- In addition, they provide religious education instruction such as Catholic values lessons, prayers, and Church-related activities.
- The Department of Education continues to review policies and structures to clarify roles and improve communication between the department and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation.
- Yukon's Catholic schools are part of the Yukon Education school authority, managed directly by the Department of Education. There is a process outlined in the Education Act for school councils to follow should they wish to join an existing or establish a new school board.

#### Additional response:

- There is a communication protocol between the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse to ensure all parties have a comprehensive and common understanding of the agreement. This includes:

- Monthly meetings between Department officials, including the Deputy Minister, and the Bishop.
  - A YGLearn course on Catholic education in Yukon, providing guidance for educators.
  - Ongoing engagement on SOGI inclusion implementation in Catholic schools.
  - Catholic educators who have concerns related to their work should bring them forward through the appropriate channels. These include:
    - The school's administrative team
    - The Office of the Superintendents
    - The Human Resources branch of the Department of Education
    - The Yukon Association of Education Professionals
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- After a letter of the Holy Family Elementary School principal became public when she stepped down in February 2025, questions were raised in the House and the media about what the Government of Yukon is doing regarding Bishop Hector Villa's influence on Catholic schools.
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#### **Background:**

- Under the *Education Act*, the Minister of Education is responsible for the operation and management of any school for which there is a School Council, including the three Catholic schools (Christ the King Elementary School, Holy Family Elementary School, and Vanier Catholic Secondary School).
- The 1962 agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse provides that:
  - The Catholic separate schools will be funded by the Yukon government and must be operated and governed in accordance with all legal requirements in force in Yukon.

- The Yukon government is responsible for operations and maintenance of Catholic separate schools.
- The Episcopal Corporation is responsible for instructing students in the Roman Catholic religion and has a role in staff recruitment and recommendations on a teacher's suitability to teach in these schools.
- Under the *Education Act*, all rights and privileges arising out of the 1962 Agreement must be respected and continued under the Act.

### 1962 Agreement:

- An agreement signed in April 1962 between the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory (Commissioner) and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation (Corporation) of Whitehorse outlined the following:
  - The sale of land and schools from the Corporation to the Commission of schools then known as Christ the King Elementary School and High School, in Whitehorse Yukon for the sum of \$200,001 (occurred).
  - That the Government of Yukon will establish, operate and maintain Catholic separate schools, subject to the terms outlined in the agreement until such a time that locally funded Catholic school districts were established (ongoing commitment).
  - That Government of Yukon will not impose any fee, levy or tax on a Catholic separate school that is higher than those for non-separate schools (ongoing commitment).
  - That the funding and services provided for Catholic separate schools will be of an equivalent standard to those provided for non-separate schools (ongoing commitment).
  - That the Commissioner will consult with the Corporation for the approval of teacher's suitability to teach in a Catholic separate school (ongoing commitment).
  - That the Corporation shall undertake programs for the recruitment of teachers, including principals and vice-principals for separate schools (recruitment currently coordinated through Department of Education, with a role for the Corporation).

- That the Corporation will be responsible for instructing students attending Catholic separate schools in the Catholic religion and morality at no cost to the Government of Yukon, inclusive of instructors, religious books and materials (this currently occurs through Catholic religion coordinators, paid for by the Department of Education).

School	Assigned FTE	Approximate Cost
Christ the King Elementary School	0.5	\$63,026.85
Holy Family Elementary School	0.3	\$43,950.11
St. Francis of Assisi Secondary School	1.0	\$103,932.74
Total	1.8	\$210,909.69

- That religious instruction be given during specified times for this instruction and training (ongoing commitment).
- That Catholic separate schools will be operated and maintained and governed by all laws of the Yukon Territory (ongoing commitment).
- The Corporation may work with the Commissioner to identified appropriate sites for future Catholic separate schools (the last new Catholic school, Holy Family Elementary School in Porter Creek opened in 1993).
- The 1962 Agreement is protected under the *Education Act* (section 57):

“All rights and privileges arising out of the Yukon Act (Canada), any agreement or understanding between the Commissioner of the Yukon Territory or the Minister and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation shall be respected and continued under this Act and any regulations passed thereunder. S.Y. 1989- 90, c.25, s.57.”
- Additionally, there is a Separate School Regulation, pursuant to sections 57, 58, 59, 60, and 306(f) of the *Education Act* (O.I.C 1991/231), which outlines residency for attendance areas, elections, religious instruction and exercises for separate schools in the Yukon.
- The Yukon Act allows for the Legislature to make laws in relations to education in the Yukon, but any law must provide that “the minority of the ratepayers in that part of Yukon, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish separate schools in that part and, if they do so, are liable only to assessments of the rates that they impose on themselves in respect of those schools.” (Yukon Act – S.C. 2002, c. 7 (Section 18))

- As long as the 1962 agreement remains in force, it is legally binding on both parties. However, the agreement cannot displace other laws of Canada or the Yukon such as the Education Act, the Constitution, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the Yukon Human Rights Act.
- Should the Commissioner (as represented by the Government of Yukon) decide to change the 1962 agreement with the Corporation, this could be done in one of the following ways:
  - Encouraging the establishment of school districts (school boards) as described in the 1962 agreement. The process for establishing school boards is outlined in sections 72 through 76 of the Education Act; or
  - Amending the Education Act and repealing the Separate Schools Regulation; or
  - Ceasing to follow the terms of the 1962 agreement, in which case the extent to which the Government of Yukon has a duty to continue to follow this agreement within the Department of Education's current legislative framework would likely be decided by the courts.

### Protocols

- The table below identifies the protocols between the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse that are currently in place and the priority level for protocol development. These protocols support both the Yukon Department of Education and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Whitehorse around roles and responsibilities.

Protocol	Branch Director	Priority Level Order
Communication	Superintendents and Director, Communication	Complete
Staffing	Director, Human Resources	Consultation with the YAEP
MOU - Roles and Responsibilities	Director, Policy and ADM Schools	1
Funding for Religious Instruction	Superintendents and Director, Finance	2

Protocol	Branch Director	Priority Level Order
Curriculum and Instruction Materials	Director, Curriculum and Assessment	3
Professional Development	Superintendents, Director, Curriculum and Assessment, and Director, Student Support Services	4
Development of Policy	Director, Policy and ADM Schools	5

**May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day**

- There have been questions raised as to why the department has not followed up with some members of the Catholic Professional Development Committee who raised concerns about the May 1, 2023, Catholic Schools Professional Development Day.
- While there have not been any formal workplace health and safety complaints or concerns documented, in continuing to thoroughly review archived files from previous employees, the department located a letter signed by some members of the Catholic Professional Development Committee, the teacher committee that organized the May 1, 2023, Professional Development Day, that was sent in May 2023. Both recipients of the letter have since moved on from the Office of the Superintendents.
- With renewed awareness of these concerns, the Department of Education will take the concerns of previous complaints from 2023 seriously.
- The Department of Education is following their established human resource processes to review the matters and address the concerns raised by some of the Committee members. We are looking into the past correspondence of these former employees to identify if any follow-up was actioned.
- At no point did the Department of Education communicate or imply that attendance at Mass was mandatory for staff. The department is continuing to understand and explore the concern that has been brought forward and to learn why some members felt that attending mass was mandatory.
- On April 2, 2025, the human resources branch met with the signatories of the May 16, 2023, letter and will take appropriate next steps.

### History

- There have been many instances over the years where differences between the enforcement of Department of Education policies and the Catholic Episcopal Corporation have become public.
- Examples include:

#### 2004

- Prayer by non-Catholics in Catholic schools 2004
  - Complaints were made both by a school and reported in the media that non-Catholics who had been accepted in the Catholic system were not following the religious rules in the school.

#### 2012

- Catholic “One Heart” document and opposition to SOGI policy 2012.
  - A document prepared by the bishop, was put on the Vanier Catholic Secondary School website but subsequently removed after review of the Department of Education.
- Locker vandalism 2012
  - A student locker at Vanier Catholic Secondary School was vandalized with the word “faggot” with subsequent media and school community reaction.

#### 2023

- Professional development - 2023
  - At a Catholic administrators meeting Bishop Vila suggested that Christopher West be invited to be the presenter at the Catholic Schools of Whitehorse Professional Development Day. Christopher West is controversial for non-Catholics as he a proponent of “Theology of the Body”. Theology of the Body fits within the Catholic doctrine. Christopher West was not invited to be the presenter.
  - The Catholic Schools of Whitehorse professional development day was held on May 1, 2023. As per tradition, a mass was held at Sacred Heart Cathedral to begin the professional day and was presided over by Bishop Hector Vila. During the homily Bishop Vila spoke to the Catholic beliefs on marriage, at which time approximately one-third of the people attending left. The principals of Christ the King Elementary School and St. Francis of Assisi remained for the entire mass.

- The professional development day continued at the Gold Rush Inn conference centre with on-line presentations from Father Martin, who does not live in the Yukon. Father Martin's message was well received at the professional development day. Bishop Vila remained in attendance for the rest of the time at the Gold Rush Inn.

#### 2024

- Pride Flag theft 2024
  - A Pride flag was damaged and stolen from Holy Family Elementary School and reported in the media.
- Curriculum resource material and textbook 2024
  - An anonymous letter was received complaining about a textbook use in the *Morals and Ethics* course at St. Francis of Assisi. The complaint was regarding textbook language which contradicted the SOGI policy, specifically regarding homosexuality.
  - A comprehensive review of the textbooks used in Grades 10-12 was completed by a panel which included, a curriculum consultant and two St. Francis staff, one of which was the religious education coordinator.
  - A list of recommendations for each text was compiled and it was determined that the textbook mentioned in the letter be replaced with an alternative.

#### 2025

- Holy Family Principal 2025
  - The principal of a Whitehorse Catholic school stepped down from her position alleging that the local bishop frequently oversteps his authority while the education department does little to address his behaviour.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## **Communicable Disease in Schools**

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Education

### **Value:**

- The Department of Education is committed to providing safe and healthy learning environments that foster student success, especially for those who depend on a school as a reliable, safe space.

### **Recommended response:**

- Schools are required to report suspected communicable diseases to Yukon Communicable Disease Control. The department and schools continue to employ established processes for monitoring and reporting communicable diseases.
- The department follows the advice and guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and collaborates closely with their office.
- It's recommended that children who are ill – regardless of symptoms – stay home to recover and to avoid infecting others.

### **Additional response:**

- The Chief Medical Officer of Health provides recommendations on school operations, including decisions on notifying others about suspected outbreaks.
- Schools have contingency plans in place when there is a high absenteeism rate among staff and/or students.

### **Measles response:**

- There has been an increase in measles infections in Canada, as well as many parts of the world.
- To date, there have been no measles infections in Yukon.
- Any response to a confirmed measles exposure or a measles outbreak in a school setting would involve close collaboration between the Department of Education, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Yukon Communicable Disease Control.

## Communicable Disease in Schools

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Education

- The best protection against measles is to be vaccinated. Two doses of measles containing vaccine (MMR or MMR-V) are required. As part of the childhood immunization program in the Yukon, the first dose of vaccine is offered when a child is one year of age, and the second dose is offered at or around the age at which they begin school (4 to 6 years old). It is never too late to get the vaccine
- Information was shared with the school and early learning community in May of 2024 regarding the importance of reviewing vaccine records and scheduling an appointment if vaccination is necessary.
- Government of Yukon recently shared information to encourage all Yukoners to stay up to date with immunizations, including measles.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Instances of communicable diseases that require a report to Yukon Communicable Disease Control arise from time to time in Yukon schools. Concerns may be raised publicly when a school community is notified of a communicable disease.

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### Background:

#### School Ventilation

- All school ventilation systems are inspected prior to the start of the school year, and preventative maintenance work is completed, including replacing filters. Filters are changed as per engineering specs, including replacing pre-filters every 3 months or as required and main filters at a maximum of every 24 months or as required. The filters can range from MERV8 all the way up to MERV14 depending on what is specified.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Smoking and Vaping in Yukon schools: refer to SI10

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- Students learn age-appropriate information and decision-making skills about drugs, alcohol, safety and risky behaviours as part of the school curriculum, including learning about fentanyl and cannabis.
- Our schools have a strong partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services branch; we can connect students who are at particular risk of harm from substance use with effective and qualified therapeutic practitioners.
- The opioid crisis in the Yukon impacts our school communities and the declaration of a substance use health emergency is a serious concern that impacts us all; our hearts are with the families and communities who continue to grieve.

#### Additional response:

- We strive to make schools places of positive connections for students, and for students to know that school staff care for and believe in them.
- The Government of Yukon's Opioid Action Plan sets out how we will keep students safe. We will continue to work with students, staff and families to educate them about the dangers of illicit drugs, like fentanyl.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- On August 23, 2023, Health and Social Services released Yukon's Substance Use Emergency Strategy, containing several recommendations where the Department of Education could partner with Health and Social services on implementation.

### Drugs in Yukon schools

Education

- At times concerns arise about young people using substances, sometimes prompted by specific school or media incidents.

#### Background:

- The Yukon's curriculum has learning outcomes from kindergarten to grade 12 related to the dangers associated with harmful substances such as poisons, prescription medications and drugs, starting in grade 5 for illegal drugs.
- All Yukon high schools offer counselling at school with support from the Department of Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- To enhance the Physical and Health curriculum, in 2020 the Department of Education rolled out a unit on substance use for grade 8-12 teachers, providing them with resources to support them in delivering this topic.
- When substances are discovered in schools, schools work with the RCMP to investigate and send communications out to parents and guardians advising what supports are available and the importance of having conversations with their children about drug usage.
- Naloxone training and kits were first made available to principals in spring 2017. In spring 2021, administrators were provided with additional naloxone training and new kits.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### School Councils and Boards Dispute Resolution Process: refer to EP07

#### Value:

- The Education Appeal Tribunal plays a critical role in giving parents and guardians the ability to appeal certain education decisions such as those related to a suspension or an individualized education plan.

#### Recommended response:

- I would like to thank the members of the Education Appeal Tribunal for their hard work in resolving issues that may arise.
- I appreciate opportunities for parties to work together and find mediated solutions.

#### Additional response:

- Mediation has been used to successfully resolve most disputes and appeals.
- The department is not able to comment on the details of any specific student's file.
- The tribunal process respects and upholds the confidentiality and privacy rights of students and their families.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the status of current appeals.

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#### Background:

- The *Education Appeal Tribunal* is a quasi-judicial, independent government body established by the *Education Act* to hear appeals on issues related to decisions made by the department, school councils or schools.
- The tribunal can hear appeals in four areas: special needs, student records, suspensions, and locally developed courses of study.
- On average, the Tribunal receives between 0-3 appeals annually.

### Education Appeal Tribunal

Education

- As of January 2025, there was one appeal before the Education Appeal Tribunal.
- In June 2024, the department, at the request of the tribunal, updated the *Education Appeal Tribunal procedures policy*.
- In cases where a mediator facilitates a decision between parties, the chair of the tribunal makes sure any decisions and/or agreements, including commitments and follow-up steps are written and signed by all parties.
- If no agreement is reached, the matter will proceed to a formal hearing.
- Decisions made during a formal hearing of the Education Appeal Tribunal are binding and are filed in the Yukon Supreme Court.

#### 2023- 2024 Reporting

EAT statistics – April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024	
Appeal requests received this year	6
Cases outstanding from previous years	3
Requests discontinued by applicants	3
Resolved by department	1
Not within EAT jurisdiction	1
In mediation	1
Resolved through mediation	1
Pending	2
Hearings	0

#### Membership

- Pursuant to the *Education Act*, the Minister is responsible for appointing “a chair, a maximum of nine other members and a secretary to the Education Appeal Tribunal”.
- Members are appointed to a length of term specified by the Minister. Currently, members are being appointed to three-year terms.
- The option exists for the Minister to appoint two rural Yukon representatives to the Tribunal.

#### Current Members

- Debra Bartlette, member from April 18, 2024 to April 17, 2027

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SI03**  
**Spring 2025**

## Education Appeal Tribunal

Education

- Gwyneth Kovachik-McNeil, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Janet Moodie, chair from November 16, 2023, to November 15, 2026
- Josefine Leideritz, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Kimberley Hardacker, member from April 13, 2022, to April 12, 2025
- Margaret Webb, member from April 18, 2024 to April 17, 2027
- Paula Pasquali, member from April 13, 2022, to April 4, 2025

### Delays

- Following the resignation of a previous Chair there was a period during the fall of 2023 when the Education Appeal Tribunal was not able to deal with appeals.
- The department reached out to those who filed appeals during this interim period and offered to engage in mediation to help resolve concerns.
- In November 2023, a new Chair was appointed for a three-year term and the backlog of appeals has been fully addressed.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- Allegations were raised about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion at three schools:
  - Jack Hulland Elementary School in Whitehorse in the fall of 2022
  - St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction on May 17, 2024
  - J.V. Clark School in Mayo on July 22, 2024
- The Department of Education continues to communicate with families, caregivers and staff that there is a range of free-of-charge supports, as we navigate these complex matters.

### **Investigations and legal matters—holds and restraints:**

- As an employer, we have an obligation and are committed to learning more about the conduct of our employees and what happened.
- The department fully cooperated with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's criminal investigation at Jack Hulland Elementary School, which was completed with no charges laid.
- I am aware of an ongoing investigation by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office.
- The Department of Education is working with the Department of Justice on these civil lawsuits. Given there are ongoing matters before the courts, I will not be commenting on the specific allegations outlined in the statements of claim.
- These matters are complex and of a most serious nature and will take time to complete.



## **Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

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Education

### **Managing student behaviour:**

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

## **Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

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Education

### **Requests for student records:**

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

### **Administration / supporting staff:**

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

### **Communications:**

- The department will communicate information as we are able to.
- The department continues to remind and encourage families and staff of the resource support available to them, including a dedicated support

## **Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

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Education

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

### **Child and Youth Advocate Office:**

- On April 25, 2025, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office provided the Deputy Ministers of Education and Health and Social Services and Justice copies of their report.
    - The Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office is expected to release the report on May 1, 2025.
    - The Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office requests an initial response by June 30, 2025, and a follow-up response by December 1, 2025.
  - The department also works with the Child and Youth Advocate on a case-by-case basis to directly support past and present students and families of Jack Hulland Elementary School.
  - The department will continue to provide updates to the Child and Youth Advocate on the government's ongoing response.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On September 12, 2023, the RCMP informed the JHES School community they completed their investigation. Their final report was forwarded to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada in June 2024. RCMP investigation concluded that no criminal charges would be laid.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, naming the Yukon government and JHES School Council as defendants. The JHES School Council was subsequently dropped from the claim.
- A decision released September 6, 2023, certified the claim as a class action.
- A statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 17, 2024, and a statement of claim for the JV Clark School was filed on July 22, 2024.

## Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion

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Education

### Background:

- In November 2021, the Area Superintendent for Jack Hulland Elementary School received information from the acting school principal that there could be school-wide physical abuse of students through inappropriate use of holds and isolation rooms as a means to restrain and address student behaviour.
- Violence at Jack Hulland Elementary School has previously been described as student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher and largely focused on a shared resource program that supports students with behavioural needs (Grove Street program).
- RCMP and Family and Children's Services were engaged on November 19, 2021. Production orders for records were completed to RCMP's satisfaction.
- A law group was engaged to conduct the employer's fact-finding investigation using duplicate copies of all the same materials that were disclosed to the RCMP, including Workplace Risk Assessments and other reports involving the use of holds and isolation rooms produced over the last 5 years. A Workplace Risk Assessment must be completed and submitted to the Student Support Services Unit when students demonstrate escalated behavior that may be harmful to themselves or others.
- The initial findings from the law group received in April 2022, suggested concerns that holds, restraints and seclusion were not used as a last resort or in situations of imminent danger, but rather for matters of non-compliance or not following the direction of staff.
- As the employer, we have an obligation to address these concerns and prevent future harm and will continue to take this matter seriously.
- Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training – an industry standard training – to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts.
- In May 2022, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter clarifying the employer's expectations of Educators in respect to managing student behavior.

## **Investigations around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

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Education

- On May 5, 2022, information was also shared with families, and a meeting was held with participation from Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, to the Yukon Supreme Court by two plaintiffs and their guardians against the Department of Education and Jack Hulland Elementary School Council for holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff.
- Legal counsel for the Department of Education filed a defense to the class action lawsuit that was submitted in mid-February 2023.
- In May 2023, the Yukon Supreme Court agreed to dismiss the action against the school council.
- June 26 – 29, 2023 a hearing was held to determine if the lawsuit should be a class action.
- September 6, 2023, the lawsuit was certified as a class action on behalf of all students "who were subject to holds and restraints and who were locked in a room and/or placed in seclusion" at the school between Jan. 1, 2007, and June 30, 2022, except for individual accusations of assault and confinement.
- The RCMP concluded their investigation in June 2024, and found on the entirety of the evidence that was collected that no criminal charges would be laid.
- A statement of claim for the St. Elias Community School was filed on May 17, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on July 19, 2024.
- A statement of claim for the JV Clark School was filed on July 22, 2024, and a statement of defense was filed on August 20, 2024.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is a top priority.

### Recommended response:

- Pest control mitigations are implemented when signs of pests are discovered in any Yukon government workplaces, including schools.
- If there are signs of pests in schools, staff can submit a pest control work order.
- The department works with schools to minimize attractants and make additional custodial resources available if needed.

### Additional response:

- Department and school officials work with Environmental Health Services on response, prevention and remediation.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Many schools have nutrition programs that can attract pests.
- It is common to see increased mouse activity in the fall and/or when a building is undergoing renovations.

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### Background:

- On August 15, 2024, school staff notified the department of a mice infestation at École Whitehorse Elementary School. Operations staff contacted a local pest control company. They responded immediately, beginning work right away to address the issue.
- Regular reports from the company indicate that mouse activity appears limited. Despite these reports, school staff continue to observe signs of mice. A contract has been established to provide comprehensive mitigation measures and to address identified rodent issues at École Whitehorse Elementary School. This one-year contract, initiated on October 1, 2024, with Orkin Canada, will ensure that the school will be attended for rodent control twice monthly for inspection and rebaiting of traps.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SI05**  
**Spring 2025**

## Pest Control in Schools

Education

- The department receives regular updates on rodent activity and mitigation efforts at École Whitehorse Elementary School from the pest control company. Department officials will continue to monitor the progress of the implemented strategies.
- An increase in the provision of food and nutritional programs has resulted in more food stored within Yukon schools and an increased volume of compostable materials. Both of which are attractants to pests.

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**For Building Schools - 5-year Capital Plan: refer to HOT01/SO01**

**For Modular Classrooms: refer to SO06**

**For School Growth Planning: refer to SI07**

#### **Value:**

- School facilities are important spaces that enable students to learn, host a variety of activities and support vibrant communities.

#### **Recommended response:**

- As Whitehorse continues to see steady population growth, Yukon school facilities need to grow and adapt to meet student population needs.
- The Department of Education routinely gathers data and input from school communities to plan their short, medium and long-term needs.
- Secondary school buildings in Whitehorse are more than large enough to accommodate the number of grade 8 -12 students enrolled across the system.
- The department recognizes that some schools' enrolment levels are approaching operational capacity. Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify additional space needs.

#### **Additional response:**

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



- In collaboration with other departments, Education monitors school facilities, capacity and demographic trends and plan for future school growth within the system.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions have been raised in the Legislative Assembly, in the media, and from school councils on how the department will deal with schools nearing or exceeding their operational capacity.
  - Determining operational capacity is complex, as space usage and programming needs change on a yearly basis and targets for operational capacity are set below the maximum number of students a school can accommodate.
- 

#### **Background:**

##### Capital planning:

- The departments of Highways and Public Works and Education make capital planning decisions based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with educational programming needs, demographic projections and enrolment trends and pressures. All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan.
- Schools can use the school growth planning process to identify additional space needs.
- The departments of Education and Highways and Public Works are working on a multi-year procurement and placement program for modulares, including where to replace aging structures and where to place new ones at Yukon schools.

##### Out-of-area requests and catchment analysis:

- Students wishing to attend a secondary school outside their catchment area must complete an out-of-area request.
  - For the 2024–25 school year, these requests were carefully considered if the student wants to attend a school experiencing enrolment pressures.
  - The same considerations will be in place for the 2025-26 school year.

- The department is undertaking a holistic catchment analysis of Whitehorse high schools, including out-of-area enrolment at F.H. Collins Secondary School.

#### School capacity:

- School capacity is estimated and measured by operational and total capacity while considering enrollment numbers.
- Enrolment numbers at F.H. Collins School, and other Whitehorse secondary schools do not fully reflect cross-enrolled students. While each student has a designated home school, many also attend another school part-time or full-time, such as the Individual Learning Centre, Aurora Virtual School, or Wood Street School.
- Operational capacity refers to the ideal state in which a school should function, considering factors such as fluctuations in enrollment, the ability to accommodate an influx of student enrollment as well as the efficient use of facilities and resources that all contribute to an ideal learning environment.
- Total capacity refers to the highest number of students that a school can accommodate, considering all available spaces, resources, and facilities.
- Both operational and total capacity are based on the number of classrooms and teaching spaces and the school's grade structure. Class size maximums are part of the YAEP collective agreement.
- Operational and total capacity estimates are subject to fluctuation monthly and throughout the school year due to factors such as changes in student enrollment, program offerings, classroom configurations, and facility utilization.
- Schools and school boards make decisions about managing operational capacity. For example, schools above operational capacity may repurpose spaces in facilities or alter class schedules to optimize use.
- The department continually reviews and refines its methods for measuring and improving operational and total capacity, ensuring that estimates remain accurate and effective in supporting informed decision-making.

### Estimated Elementary Operational and Total Capacities as of February 2025

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
Christ the King Elementary	353	294	120%	368	96%
École Whitehorse Elementary School	452	459	98%	551	82%
Elijah Smith Elementary School	271	330	83%	396	69%
Golden Horn Elementary School	246	216	114%	259	95%
Grey Mountain Primary School	86	67	128%	80	108%
Hidden Valley Elementary School	187	142	132%	170	111%
Holy Family Elementary School	185	147	126%	176	105%
Jack Hulland Elementary School	315	351	89%	421	74%
Selkirk Elementary School	375	302	124%	362	103%
Takhini Elementary School	160	222	72%	266	60%
Whistle Bend Elementary School	230	340	67%	425	53%
École Émilie-Tremblay (K-6)	220	302	73%	362	61%

### Estimated Secondary Operational and Total Capacities as of February 2025

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
CSSC Mercier	160	150	106%	195	82%
F.H. Collins Secondary School	741	744	99%	967	76%

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT11/SI06

Spring 2025

## School Capacity

Education

School	Enrolment	Operational Capacity	Operational Capacity Rate	Total Capacity	Total Capacity Rate
Porter Creek Secondary School	558	765	73%	994	56%
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School	471	518	91%	673	70%

### F.H. Collins Secondary School:

- F.H. Collins Secondary School was designed as a high school with the possibility to accommodate a school expansion in the future. Currently, this school is at 99 per cent operational capacity and long-term capital planning will include options for expansion.
- For the 2024–25 school year, 12 students from the F.H. Collins Secondary School catchment area were redirected to other area high schools as programming could not be provided at the school when those students attempted to register.
- The City of Whitehorse's building inspection team has determined that the occupancy capacity of F.H. Collins is 1,630 persons. This contrasts with the school's operational capacity of 744 students. Occupancy capacity is determined by the building and fire codes.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-10**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- School Growth Plans are an important way to focus on student success and the impacts of school-level strategies to improve student learning outcomes and engagement.

### Recommended response:

- The School Growth Planning process is one way the department seeks to identify and address the root causes of achievement gaps, supporting evidence-based approaches to improving student success.
- School Growth Plans identify the school's educational goals and priorities for the school year and are designed to be the road maps for improvement for each Yukon school.
- Each school is responsible for developing and implementing a School Growth Plan that reflects their school community's and students' needs.
- All schools are encouraged to include Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being in their School Growth Plans, aligning cultural, language, tradition and perspectives with the curriculum and local priorities.

### Additional response:

- In the future, the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners will help define the areas of focus that every school will use in its School Growth Plan.
- The Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, which was developed collaboratively with Yukon First Nations and education partners, is nearing completion.
- Following the launch of Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, the Department of Education will update the School Growth Planning Policy and process.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 Auditor General report highlighted that the department needs to implement its required oversight mechanisms, including providing summary reports of School Growth Plans to the Minister (Recommendation #47).

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### Background:

- School Growth Plans are developed collaboratively with Yukon First Nations, school councils, school boards, school staff and students.
- Depending on their scope, plans identify one to three years of educational priorities.
- School Growth Plans are public documents and are shared with the superintendents, executive directors, school councils, school boards, and other local community partners as appropriate.
- Improving School Growth Planning oversight and reporting was included in the Auditor General of Canada's recommendations in 2019.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-29

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### Privacy Awareness: Refer to DPT11

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- Video surveillance is used in limited situations at schools when it is deemed appropriate to ensure a safe school community.
- This technology serves as an additional tool to help address incidents of concerning behaviour on school grounds, including when there are allegations of crime or vandalism on school property.
- Since 2022, there have been no reports made to the Department of Education or the Information and Privacy Commissioner of misuse or mishandling of information gathered by video surveillance technology.

#### Additional response:

- In 2022 the Information and Privacy Commissioner completed a compliance audit.
- In response, the department outlined a clear response to the Information and Privacy Commissioner on how the department would address the 24 recommendations in the 2022 compliance audit.
- A Privacy Impact Assessment recommended in the audit is underway.
- The department also has a Video Surveillance Policy that follows privacy regulations and contains guidelines for records collection, retention and destruction.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- On March 25, 2024, the Yukon Ombudsman/Information and Privacy Commissioner tabled their 2022 Annual Report with the Yukon Legislative

## School Video Surveillance

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Assembly. This report featured two stories involving the access and privacy aspects of video surveillance at schools.

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### Background:

- As of January 2025, video surveillance technology is being used at the following schools:
  - operated by Yukon Education:
    - F.H Collins Secondary School
    - St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School
    - Porter Creek Secondary School
    - École Whitehorse Elementary School
  - operated by the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon:
    - Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile Mercier
    - L'École Émilie-Tremblay
  - operated by the First Nation School Board:
    - Ghùch Tlâ Community School (Carcross)
- Following a complaint in 2022, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner conducted an investigation and a compliance audit to evaluate whether the personal information collected through the use of video surveillance technology in schools is adequately protected in accordance with the requirements of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and regulations.
- Following the compliance audit, the Information and Privacy Commissioner submitted a [Privacy Compliance Audit Report](#) to the Department of Education on June 14, 2022, which included recommendations.
- The Department of Education accepted 22 of the 24 Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations and committed to ensuring that any new video surveillance technology in schools complies with the 24 recommendations.
- The department is also committed to working expeditiously to implementing the recommendations in all current systems, including completing Privacy Impact



Assessments for deployed technology, submitting them to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and updating the department's video surveillance policy.

- An umbrella privacy impact assessment on the use of video surveillance in Yukon schools is under review by legal services. Once complete, it will be reviewed by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Department of Highways and Public Works.
  - After full approval of the umbrella assessment, the next step is to evaluate and complete school-specific privacy impact assessments at Yukon schools, using the umbrella assessment as a template.
  - There are several different video surveillance systems being used by Yukon schools.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-31**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value

- The Department of Education is serious about protecting students' privacy and personal information.

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education's position is that the department has the authority to collect, use, and disclose student's personal information for the purpose of communicating to the broader school community.
- The Department of Education is currently undertaking a privacy impact assessment to assess the risks of posting students' personal information to internet platforms.
- The Department has notified staff of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of youth's personal information under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

### Additional response re: Office of the Information and Privacy

#### Commissioner investigation into the department's use of social media

- The Department of Education does not agree with all the Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations.
- The Department is working to refine processes and policies into a comprehensive framework that clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, and oversight with respect to the collection, use, and disclosure of youth personal information on internet platforms.
- The Department of Education is also reviewing and updating the department's privacy management policy and plan.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- An individual made a complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner regarding collection, use, and disclosure of student images on

internet platforms in Yukon schools.

- The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner posted the report publicly on their web site on June 12, 2023.

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### Background:

- The department has notified staff of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of youth's personal information under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Further, the department has provided direction that there are to be no new social media posts until the risk assessment has been completed, processes and procedures are better defined, and further direction can be provided.
- On May 18, 2023, Minister McLean received a letter from the Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) advising the Department that the Commissioner had completed their report on the compliance audit regarding the collection, use, and disclosure of student images on internet platforms that is occurring in some schools in the Yukon.
- On June 9, 2023, the Department of Education responded to the report and recommendations, accepting 4 of the 6 recommendations.
- While the Department is not ceasing the collection and use of, or purging of, stored internet images, we are making many improvements.
- In summary, the department committed to:
  - clearly establish Education's authority to collect, use, and disclose students' personal information on internet platforms for the purpose of communicating the goals and objectives of the Yukon education system as outlined in section 4 of the Education Act (underway)
  - revise our media release permission form to indicate intention, clearly outline risk, establish the authority to collect, use, and disclose, as well as who to contact for more information (complete)
  - send the media release permission form home with students annually and provide the ability for students to revoke permission (complete)
  - implement, and train staff, on the use of the permission tracking mechanism within the student information system (underway)

### Schools use of social media

Education

- complete a privacy impact assessment that examines specifically the risk of posting student personal information to internet platforms (underway)
- revisit all Yukon school's social media sites and ensure the sites have been approved by the school's superintendent or executive director. Approval forms will be kept on file and a spreadsheet inventory of sites will be audited twice annually (completed)
- reinforce, through communication and training, all employees of their obligations with respect to the collection, use or disclosure of students' personal information under the ATIPP Act (underway)

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-29

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools**

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Education

### **Value:**

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

### **Recommended response:**

- Yukon schools follow the *Tobacco and Vapour-Free Schools Policy*, which prohibits smoking, including vaping and the use of e-cigarettes, on school property.
- A school's response to students who are caught smoking or vaping on school property is guided by its school rules, which are approved by each school council or school board.
- The Government of Yukon signed the Coordinated Vaping Product Taxation Agreement with the Government of Canada, which increases the tax rate on vaping products. The framework puts a focus on reducing youth vaping rates by mainly impacting single-use products.

### **Additional response:**

- Talking to students about making healthy lifestyle choices is part of the curriculum and should be an ongoing conversation happening both at school and at home.
- Schools provide information to help young people to make good choices and keep themselves safe and healthy. We encourage everyone to talk to the kids in their lives to help them make healthy choices and stay safe.

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### **Context – this may be an issue because:**

- There have been incidents of students smoking and vaping at school.
  - In January 2025, a new taxation agreement took effect which increased the federal excise tax on vaping products.
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## Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools

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Education

### Background:

- Under the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act* no person shall smoke, vape or use a tobacco product in a school or on school grounds.
- The Department of Education updated the *Tobacco and Vapour Free Schools Policy* in 2019 to include language around vaping devices.
- Under the department's *Substance Abuse Policy*, smoking cannabis is not permitted on school grounds, regardless of whether it is legal.
- There are no designated smoking areas on any school grounds; however, students sometimes smoke off school grounds in areas close to and often within sight of the school, especially at the secondary schools.
- The Yukon government's Health Promotion Unit helps deliver smoking and vaping prevention information to students upon school request.
- The Department of Education also provides information about the risks of smoking and vaping in Yukon schools as part of the school curriculum.
- Whitehorse high school administrators have been working to improve the consistency of their school-based policies on vaping.
- In spring 2022, F.H. Collins High School partnered with Physical and Health Education Canada (with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada) to engage in a three year-pilot project entitled STOMP.
  - STOMP takes a comprehensive approach to curb tobacco use, including e-cigarettes and vaping, in students from grades 7-12.
  - F.H. received a grant of \$2500 for this project.
- Health Promotion continues to support Yukon educators and students with classroom presentations and resources on tobacco use, vaping and cannabis use.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Student Personal Device Usage**

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### **Value:**

- The Department of Education's priority is to create an environment conducive to learning in all Yukon schools.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education is aware that many jurisdictions, including British Columbia have recently announced personal device use restrictions in schools for the 2024–25 school year. The restrictions aim to reduce classroom distractions, promote wellbeing, foster online safety, and ensure consistency.
- As of the fall of 2024, at least 14 schools across the Yukon have implemented similar policies, each tailored to their community's needs. The policies were implemented in collaboration with their school councils and communities, where they established personal device use rules or codes of conduct.
- The Department of Education plans to develop formal guidance to help all school authorities and their schools manage personal device usage. This will reduce classroom distractions, foster student well-being, privacy issues and enhance online safety while acknowledging technology's potential educational benefits when used appropriately.

### **Additional response:**

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

## Student Personal Device Usage

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

- The Department of Education works with external programs and organizations to support students' well-being and teach about online safety. These include the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board, to talk to students about topics such as online safety, cyberbullying, and bullying in general.
- Teachers get special training to reduce the risk of problems and create a safe physical and virtual environment for students.
- As of January 2025, all provinces in Canada have put policy instruments in place to restrict or limit personal device use in schools. These include Quebec, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved



### Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

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Education

**Burwash – KLUANE Lake School Kêts'ádań Kù: refer to SO02**

**Modular Classrooms: refer to SO06**

**School Capital – Projects and Process: refer to SO10**

**Whistle Bend School: refer to SO19**

**Whitehorse Downtown School: refer to SO20**

**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to HOT14/SO21**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO22**

#### Value:

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

#### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable for many years.
- We are pleased that work is underway on a new school in Burwash Landing, that planning continues for the replacement of École Whitehorse Elementary School, and early considerations for a downtown Whitehorse school are underway.
- The Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan includes Experiential Learning Spaces.
  - In the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Experiential Learning Spaces at Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow), Khàtìnas.àxh Community School (Teslin), and Hidden Valley Elementary School (Whitehorse) were completed.
  - The Experiential Learning Space at École Émile Tremblay (Whitehorse) is under construction and is expected to be completed by February 2025.

### Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

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Education

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is aiming to design and build the Experiential Learning Spaces at Christ the King Elementary School and Golden Horn Elementary School (Whitehorse), Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly Crossing) and Ross River School (Ross River) during the 2025-26 fiscal year.

#### Additional response:

- Capital planning decisions are based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs, emerging enrolment trends, and pressures.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Many school communities advocate and lobby for capital projects for various reasons (e.g., enrolment increases, facility upgrades, aging buildings).

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#### Background:

- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan. For a list of projects in the 2025-26 five-year capital plan, refer to **SO10: School Capital – Projects and Process**
- Education staff communicate regularly with school principals to identify projects to enhance programming.

#### Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT01/SO01

Spring 2025

## Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-31

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Burwash - KLUANE LAKE School** **- Kêts'ádań Kù**

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Education

**NOTE: Questions about tendering and building are for HPW.**

### **Value:**

- As part of the government's commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for Yukon schools, the government is pleased to be working in partnership with Kluane First Nation on Kêts'ádań Kù [KEht-sah-dun KOO] community school.

### **Recommended response:**

- Moving the current Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing has been a longstanding request of Kluane First Nation.
- The Governments of Yukon and Kluane First Nation continue to uphold the Memorandum of Understanding, which outlines a shared commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing, to be known as Kêts'ádań Kù - meaning "House of Learning."
- Kêts'ádań Kù will support Kluane First Nation citizens to learn and thrive in their community.

### **Additional response:**

- On August 22, 2024, GemMec ALC Inc. was awarded the construction contract for \$26.9 million (M), including a \$0.4M contingency.
- The total cost was \$22.5M at the time of application. The federal contribution was provided at \$10.87M. This project is listed at a recovery rate of 50%.
- Construction started in late September 2024 and stopped at the end of October due to freeze-up. Work will restart in the spring after the ground thaws.
- As the project is in the early stages, we continue to anticipate opening in the fall of 2026.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO02**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Burwash - KLUANE LAKE School** **- Kêts'ádañ Kù**

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Education

- The bipartite oversight committee and the project management team hold regular meetings.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- This project is important to the Kluane First Nation and is a high-profile school project mentioned in the Minister's mandate letter.
- 

### **Background:**

- Kluane Lake School has been located in Destruction Bay since 1961. Most of the students reside in or around Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay.
- This project received Implementation Phase Approval for a target cost of \$29.7M in August 2023. However, after all bids exceeded the expected budget, a revised Implementation Phase Approval was approved.
- In August 2024, the project received Implementation Phase Approval, which now has a target cost of \$32.5M.
- For the 2024-25 fiscal year, there is an anticipated deferral of \$4.62M due to projected work timelines.
- The 2025-26 Main includes \$15,650M to begin construction this spring.
- The budget of \$32.5M for the school can be broken down as follows:

Item	Revised Budget Breakdown
Consultant services	\$1,230,000
GY project management	\$485,000
Construction Contracts	\$26,533,000
YACA Direct Award Opportunities: Road and Parking Civil Works, Clearing and Grubbing	\$654,000
YACA Additional Benefits: Outdoor Spaces, Housing Construction	\$944,000
Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment	\$400,000

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO02**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Burwash - KLUANE LAKE School** **- Kêts'ádań Kù**

Education

Item	Revised Budget Breakdown
Contingencies (~7.5%) (Reduced due to tender price received)	\$2,254,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$32,500,000</b>

- The school in Destruction Bay is a priority for renovation or replacement on the Yukon's School's Seismic Mitigation Program.
- On November 13, 2015, the Department of Education and Kluane First Nations (KFN) entered an 'Agreement Respecting the Provision of the Public-School Education Program in Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing' to identify and implement a three-year plan to provide options and planning for the establishment of a school in the community of Burwash Landing.
- In April 2016, the department began working with KFN on planning a new school in Burwash Landing, including site visits to determine suitable locations on non-settlement land.
- In October 2016, the Yukon government (YG) contracted the firm Urban Arts, in consultation with KFN, to develop a Functional Plan for a new school in Burwash Landing. Work to revise this functional plan was undertaken in 2018.
- In January 2019, the Minister of Education met with the Chief to discuss the school's next steps and the budget/project scope. On January 18, 2019, the joint working group, led by the Deputy Minister of Education, met and determined the three options for further exploration: retrofit, lease, and build.
- In November 2019, the Minister met with the Chief to confirm that a school would be built in Burwash Landing. Since then, technical officials have been meeting to move this project forward, including signing an MOU in 2019 outlining a commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing.
- The MOU includes provisions to establish a KFN/YG Oversight Committee to oversee the implementation of the MOU, with a commitment for the Minister of Education and Chief to meet quarterly to ensure the goals are being met and to help move items forward as required.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO02**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Burwash - KLUANE LAKE School** **- Kêts'ádañ Kù**

Education

- In January 2021, a tender for an Owner's Advisor to provide expertise and guidance on this new school project was posted. Taylor Architecture Group (TAG) was the successful proponent.
- In August 2022, KFN provided a submission to YG to name the Burwash School. At the General Assembly in July 2022, Kêts'ádañ Kù, meaning "House of Learning", was selected by KFN citizens as the name for the new school. In November 2023, the name was formally approved by Cabinet as per the corporate building naming policy.
- The site selected for the school is KFN settlement land.

### Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025

2024-25 Actuals	2024-25 Supplementary Budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total project actuals to date	Total project estimated budget
\$4,637,394	\$5,250,000	\$15,650,000	\$7,366,128	\$32,500,000

\*Total project actuals are effective 2018-19

### Summary of Investing in Canada's Infrastructure Program (ICIP) recovery as of April 24, 2025:

2024-25 Actuals	2024-25 Supplementary Budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total recovery actuals to date	Total recovery approved by ICIP
\$2,256,496	\$5,340,000	\$5,340,000	\$2,270,522	\$10,875,000

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-25**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Hidden Valley School Playground

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Education

### Value

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

### Recommended response:

- The Yukon government continues to invest in school infrastructure to ensure that our schools meet the demands of the unique school communities they serve.
- January 24, 2024, a contract was awarded for the new playground equipment at Hidden Valley School. Unfortunately, the contractor did not meet the delivery date, and it has since been cancelled.
- The Department of Education has issued a new procurement tender for the playground equipment. It is scheduled to close on May 12, 2025.
  - Installation will be addressed through a separate tender process once the procurement tender is complete, recognizing that the equipment will not be installed during the remainder of this school year.

### Additional response:

- A Gaga ball court was installed prior to the start of the 2024-25 school year.
- Hidden Valley Elementary School's playground will feature accessible play equipment, ensuring inclusivity for all students. The tender for the playground equipment includes provisions for additional accessible options.



# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO03**  
**Spring 2025**

## Hidden Valley School Playground

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Education

- Safe outdoor learning and play is an integral component of a child's education, and we are committed to ensuring these opportunities are available for students.
- Yukon government performs periodic assessments of all play structures with the most recent being completed in fall 2022.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- A January 2024 contract to install new playground equipment was unfulfilled.

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### Background:

- Two of the three wooden structures at Hidden Valley Elementary School were deemed in need of refurbishment and removed on July 2, 2023.
- The department worked with the school principal and determined that removing the two wooden climbing structures at the front of the school was the best option at the time.
- The superintendent works closely with the principal at Hidden Valley Elementary School to plan capital priorities for the school.
- During the 2023 Thanksgiving weekend the Department of Education installed new playground equipment that the department and school council purchased.
- Work over the summer break in 2023 included procuring a Gaga ball court for the school grounds and upgrades to the Porcupine Neurodiversity Room to meet programming needs for the school.
- The Gaga ball court was supported by Every Student, Every Day funding program.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-22**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### Joint Use Agreement - Use of School Facilities

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Education

#### Value:

- The Department of Education encourages community use of school facilities.

#### Recommended response:

- The City of Whitehorse signed a Public Facilities Joint Use Agreement with the Government of Yukon's Department of Education and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon. This agreement facilitates public use of Yukon schools in Whitehorse and swimming and skating at the Canada Games Centre.
- Although the agreement expired on August 31, 2024, the Department of Education, City of Whitehorse, and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon mutually agreed to extend it until August 31, 2025.
- Negotiations for a new three-year agreement began in February 2025 with the First Nations School Board as a new party to the agreement.

#### Additional response:

- Over the summer and fall of 2024, the City of Whitehorse conducted a review of the Joint Use Agreement.
- This review aimed to inform the upcoming negotiations and included input from user groups, representatives of the agreement's signatories, and other stakeholders as needed.
- The review process featured an online survey and stakeholder discussions to ensure a comprehensive approach.
- The survey identified several key challenges, including:
  - Inefficient space allocation, which is underutilized during peak times.

## Joint Use Agreement - Use of School Facilities

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Education

- Concerns about fee structures and accountability for facility maintenance.
  - Operational issues, such as inconsistent rule enforcement and security.
- 

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- User groups continue to require as much time as possible for evening events. This must be navigated around school teams and activities, which can cause tension between schools and community user groups who both require the use of gymnasiums.
- 

### Background:

- The Joint Use Agreement and its appendices provide operational parameters for the shared use of Whitehorse schools and City facilities. These parameters include the priorities for time allocations in all facilities, deadlines for requests and scheduling, booking procedures, and use conditions.
- The review report proposes several key recommendations to improve the Joint Use Agreement. These include:
  - Provide a booking system for schools and users that's easier to adjust, more adaptable, and maximizes space use.
  - Establish a dedicated fund to handle payments, cover operational and equipment costs, and ensure transparent financial management.
  - Create an oversight committee to coordinate decisions, monitor progress, and collaborate with user groups and the schools to optimize operations.
- The Education Act includes a duty to encourage community use of school facilities (ss.169(j)).
- User groups are required to obtain general liability insurance to be eligible to use school facilities. This ensures users are protected in the event of an accident or other incident during use of the facility.

### Joint Use Agreement - Use of School Facilities

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Education

- They must also provide a yearly refundable damage deposit and key deposit to the City of Whitehorse in case of facility damage or lost keys.
- User groups can write to the Department of Education to request a waiver of the insurance requirements, which are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Refundable damage and key deposits are also required.
- User groups are required to obtain general liability insurance to be eligible to use school facilities. This ensures that users are protected in an accident or other incident during facility use.
- The Yukon Government (YG) operates a risk program that combines a deductible of \$2M with an extensive limit of commercial insurance for property losses and liability exposures; up to \$25M for liability and \$300M for property.. The YG Risk Management Revolving Fund finances these services and costs.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-06**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- All Yukon schools have access to clearly identified sources of potable water.
- For the start of the school year, each school had at least one clearly identified potable water source that meets Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*.
- The Department of Education supported the Department of Highways and Public Works and contracted a third-party firm to complete water sampling in all schools owned and operated by the Yukon government. The sampling was finished in December 2024, and all results have been received.
- Potable water fixtures were sampled at Independent Learning Centre on March 20, 2025. All three fixtures sampled meet Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*.
- The Department of Education, Highways and Public Works, Environmental Health, and the Chief Medical Officer have developed an action plan to address fixtures that exceed Health Canada's *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*. Mitigation work includes removal or isolation of fixtures; replacement of some fixtures or valves; installation of filter systems; and daily flushing protocols at all dental program sinks. All classroom sinks remain in use as they are suitable for hand washing or other education related activities but will be removed from the long-term monitoring program, except for kindergarten and grade one classrooms.
- Testing and remediation of potable water sources is an ongoing

project. The Department of Education and Highways and Public Works, in consultation with Environmental Health and the Chief Medical Officer, are developing a long-term water management plan. The plan will include regular monitoring of potable water sources in Yukon schools.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In the spring of 2024, the department learned that lead levels in some schools exceeded recommended standards.
- In the spring of 2024, the Department of Education provided signs to school to clearly identify sources of clean drinking water.
- Potable water fixtures were sampled at Independent Learning Centre on March 20, 2025. All three fixtures sampled meet Health Canada's Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. This was the last school to be tested, as collaboration with the building owner was involved.

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### **Background:**

- The Departments of Education, Highways and Public Works, Environmental Health, and the Chief Medical Office of Health have met weekly since May 2024 to discuss water in schools, testing, and mitigations and to ensure work remains on schedule.
- Highways and Public Works has installed filters at all Elkay water stations in Yukon schools – some by a contractor and some by HPW in collaboration with EDU.
  - An Elkay water filter is a type of filtration system designed to improve drinking water quality. These filters typically work to reduce contaminants such as chlorine, lead, and other impurities, ensuring cleaner and better-tasting water.
- A critical fixture is defined as that which is used for drinking water and food preparation. These fixtures are most likely utilized for the preparation of food for consumption. Critical fixtures include hallway drinking fountains, kitchen faucets in staff rooms, home education rooms, cafeteria, and kindergarten and grade one classroom sinks.

- Non-critical fixtures include janitor's sinks and bathroom sinks. These fixtures are less likely to be used for consumption. These faucets are not designated for use for drinking or food preparation.

#### Fixture signage

- Signage was necessary during the initial phase of the testing and remediation project to aid building occupants in identifying sources of drinking water.
  - Analyses of the comprehensive water testing in 2024 has confirmed that fixtures meet Canada's drinking water guidelines.
  - Based on these analyses, and recommended by the CMOH, it was determined that signage at each individual fixture is no longer necessary.
- Students and staff have been directed to use drinking fountains, water bottle filling stations and kitchen sinks as the source of their drinking water.
  - Incidental ingestion of water from other locations presents no significant risk to health.
  - Fixtures that are over Canada's drinking guideline maximum acceptable concentration for lead in drinking water will be addressed based on usage.
- Signs remain in the Children's Dental Program treatment rooms at schools.
  - As these sinks are used infrequently, the water sits in the plumbing and fixtures for extended periods.
  - The best mitigation at this point is to encourage routine flushing prior to use. Flushing is a proven mitigation to reduce the level of lead at the fixture.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-02**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value

- The Department of Education works with school communities on ways they can organize their building's learning spaces to meet the needs of their students and programs.

### Recommended response:

- The department monitors all schools to help administrators and school communities plan for enrolment and needs in the short, medium and long term.
- Modular classrooms are an option to address enrolment pressure in schools. Enrolment pressure is also a key element in the long-term capital planning process.
- The departments of Education and Highways and Public Works are working on a multi-year procurement and placement program for modulars, including where to replace aging structures and where to place new ones at Yukon schools.

### Additional response:

- Planning is underway to install two portable classrooms at FH Collins ready for occupancy by the start of the 2025–26 school year.
- The Government of Yukon awarded the contract to PCR Construction, a local company. The modules are being fabricated, and substantial completion is expected in March, this year.
- Each modular classroom will represent an additional instructional space to accommodate up to 28 students.
- For 2025–26, \$1.2M is allocated for modular classrooms.
- Market conditions can impact the procurement timelines for modulars which, in turn, impact completion timelines.



### Modular Classrooms

Education

- Site feasibility studies were conducted to confirm the ability to place modulars at schools with emerging enrolment pressures.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Several schools have requested modulars in recent years.

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#### Background:

- In recent years, new modular classrooms have been placed at:
  - Golden Horn Elementary School (2),
  - Hidden Valley Elementary School,
  - Selkirk Elementary School (2), and
  - Robert Service School in Dawson (a 4-classroom annex to replace aged modulars).
- Determination of the needs for modular classrooms are based on school capacity, including demographic projections, and the future state of the school.
- The Robert Service School annex project started in 2020-21 fiscal. At that time, eligible expenditures were recoverable at 100% through a federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) COVID-19 stream. The total cost of the modular addition was \$6.227M, of which ICIP funded \$5.644M.
  - Net cost to the Department of Education was \$583,000.
- In addition to the new modulars, all existing modulars have been assessed for condition.
  - The St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School and Porter Creek Secondary School modulars are at the end of their serviceable lifecycles and need replacement.

#### Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025

Actuals to date	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Budget
\$868,824 (FH Collins)	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO06**  
**Spring 2025**

## Modular Classrooms

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-25](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Public Announcement Systems in Schools

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Education

### School Maintenance – 2025-26 Projects and Process: refer to SO12

#### Value:

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is a priority for the Department of Education.

#### Recommended response:

- Effective communication both during regular activities and emergencies is crucial for school staff and students.
- As systems age and technology changes, public announcement (PA) systems can become difficult to update and maintain. The department continues to repair and replace PA systems regularly.
- The Department of Education works with schools that are having issues with their PA systems to modify their school emergency plans and ensure that there are additional communication methods in the school.
- The project for automatic doors and fob installation at Del Van Gorder School has been identified, and department staff are working collaboratively with Highways and Public Works to prioritize it into the 5-Year Capital Plan.

#### Additional response:

- PA systems are complex networks that take time to install and connect to phones and the internet.
- The Department of Education recognizes that PA systems are critical infrastructure and have maintenance contracts to address and repair any reported issues.
- Going forward, the design and requirements for new PA systems will be standardized to improve efficiency in daily operation, maintenance,

## Public Announcement Systems in Schools

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Education

and repairs.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Opposition raised a question in a September 2024 news release about the issue of ongoing school public announcement (PA) system problems.
  - School councils and school administrators regularly raise concerns about non-functioning PA systems.
- 

### Background:

- Schools with PA systems use them to announce to the entire school, make calls between school rooms, play signal bells, and more. They are sometimes used as part of staff communication protocols.
  - For example, they may use them to communicate emergency codes to all staff and students at once or call a classroom to request support from other staff.
- If a school's PA system is not available or functional, schools make alternative plans to communicate, such as deploying two-way radios to teachers, using megaphones or cellphones in the interim.
- Replacement of broken or aging PA systems is managed and prioritized as part of the capital planning process. For example, broken PA systems would take priority over aging but functional systems.
- There is limited availability of local contractors who can address PA system needs.

### Current and upcoming maintenance and replacement projects:

- On April 1, 2024, a maintenance contract was established for the 2024–25 fiscal year to address immediate or pressing issues, ensuring timely responses and effective solutions.
- PA system projects completed for the 2024–25 fiscal year include:
  - Hidden Valley Elementary School

## Public Announcement Systems in Schools

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Education

### Upcoming 5 Years:

- Current Schedule, Department staff working with Highways and Public Works to see if all schools can be bundled under one contract.
  - 2025-26: FH Collins PA system assessment
  - 2025-26: Selkirk Elementary School – Replace PA system
  - 2026-27: St. Elias Community School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2026-27: Ecole Emily Trembley School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2027-28: Tantalus School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2028-29: Eliza Van Bibber School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2029-30: Christ the King Elementary School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System

### Past maintenance and replacement projects:

- In 2023–24, the Government of Yukon worked to address system concerns and source necessary PA system parts for Elijah Smith Elementary, Porter Creek Secondary, Selkirk Elementary, Saint Francis of Assisi and Christ the King Elementary School.
- In recent years, the Government of Yukon completed upgrades on PA systems at:
  - 2024-25: Hidden Valley Elementary School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2023-24: Ghuch Tla School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2022-23: Teslin School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2022-23: Del Van Gorder School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2020-21: Holy Family Catholic School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2019-20: Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School - Replace PA
  - 2019-20: Porter Creek Secondary School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2019-20: Grey Mountain Elementary - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System
  - 2018-19: Elijah Smith School - Replace PA and Clock/Bell System

### École Selkirk Elementary School

- École Selkirk Elementary School's school council sent letters on April 9, 2023, and

### Public Announcement Systems in Schools

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Education

June 2, 2024, with concerns regarding their PA system. Responses communicated that a new project has been identified to replace the PA system at École Selkirk Elementary in the 2025–26 school year.

#### F.H. Collins Secondary School:

- On October 28, 2024, the F.H. Collins Secondary School's school council sent a letter to the Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, and Department of Education officials voicing their concerns regarding the school's malfunctioning PA system. The council shared that they had raised this issue with several department officials and sought a resolution.
- In November 2024, the PA system in several classrooms at F.H. Collins was not functioning. The manufacturer no longer provides technical support for the system, and some parts are unavailable.
  - The Department of Education is collaborating with Highways and Public Works to have an analyst come to the Yukon to assess the system after the school year to determine whether it can be restored to full functionality.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-07**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The health and safety of students and staff is the Department of Education's top priority.

### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon's radon management guidelines follow Health Canada's recommended guidelines.
- Testing and remediation were completed at all schools in 2018, and the majority of schools had low radon readings.
- Schools whose results exceeded the recommended range were remediated and monitored until their levels were within the recommended range.
- Unless there is a significant change to the physical structure of a school or Health Canada's recommended radon concentration levels for acceptable indoor air quality change, there is no requirement or need for retesting.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of radon levels in schools was raised in October 2019.

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### Background:

- Radon is naturally occurring in the Yukon. It does not pose an immediate danger to health and is only a concern if there is prolonged exposure to high concentrations over many years.
- Health Canada's recommended levels of radon concentration for acceptable indoor air quality are as follows:
  - Below 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – acceptable.
  - Between 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> and 600 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – remediate within two years; and

- Above 600 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – remediate within one year.
- All Yukon schools were tested for radon. Schools that showed results above 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> were remediated, with follow-up monitoring until the Government of Yukon was confident levels were within the recommended range.
- All Yukon school communities were informed about the results and if any remediation is needed at their schools. The majority of schools had low radon readings.
- In 2008, Holy Family Elementary School, Jack Hulland Elementary School, Nelna Bessie John School and the Teen Parent Center tested above the parameters established by Health Canada guidelines.
- In 2009 and 2016, remediation systems were installed at Nelna Bessie John School and Jack Hulland Elementary School, and long-term testing indicates levels are now below Health Canada guidelines.
- The Teen Parent Centre and Holy Family Elementary School had remediation work in 2018-19. Follow-up testing indicates radon levels are below Health Canada guidelines.
- Post-remediation testing was completed in the 2021–22 school year at Eliza Van Bibber, Christ the King Elementary, the Teen Parent Centre, and Holy Family Elementary School, and results indicate levels are now below Health Canada guidelines.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Value

- The Yukon government is committed to Yukoners by investing in school infrastructure.

### Recommended response:

- The 2020 Long Term School Planning report by Colliers International provides the Yukon government with guidance for prioritizing school replacements, expansions, major renovations, and seismic mitigations.
- The 2020 Long Term School Planning report, which examined the condition of community rural schools ranked St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction as the highest and Khatinasaxh Community School in Teslin as the second highest for modernization or replacement priority.
- The Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable.
- The current capital plan includes the replacement of a rural school and Burwash Landing's Kets'adañ Kù will replace Kluane Lake School in Destruction Bay.

### Additional response:

- Capital planning decisions are based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented by education program needs and emerging enrolment trends and pressures.
- The Department of Education discusses facility needs with Yukon school communities and boards as future school projects are planned.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations has contacted the Department of Education to ask when the St. Elias Community School will be replaced.

- The Teslin Tlingit Council has raised concerns about the need for timely maintenance at Khàtìnas.àxh Community School while the Government of Yukon renegotiates the expired lease.
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#### Background:

- St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction is the highest-scoring school outside Whitehorse in the 2020 Long Term School Planning report.
  - St. Elias Community School was built in 1960, and it is recommended that it be modernized or replaced to address maintenance, seismic, and acoustic issues and improve the learning spaces to align with a 21st-century learning environment.
- Khàtìnas.àxh Community School in Teslin is ranked second for community schools in terms of priority for replacement and is currently not in the five-year capital plan.
  - In May 2024, the departments of Highways and Public Works and Education representatives conducted a site visit at Khàtìnas.àxh Community School to meet with Teslin Tlingit Council representatives and the school administrator. The visit was to complete a walk-through and identify maintenance requirements.
  - The roof and siding of the school are in poor condition and need immediate replacement to prolong the building's life.
  - There are newly established leaks in the at the Khàtìnas.àxh Community School due to ice and snow melt and the free-thaw cycle.
  - Highways and Public Works is fully aware of the situation and is actively addressing the concerns. Highways and Public Works Facilities Management team was promptly dispatched to the Khàtìnas.àxh Community School to address the recent issues caused by leaks resulting from the ice and snow melt and the freeze-thaw cycle. The team worked closely with a local contractor to clear the snow and ice, while also applying ice melt to mitigate further issues. Additionally, the team conducted a thorough inspection of the affected rooms and tiles to ensure there were no safety hazards due to the leaks.

### Rural School Replacements

Education

- The 5-year renewal term of the lease agreement expired June 30, 2024, while the Yukon government and the Teslin Tlingit Council were still in negotiations for renewal. A one-year bridging agreement has been signed on the same terms as the current lease. Any changes to the lease going forward, including increases to rent, will be effective from the original date of July 1, 2024.
- The Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan includes community modernization projects that are ongoing at:
  - Ross River School
  - Robert Service School

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-08

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process**

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Education

### **Value**

- The health and safety of students and staff remains the Department of Education's top priority.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon will continue to work with school communities on planning their short, medium and long-term facility needs.
- It is important that we ensure the portfolio of schools meets the demands of our growing population and provides modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- In spring 2023, the Yukon government conducted a public survey and held open houses to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with school facilities and how to better meet K-12 programming needs.
- The results of this engagement will inform future updates of the Whitehorse school replacement plan and the work plans for small and medium renovations for Whitehorse schools.
- Capital planning decisions are based on information and facility assessments, supplemented with educational programming needs.
- The Government of Yukon's approach to capital spending is driven by its overarching priorities and fiscal responsibility. All departments, including the Department of Education, follow established guidelines to ensure that funding is allocated efficiently and effectively across public services. All departments are deferring discretionary capital spending until later in the fiscal year, but non-discretionary capital has not been deferred.

## **School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process**

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Education

- For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the Department of Education has a structured process for schools and program areas to request discretionary spending. As with any funding request, detailed justification must demonstrate why it is non-discretionary. Each request is evaluated case-by-case to ensure alignment with the Yukon government's goals of maintaining essential services while managing public resources responsibly.
- At this time, we anticipate regular operations with approved budgets for 2025-26 fiscal year.

### **Additional response – maintenance and renovations:**

- The Government of Yukon works to identify projects for maintenance, refurbishment or replacement, such as:
  - playground equipment,
  - experiential learning spaces,
  - modernizing learning spaces, and
  - program-related capital repairs.
- Schools are provided with a program-related capital budget for small-scale program-related renovations.
- Non-discretionary capital spending, necessary to ensure students' and employees' health, safety, and well-being or to fulfill contractual agreements, remain a school priority.
- These decisions are part of the government's commitment to meeting immediate and long-term goals, ensuring that critical needs are addressed while maintaining fiscal sustainability.

### **Additional response – accessible playground equipment:**

- Accessible equipment will be included in upgrades to existing playgrounds and installations of new playgrounds.

## **School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process**

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Education

- This work is already underway, and recently, we installed accessibility swings at the following schools: École Whitehorse Elementary School, Grey Mountain Primary School, Holy Family Elementary School, and Golden Horn Elementary School.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School, the latest school built, has two playgrounds. One is fully accessible.
- The plans for Kêts'ádañ Kų in Burwash Landing will also include accessible features.

### **Additional response – Activity bus replacement:**

- The Department of Education's activity bus fleet consists of 25 vehicles, with 20 nearing the end of their economic life. Three buses are managed by the Highways and Public Works Fleet Vehicle Agency, while the rest primarily serve schools in the Whitehorse area.
- We are pleased to have \$400,000 in our 2025-26 budget for replacement of these buses.

### **Additional response – 2024-25 non-discretionary capital spending:**

- The department's Director of Finance met with principals and vice-principals on October 10, 2024, to clarify the directive and process and answer any questions they may have. This meeting was well received, and clarification was provided.
- All school administrators were encouraged to request non-discretionary capital spending through the department's process if deferral is not deemed appropriate.
- There will always be times when governments must evaluate their financial projections and prioritize spending, which may result in slowing down expenditures or deferring discretionary spending.

## School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process

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Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The timing of some major capital projects in recent years (e.g., Selkirk Street) has disrupted the flow of traffic for students, staff, and families accessing the facility.
  - Petition No. 24 was tabled on October 9, 2024, advocating for the installation of more accessible playgrounds at schools across the Yukon.
- 

### Background:

- In the last five years, the department has not had to defer or slow down capital spending.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works deliver major capital projects for sponsoring departments and building maintenance projects.
- The Department of Education works with the Department of Highways and Public Works to ensure impacts on programming are minimized where possible.
- All efforts are made to implement major projects during school closures.
- Major capital projects for 2024–25 included work on:
  - Ross River School structural upgrades - \$2.05M. (See below for table)
  - the new Kêts'ádań Kù in Burwash Landing - \$5.25M.
  - substantial completion of Whistle Bend Elementary School - \$3.693M.
  - Whitehorse Replacement School (EWES) - \$420k
  - the Selkirk Elementary School parking lot - \$1.55M (substantial completion was awarded August 2024)
  - Experiential Learning Spaces – \$1.2M
  - Experiential Learning Spaces at Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow), Khàtìnas.àxh Community School (Teslin), and Hidden Valley Elementary School (Whitehorse) for \$1.2M.
  - The Robert Service School (Dawson City) was deferred because the project's overall cost was over budget.
- Major capital projects for 2025–26 will include work on:
  - Kêts'ádań Kù in Burwash Landing - \$15.65M.
  - Whitehorse Replacement School (EWES) - \$1.0M
  - Ross River School structural upgrades - \$1.2M.
  - Experiential Learning Spaces – \$1.2M

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO10**  
**Spring 2025**

## School Capital – 2025-26 Projects and Process

Education

- Selkirk Elementary School parking lot \$5k for warranty completion
- School Van Replacement \$400k for end of life activity buses
- The HPW Vehicle Replacement Prioritization Process uses a scoring system to evaluate vehicle age, mileage, repair history, and maintenance costs. This ensures replacements are based on actual needs, prioritizing critical units and improving efficiency and transparency. Feedback from school administrators and HPW maintenance teams helps align educational and operational requirements.
- During the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Department of Highways and Public Works is aiming to design and build the Experiential Learning Spaces at Christ the King Elementary School and Golden Horn Elementary School (Whitehorse), Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly Crossing) and Ross River School (Ross River).
- For 2024-25, and again in 2025-26, \$1.2M is allocated for Modular Classrooms.

### Ross River School Remediation Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025:

2024-25 Actuals	2024-25 Supplementary Budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total project actuals to date
\$1,633,954	\$2,050,000	\$1,200,000	\$10,179,990

\*Total project actuals are effective 2019-20

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-25**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Value:

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

### Recommended response:

- In 2018, the departments of Education and Highways and Public Works developed the Yukon Schools Functional Program, a generic design framework for scaling school designs.
- This program establishes consistent, scalable standards for school design and construction, based on factors such as school population, grade levels, and urban or rural contexts.
- The functional program served as the foundation for the design and planning of Whistle Bend Elementary School and Kêts'ádañ Kù in Burwash Landing.

### Additional response:

- The Yukon Schools Functional Program can be applied to school projects using either the design-build or design-bid-build procurement models.
- While the program provides a standardized framework, school designs are customized to meet the unique needs of each community.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works plans to update the program, incorporating lessons learned from the recent school design projects in Whistle Bend and Burwash Landing.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- During the fall 2024 legislative session, the leader of the third party raised the question of what the school functional program design standards are and if they are available online.
-

#### Background:

- The Yukon Schools Functional Program is based on a review of the industry guidelines and standards used in other Provinces. The program was adapted to existing Yukon schools, current programming needs, and the new kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) curriculum.
- The designs should focus on providing flexible, multi-use spaces emphasizing collaborative learning and integrating technology and Yukon First Nations culture and language.
- Some strategies identified include using common learning areas, Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics (STEAM) labs and Makerspaces to provide various programming options regardless of location or student enrollment.
- The program details the functional and technical requirements of schools and program areas based on location and population.
- In 2018, the Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) commissioned Colliers Project Leaders to complete the work for \$125,000.
- The report consulted educational design standards and buildings in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. These standards were compared with current Yukon schools to develop a comprehensive functional and technical requirements program to support 21st-century learning in the Yukon.
- Education and HPW will review the adaptable functional program to ensure it reflects the lessons learned from our latest projects and gymnasiums requirements to benefit Yukoners to support the thriving sport and recreation community.

#### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-06**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **School Maintenance – 2025-2026 Projects and Process**

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Education

**Water in schools: refer to HOT08/SO05**

### **Value**

- The health and safety of students and staff remains the Department of Education's top priority.

### **Recommended response:**

- The department ensures regular preventative maintenance throughout the school year, focusing on minimizing disruptions to school activities.
- Maintenance tasks affecting school programs are planned during closure times whenever possible, such as winter, spring, and summer breaks.
- Khàtinàs.àxh Community School requires a full roof replacement, as determined by an assessment report and cost estimate completed in 2023; patches are no longer effective.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) is currently identifying capital funding for this project, which will also include the replacement of the exterior siding.
- Subject to approvals, the tender for the roof replacement will be issued in spring 2026.

### **Projects 2025-26**

- Work is underway with schools to assess all required projects and develop a prioritized project portfolio for 2025-26.
- Projects anticipated to be completed in the 2025–26 fiscal year include:
  - JV Clark School Roof Replacement Phase 1 (\$1.8M)
  - Johnson Elementary School Mechanical Systems Upgrade (\$1.3M)
  - Robert Service School Mechanical Upgrades (\$0.9M)
  - Beaver Creek Nelnah Bessie School Seismic Structural Upgrades (\$0.6M)

## **School Maintenance – 2025-2026 Projects and Process**

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Education

- F.H. Collins Addition of Two Portable Classrooms
- Selkirk Elementary PA/Bell and Clock Replacement
- École Emily Tremblay site drainage improvements (\$6.2M)
- Nelnah Bessie John School - Seismic structural upgrades (\$150K)
- Tantalus – Partial flooring upgrade – To be Completed Summer 2025
- Selkirk School parking lot repair
- Golden Horn Elementary School – Barrier-free access automatic doors (delayed due to contract)
- Hidden Valley Elementary School – Barrier-free access automatic doors (delayed due to contract)
- Downtown School replacement planning
- Ross River School structural upgrades
- Yukon University campus & housing upgrades
- Yukon University equipment & furniture upgrades
- Yukon University information tech. systems & equipment upgrades
- The project for automatic doors and fob installation at Del Van Gorder School has been identified, and the Department is working collaboratively with Highways and Public Works to prioritize it into the 5-Year Capital Plan.

### **Projects 2024-25**

- Projects anticipated to be completed in the 2024–25 fiscal year include:
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School - Lighting upgrade and exterior doors replacement
  - Robert Service School - Mechanical assessment
  - Hidden Valley Elementary School - PA system project

## **School Maintenance – 2025-2026 Projects and Process**

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Education

- Selkirk Elementary School - Sidewalk and landscaping, parking lot completion, and partial hallway reflooring and asbestos remediation (from the gym hallways up to the music room), replacing PA and clock/bell system
- École Émilie Tremblay - Replace PA and clock/bell system
- Takhini Elementary School – Partial reflooring on 2nd floor
- Jack Hulland Elementary School – Hallway and classroom painting
- Christ the King Elementary School – Salmon room flooring replacement
- Golden Horn Elementary School – Fire alarm replacement, and a feasibility study of the playfield upgrade
- The department's commitment to the health and safety of students and staff includes ongoing maintenance of all facilities and addressing routine and emergency needs, regardless of the building's age.

### **Additional response:**

- The departments of Education and Highways and Public Works work closely with school administrators to identify areas that need maintenance.
- Building systems such as HVAC, electrical and plumbing are maintained at regularly scheduled intervals.
- Assessments of building systems occur periodically to assist in identifying larger projects for maintenance or upgrade.
- Remediation and testing on all critical water fixtures are ongoing into this school year, and the Department of Education is developing an agreement with Highways and Public Works to monitor drinking water at each school annually.

## School Maintenance – 2025-2026 Projects and Process

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Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Emergency maintenance to address issues such as isolated water events or hazardous materials remediation can have an impact on programming and can result in disruptions to planned activities.
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### Background:

#### Golden Horn Elementary School playfield:

- In December 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) completed a study to explore options, including capital costs, operations and maintenance costs, and a lifecycle cost estimate to upgrade the school's playfield.
- The report currently includes three options, including budget and operational costs:
  - Servicing existing field (\$263,000 and \$5,000 annual maintenance)
  - Natural Turf (\$1,7M and \$80,000 annual maintenance)
  - Artificial Turf (\$2,7M and \$30,000 annual maintenance)
- Education and HPW will develop recommendations based on school and school council feedback.

#### 2023-24 capital maintenance projects:

- 2023-24 capital maintenance projects delivered by Highways and Public Works, not including multi-year projects, are:
  - Elijah Smith School - Air Handling Unit
  - Robert Service School - Mechanical Upgrades
  - Ghùch Tlà Community School - PA/Bell/Clock Replacement
  - Jack Hulland School Services Maintenance Shop – Demolition
  - Ross River School - Gym Lighting Replacement.
  - Takhini Elementary School - Partial Classroom Re-flooring
  - Porter Creek Secondary School – Re-flooring Classrooms
  - Golden Horn Elementary School – Re-flooring Partial Corridor
  - St. Elias Community School – Re-flooring Hallway
  - Tantalus School - Exterior Re-paint

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO12**  
**Spring 2025**

## **School Maintenance – 2025-2026 Projects and Process**

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Education

### Capital maintenance projects, generally:

- The department makes efforts to minimize disruptions to school programming, and processes are in place to ensure health and safety remain at the forefront.
- When capital maintenance projects have programming components, principals are provided an opportunity to give feedback during the design process. An example would be the functionality of a PA system and where to place speakers.
- The Yukon government ensures that all Yukon government buildings, including schools, are safe to occupy.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works maintains all government building ventilation systems to industry standards and performs regular inspections and maintenance.
- All Yukon government schools are equipped with ventilation systems, which provide fresh air to classrooms and offices. The fresh air supply is based on maximum occupancy and national and international volume standards.
- Carbon monoxide monitoring is not a code requirement to monitor building air.
- Schools have access to a work-order-generating program, which the departments of Highways and Public Works and Education monitor and action.
  - Work orders are categorized as either "routine" or "emergency". Anything identified as "emergency", such as health and safety items or critical systems requests, take precedence and are prioritized.

### **Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-08**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2025****Seismic and Schools**Education  
&Highways and Public Works

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**Value:**

- Safe school infrastructure for students, staff and user groups is a priority for the Department of Education.

**Recommended response:**

- The department ensures that Yukon schools undergo regular inspections. If any structural issues are identified, the Government of Yukon takes precautionary actions and mitigation work is prioritized based on a risk assessment.
- The Government of Yukon continues to perform seismic and structural assessments on Yukon schools as required to ensure staff and student safety.
- The department has undertaken several mitigation measures by addressing structural issues identified during assessments. For example, repairs on roofs, floors and walls. Many non-structural problems have also been addressed, such as duct work, furniture upgrades and shelving.
- Seismic mitigation is one of the many factors considered in a new school design.

**Additional response:**

- Every school was built to the standard of the day and inspected to ensure they met all relevant codes at the time of construction.
- The Highways and Public Works and Education departments are reviewing all Yukon school facilities and planning for the future of those facilities.



**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2025****Seismic and Schools**Education  
&

Highways and Public Works

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The public is interested in seismic mitigation in Yukon schools.

**Background:**

- The Yukon's last major seismic event was in 2017, and the mitigations in place proved effective during that event.
- Yukon schools were built according to the building code at the time of construction, and modern building code requirements contain increasingly stringent structural requirements.
- The type and severity of seismic issues varies from building to building and can be categorized into:
  - structural components, like roofs, floors, walls, foundations,
  - non-structural components, like suspended ceilings, water piping, ductwork, furniture upgrades and shelving units.

**Approved by:**Mary Cameron2025-03-19

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Approved by:**T. AllenMarch 19, 2025

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

### Value

- The Department of Education provides schools with activity buses to support student access to safe transportation to and from extra-curricular activities.

### Recommended response

- The Department of Education provides students and user groups access to safe activity bus transportation so students and teachers can attend events. The department is aware that there have been challenges with the activity bus allocation in the past and that the fleet is ageing.
- At present, the Department of Education has 25 activity buses that can accommodate 8 to 24 passengers each. Fleet Services at the Department of Highways and Public Works collaborates to ensure regular bus servicing while minimizing transportation disruptions to activities.
- In 2024, the First Nations School Board (FNSB) acquired nine new activity buses. As a result, the activity buses previously assigned to FNSB schools were divided among Yukon Education schools, so every school will have at least one bus.
- Schools offering experiential learning programs have at least two activity buses, significantly reducing reliance on Standard Buses for field trip transportation.

### Additional response:

- The Department of Education's activity bus fleet consists of 25 vehicles, with 20 nearing the end of their economic life. Three buses are managed by the Highways and Public Works Fleet Vehicle Agency, while the rest primarily serve schools in the Whitehorse area.

- We are pleased to have \$400,000 in our 2025-26 budget for replacing these buses.
  - Based on 2024 market conditions, where a new activity bus is approximately \$175,000, an allocation of \$400,000 would cover the cost of two replacement vans, with some remaining funds available. The exact amounts depend on market conditions and the competitive bidding process.
  - Each activity bus is inspected visually and logged by the driver before each trip and mechanically every six months by a certified mechanic. Suspected or identified problems are addressed immediately.
  - Education uses its existing departmental vehicle fleet and vehicles through the Fleet Vehicle Agency to accommodate school group needs.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Aging activity buses are more prone to mechanical issues the longer they remain as part of the fleet, and they may need to be replaced.
  - Our fleet includes 25 activity buses, of which 20 have completed their useful lives.
- 

### **Background:**

- All Yukon schools can book school buses through Standard Bus and have budgets identified for this activity.
- The Department of Education owns 25 activity buses. The type of driver's licence required to operate depends on the size of the vehicle. The years of manufacture range from 2011 to 2017.
- Many buses cannot transport an entire class as the class size ranges from 22 to 28 students.
- Three buses are located at the Fleet Vehicle Agency and can be booked by schools through a shared calendar managed by the Student Transportation Officer. The remaining 21 buses are allocated to specific schools. In addition,

schools can book 15-passenger vans through the Fleet Vehicle Agency Vehicle Request System.

- Schools with allocated buses are considered the key holders, and no other school can book those specific buses.
- The Yukon government owns the buses; therefore, schools only incur variable costs, such as fuel. Maintenance and annual inspections are coordinated through the Fleet Vehicle Agency with support and funding from the Department of Education. Many of these vehicles are nearing the end of their serviceable life cycle, and there have been several mechanical breakdowns in the last few school years.
- The Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY) does not use the central pool and procured its own school bus, which resides in a compound at CSSC Mercier.
- The Department of Education has a budget of \$400,000 allocated for 2025-26 as part of the 5-year capital plan to replace aging vehicles. To date, it has been unable to replace aging vehicles due other pressures on major capital projects. This budget does not intend to add new buses to the fleet; it is only for replacements. The cost of a new bus is approximately \$200,000.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-13**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Special Needs Transportation: refer to SO17

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended Response

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

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

### Additional Response

- Standard Bus is responsible for notifying schools and families when bus routes are cancelled. The Department of Education works with Standard to ensure notifications are sent out as early as possible. In some instances, routes may be cancelled for the day due to extreme weather conditions, unsafe road conditions, or driver shortages.
- The Department of Education asks families to prepare an alternate plan when inclement weather and poor road conditions limit bus service.
- Efforts will be made to limit any service disruptions in Whitehorse. The

Department of Education will continue to work with Standard Bus to develop contingency plans.

- As of January 2025, Standard Bus has 65 full-time drivers and several back-up drivers that can be called in when required.
- Standard Bus confirmed that as of November 1, 2024, all routes were fully staffed.
- The Department of Education acknowledges the impact cancelled bus routes can have on families and works with Standard Bus to find solutions whenever possible.
- Standard Bus will offer a special "Kindergarten Bus Ride Day" in the summer of 2025 for incoming kindergarten students to familiarize themselves with the school bus.

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#### **Context – this may be an issue because:**

- Busing is a challenging topic as the department often receives a high volume of late registrations, making accommodating it difficult. Additionally, routes are sometimes cancelled throughout the school year due to driver shortages, creating caregiver challenges.
- Potential concerns may arise with providing students with City Transit passes due to existing capacity and scheduling issues with City Transit.

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#### **Background:**

##### Updated Contract

- Standard Bus Contracting Ltd. was awarded the contract for busing students within the Whitehorse area in July 2024 for a three-year term. The original value of this contract was \$9,844,650, and the tender included language to allow for additional buses or routes should they be required.
- The Department of Education has determined the need for additional buses to manage student growth, resolve capacity challenges, and maintain accessibility for students who rely on school bus transportation.

- Specifically, one Accessible Services bus and one Regular bus has been added to the existing routes.
- With this adjustment, three Accessible buses and one additional bus are now available to accommodate student growth.
- The additional buses increased the value of the contract by \$157,500, bringing the total value of the busing contract for Whitehorse area schools to \$10,002,100.
- In the fall of 2024, there was an incident when a child fell asleep on a school bus and missed their drop-off. The school bus driver demonstrated exceptional care when they discovered the child, promptly returning them to the school office to ensure their safety. The parents appreciated the driver's calm demeanour and the school's effective safety procedures.
- The Department of Education will continue to work with Standard Bus to ensure that safety protocols, including monitoring student boarding and deboarding, are carried out to ensure that all students are dropped off at the correct locations.
- The Department of Education was made aware of concerns regarding the Standard Bus's decision to suspend school bus services beyond route Km 14 on Annie Lake Road. In January 2025, the Education Operations Team worked with Standard Bus to resolve the issue. In 2024, parents voiced concerns regarding bus safety on Range Road. Standard Bus addressed the concerns, which included:
  - A route change to avoid traffic congestion impacted one bus stop. The change requires passengers to cross the street at a designated crosswalk. This approach aligns with the crossing practices of other students in the area.
  - The decision made by Standard Bus was to improve service reliability, especially during cold weather.
  - The parents were informed by email and phone on November 8, 2024.
- To ensure children's safety, parents are advised to bring their children to the school bus stops, arrive early, wait in safe zones, and always stop and look both ways before crossing the road, including at crosswalks.
- The Department of Education works with the Whitehorse School Busing Committee on matters affecting the delivery of shared bus services.



- There are 43 active bus routes in Whitehorse and 12 in the communities (including Ross River) - one of these routes is currently under a change order request to the contract.
- As of the start of the 2024-2025 school year, approximately 2,200 riders were registered for the school bus in Whitehorse.
- Since the start of the school year, the department has received an estimate of about 500 late registrations and/or special requests, which impacted our ability to respond on time.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, Standard Bus reported that all rural community routes are staffed.
- Families can sign up for “My School Bus Monitor” for email updates. They can also sign up for text notifications with Standard Bus.

### Transportation subsidy:

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

### Act and Regulations

- The Education Act and the Student Transportation Regulations outline the Department of Education's responsibilities for student transportation.
- Transportation subsidies are mandated under s. 47 of the Education Act.
- If a student's home is more than 3.2 km by the nearest passable road from the school the student attends, the Minister must provide transportation (i.e., busing) or an 'allowance for transportation and accommodation.'

- The Department of Education supports Yukon students by providing busing services (in all Yukon communities), including families that do not meet the eligibility requirements under the Education Act.
- Under the Student Transportation Regulations (O.I.C. 1991/069), the amount of the transportation allowance (limited to one per family) shall equal the Government of Yukon car mileage rate payable to public servants to a maximum amount prescribed by the Minister.
- Under Ministerial Order 2004/10, the maximum transportation allowance payable is \$13 per day.

### Special requests

- In keeping with the Education Act and Student Transportation Regulations, student riders are first assigned a seat for transportation from home to school and back.
- Transportation to locations other than home is beyond the criteria for school busing. These are considered special requests, and they are considered at the beginning of the school year based on available space and existing bus routes.
- The Student Transportation Ridership Guidelines outline how we consider accommodating students travelling to locations other than their home, such as after-school activities or daycare.

### Discipline and Behavior Management on Buses:

- The school rules apply while on the bus, and school Principals determine if an incident warrants suspension or expulsion from the bus.
- When behavioural issues persist, schools work with Standard Bus and Education staff to devise a solution. An example would be to develop a seating plan.
- The school principal will manage and issue any suspensions for behavioral issues on the school bus in accordance with the school's disciplinary policies.
- Standard Bus has a process to report incidents to schools when they happen on the bus.
- There may be occasions when drivers decide operationally, for health and safety reasons, to remove a student from the bus prior to leaving the school grounds or on route.
  - Monthly fixed costs per bus

- Variable costs per kilometre and route
- **Purpose:** Accommodate increased student ridership

### Costing and Conditions

- All rates will be charged according to the pricing outlined in Standard Bus's original bid submission.
- All other terms and conditions of the existing contract remain unchanged.
- Standard Bus was awarded the Student Transportation school bus contracts for both Whitehorse public schools and community public schools for 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27. The transportation contract is based on the number of routes and the distance driven per route. There are 43 bus routes (42 currently within the contract) that cover approximately 5,000 km daily in Whitehorse. In rural communities, buses travel an additional 920 km each day. Change orders are required to add bus routes.
  - The 3-year contract total is \$13,351,794
  - **Whitehorse Area Schools** – (Includes Fixed Overhead and profit, Fixed Bus Costs, Variable Bus Cost, and Accessible bus)
    - 2024/2025: \$3,009,721.04
    - 2025/2026: \$3,111,218.04
    - 2026/2027: \$3,223,694.42
    - \$500,000 allocated for field trips
    - Total: \$9,844,633.50
  - **Rural Community Schools** – (Includes Fixed Overhead and profit, Fixed Bus Costs, and Variable Bus Cost)
    - 2024/2025: \$1,126,046.97
    - 2025/2026: \$1,164,812.69
    - 2026/2027: \$1,206,301.54
    - \$10,000 Allocated for Field trips
    - Total: \$3,501,161.21
- Should change order requests require additional funds, the department will review budgets to use existing funds or work through regular budgeting processes for a variance.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO15**  
**Spring 2025**

## Transportation - Busing

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-23](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Transportation - Busing – Traffic Safety

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Education

#### Transportation Safety Plans: refer to SO18

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- School buses are one of the safest modes of transportation available.
- In our current contract with Standard Bus, we have additional safety features such as strobes placed on the top of the vehicles and surveillance cameras that face the riders on the bus.
- The Government of Yukon participates in a Transport Canada National Task Force on School Bus Safety, as Yukon's school buses must meet all the Transport Canada requirements for buses.
- At this time, installing seat belts on buses is not recommended or required by the task force.
- The contractor ensures that evacuation drills are practiced twice per school year.

##### Additional response:

- The Department of Education works with Standard Bus, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and communities to promote safe driving near school buses and to reduce risks along bus routes.
- In an emergency on a bus, the priority is to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Information is shared with families as soon as it is safe to do so.

## **Transportation - Busing – Traffic Safety**

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Education

- If parents have any concerns, they can contact their school, the Student Transportation Officer, or Standard Bus.

### **Additional response**

#### **Transportation Safety Plans:**

- Infrastructure and parking lot access points are an important factor in ensuring students and school community members can navigate school campuses safely.
- The Department of Education is working with Highways and Public Works' Road Safety Unit on a Transportation Safety Plan initiative.
- The Department of Education has made many on-campus improvements to student safety around traffic. Some of these improvements come from recommendations outlined in the 2018 Whitehorse School Mobility Report.
- The department hired a contractor to do a follow up assessment to the 2018 report and will be working to implement any further improvements that are recommended.
- The department has been working with Highways and Public Works to develop safety materials for students and parents.
- The rollout of materials is complete in rural schools, led by the RCMP, with plans underway for distribution to participating schools in the Whitehorse area.
- The Department of Education would like to remind drivers that they are required under the law to stop when a school bus is letting children on and off the buses. This is for the safety of our children.

### Transportation - Busing – Traffic Safety

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Education

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There has been media attention, public discussion, MLA correspondence and debate in the Legislature about school bus safety.
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#### Background:

- The regulations for physical safety requirements on school buses, including school bus seating, are set by the Government of Canada. Yukon school buses are required to meet national standards.
- All bus routes and stops are assessed on an ongoing basis.
- The Government of Yukon increased fines and demerit points for infractions, and the department is piloting the use of dashboard cameras on certain bus routes.
- The Departments of Education, Justice, Highways and Public Works, RCMP, Standard Bus and school communities have worked, and continue to work, to address concerns about bus safety on the highways.
- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee to address issues that affect shared busing services in Whitehorse.
- The RCMP continues to pay close attention to areas of concern, including the Alaska Highway.

#### Motion 332 and 2020 Report from the Task Force

- Motion 332 was passed in October 2019: THAT this House urges the Minister of Education, in partnership with all appropriate stakeholders, to participate in the recently announced Transport Canada assessment of seatbelt safety and continue to review school busing in Yukon, including but not limited to: (1) bus capacity and assigned seating; (2) whether the wearing of seat belts by passengers should be mandatory; (3) registration process; (4) behavioral and disciplinary policies; (5) emergency procedures; and (6) service areas and standards.
- In June 2019, the federal Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities published a report on bus passenger safety, which noted that buses - particularly school buses - are among the safest modes of transportation available.

## Transportation - Busing – Traffic Safety

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Education

- The Government of Yukon is part of a national committee (Task Force) to identify measures to further improve school bus safety in Canada.
  - The HPW Director of Transport Services has been part of the national Task Force and updates the EDU Director of Operations periodically.
  - The February 2020 report from the Task Force recommended 4 additional safety measures, but did not recommend 3-point seat belts in buses for passengers. The 4 recommendations are:
    - i. Infraction Cameras, to help prevent dangerous incidents caused by passing motorists.
    - ii. Extended Stop Arms, to further deter motorists from passing while children are entering or leaving the bus; (Transport Canada proposed this regulation which would apply only to newly manufactured/imported buses)
    - iii. Exterior 360° Cameras, as a means of better detecting and protecting children and other vulnerable road users around the exterior of the bus; and
    - iv. Automatic Emergency Braking, to help reduce the severity of a collision or avoid it entirely. (As of February 2023, Transport Canada continues to conduct research and testing of automatic emergency braking to inform a proposed regulatory package.)
  - The task force is working with partners in British Columbia and Ontario to carry out school bus seatbelt projects.

### Operational procedures

- Following incidents, the bus drivers first work with the RCMP on scene, and submit company incident reports, which are then shared with the department.
- The department and Standard Bus then work together on specific responses such as outreach with the RCMP.
- The department coordinates with the school, Standard Bus, and RCMP to ensure the safety of students and to share current information with parents as it becomes available.



# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO16**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Transportation - Busing – Traffic Safety**

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Education

- School buses regularly stop on highways to pick up and drop off students at designated locations. By stopping on the highway, other drivers can see the bus and flashing red lights from a distance, and all vehicles are required to stop. This allows the bus to take control of the roadway, stopping vehicles in both directions so it is safe for children to cross the road.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Transportation - Special Needs Transportation**

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Education

**Busing: refer to SO15**

### **Value:**

- The Department of Education provides support to ensure students with special needs can travel safely to and from school.

### **Recommended response:**

- The safety and wellbeing of students is a top priority, and the department expects the same from contractors operating on behalf of the Government of Yukon.
- The Department of Education supports students with special needs by providing transportation through their bus contractor, Standard Bus, and through other means, such as transportation subsidies.
- The department has been working on options to include another route to serve students who require this level of accessible transportation.

### **Additional response:**

- For some families, transportation challenges can impact student attendance. When students miss school, they miss important learning opportunities, school activities and chances to be with their peers.
- The Department of Education is exploring all available safe transportation options with families to find the best solutions to meet students' and families' needs.
- An additional alternative transportation bus route, anticipated to start in March 2025, has been created to meet the needs of students with disabilities who require an alternative transportation option.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO17**  
**Spring 2025**

## Transportation - Special Needs Transportation

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Education

- An educational assistant has been hired to support students on the new route.

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### Context – this may be an issue because:

- Taxi safety and accessible vehicles are a high-profile concern in Whitehorse.

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### Background:

- Many families have been unable to access accessible school bus transportation due to only two buses running, consequently the routes have not covered the same geographical area as the non-accessible bus routes, leaving some families unable to send their children to school.
- The bus routes for the accessible buses are lengthy, meaning that children are on these routes much longer than children who don't need the accessible bus, and often arrive after school has already started.
- In previous school years, transportation arrangements were made for students with special needs through contracts with local cab companies.
- Some families are reluctant to allow their children to ride unsupervised in a taxi, and some children require 1:1 supervision or care that a driver could not provide.
- This contract has been discontinued, although some families do continue to utilize cabs through a journal voucher from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Social Services, disability services.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-05**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## **Transportation - Transportation Safety Plans**

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Education

**Busing: refer to SO15**

### **Value:**

- Developing active safety transportation plans is a key government priority.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon understands the importance infrastructure plays in ensuring students and school community members can navigate school campuses safely.
- In 2018, the department worked with the City of Whitehorse on a School Mobility Review of infrastructure surrounding Whitehorse schools, and to identify projects that could enhance safety. Many of the on-campus recommendations from the 2018 School Mobility Review and additional identified projects have been implemented.
- Traffic impact assessments are conducted during the design stages for new schools to inform the development of the campus and traffic infrastructure.
- In November 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works, in collaboration with the City of Whitehorse, installed new traffic lights at the intersection near Whistle Bend Elementary School.

### **Additional response:**

- The Yukon government continues to invest in infrastructure to enhance safety, including new parking lots, additional signage and better lighting.
- School communities are consulted during each site design process.

## Transportation - Transportation Safety Plans

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Education

- The departments of Education and Highways and Public Works collaborate on public awareness campaigns that ensure all Yukoners understand how to keep students safe on their commute to school.
- The Department initiated a follow up report to the 2018 School Mobility Review to evaluate the work done and identify any potential opportunities to further enhance safety and traffic flows. The follow-up report was completed in December 2023.
- The departments of Highways and Public Works and Education worked together to:
  - develop a safety activity booklet for students,
  - develop a school-specific parent handout that will include information on how to navigate the campus safely, and
  - develop and deliver back to school bus safety ad campaigns.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some of the themes heard in the spring 2023 public engagement centred around active transportation, safe links to school campuses, accessible parking and safe student drop-off areas.
- Golden Horn Elementary School's school council has brought up the design and functionality of its recently upgraded parking lot, which includes a parent drop-off and bus loop.

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### Background:

- When concerns are raised about crosswalk safety, the Department of Education works with the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse to mitigate risk and address concerns.
- The Department of Education continues to work with Whistle Bend Elementary School to assist and address their traffic safety concerns in partnership with the Department of Highways and Public Works, the City of Whitehorse, and the RCMP.

## Transportation - Transportation Safety Plans

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Education

Education is working closely with the school and its school council to deliver traffic safety education.

- In partnership with the RCMP, educational materials were distributed and presented in all rural schools throughout the 2023–24 school year. Highways and Public Works Transport Services are extending its educational initiative to Whistle Bend Elementary School for the 2024-25 school year. The program, funded through existing budgets, has secured resources and presenters. Transport Services is now coordinating with the school council and principals to finalize implementation dates.
- School communities have expressed concerns with adjacent infrastructure and requested upgrades in the past. For example, adding crosswalks to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Porter Creek.
- School communities are consulted during each site design process.

### School Mobility Review in 2018:

- In 2018, the department worked with the City of Whitehorse on a School Mobility Review of infrastructure surrounding Whitehorse schools and to identify projects that could enhance safety.
- Stantec was hired for the review and visited sites from May 28 to 31, 2018. They focused on six priority sites: Christ the King, Jack Hulland, Elijah Smith, Whitehorse Elementary, Holy Family, and Selkirk schools. They identified some on-campus and off-campus opportunities for improved safety.
- Many of the on-campus recommendations from the 2018 School Mobility Review, as well as additional projects identified, have been implemented. These include:
  - New parking lots and parent drop-off areas at Christ the King, Golden Horn, Holy Family and Hidden Valley schools.
  - Bus loop and parent drop-off at the north side of Selkirk Elementary School.
  - Enhanced crosswalks on 12th Avenue and additional signage on Pine and Fir Streets.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO18**  
**Spring 2025**

## Transportation - Transportation Safety Plans

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Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-31

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Questions about tendering and build are for HPW**

**School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to EP05**

**Value:**

- Modern learning environments support thriving and growing communities.

**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education is excited to have opened the first new Whitehorse elementary school in over twenty years in the neighbourhood of Whistle Bend in Whitehorse.
- Whistle Bend Elementary opened its doors to students in August 2024, and the Government of Yukon is dedicated to ensuring this is a smooth first year for students, families, and staff.
- The school's enrolment has exceeded expectations, starting with 218 students. By December 2024, the number increased to 225 students, and the department is committed to ensuring the school is staffed to support this increase in student enrollment.

**Additional response:**

- At this time, no school other than Jack Hulland Elementary School has been impacted by reduced staffing numbers due to lower enrollment.
- Prior to opening, the new principal, the superintendent, and Student Supports Services worked with the school council to address design issues such as updating the location of sensory/neurodiverse spaces.
- In the spring of 2024, Student Support Services purchased additional equipment specifically for the school's sensory rooms. The rooms have been fully utilized since the start of the school year. There is a small sensory room designated as a quiet room, and a larger sensory room.



- The 2024-25 budget contained \$2.5 million to complete the Whistle Bend Elementary School.
- As part of the Capital Planning Budget \$50,000 is allocated for 2025-26.
- In November 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW), in collaboration with the City of Whitehorse, installed new traffic lights at the intersection near Whistle Bend Elementary School.
- The school bus drop-off area has been successfully relocated, a result of collaborative efforts between the school council and administrator, the Department of Education and Highways and Public Works.
  - The drop off area was moved to the parking lot, while the parent drop-off area is now situated within the loop at the front of the school.
  - This change was to prevent students from stepping into the parking lot from a bus. The change took place on Monday March 3, 2025 and has resulted in a decrease in traffic issues.
  - School staff are onsite within the parking lot to ensure students disembark safely from the bus onto the sidewalk, which leads directly to the school's main entrance,

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The school council has raised many concerns with the design, specifically as it pertains to sensory/neurodiverse spaces, bathroom amenities, frosted interior windows, accessibility, parking, and perimeter fencing.
- Throughout this project, questions have been raised about overall project delays and budget increases.

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### Background:

- The Whistle Bend Elementary School Council sent a letter to the school's superintendent on April 19, 2025, identifying concerns about school staffing, and

capacity and FTE for English as an Additional Language Learners, and CASA support.

- Whistle Bend Elementary School is built to receive 425 students and is at 53% capacity for this 2024-25 school year.
- Should enrolment increase dramatically, the Department of Education has additional land plots for school construction; either elementary or secondary schools.
- The school principal is working with the superintendent to address staffing for the 2025-2026 school year.
- A new Whistle Bend Elementary School attendance area was created based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, plus portions of the previous Takhini Elementary School area.
- The principal was hired in January 2024 and successfully recruited the vice-principal and all teacher positions.
- The school has been allocated 17.5 FTEs for this school year.
- On May 29, 2024, the community was invited to celebrate the opening of the new school, over 500 people visited the school.
- New traffic zones around the school and four crossing guards were in place for the start of the school year and until the installation of the new traffic and pedestrian lights.
- In August 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works and the City of Whitehorse signed a memorandum of understanding for provision of pedestrian lights in Whistle Bend.
- In November 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works, in partnership with the City of Whitehorse, installed new traffic and pedestrian lights at the intersection near Whistle Bend Elementary School

### School Design

- Education established a Project Advisory Committee which met regularly throughout the design phase of the project.
  - Members included: Whistle Bend Community Association, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and City of Whitehorse, and Yukon government representatives from Education, Community Services, and Highways and Public Works.

- The committee was co-chaired by a Department of Education representative and a nominated representative of the Project Advisory Committee.
- The design-build contract was awarded to Ketza Construction Corporation.
- The 2023-24 Main Estimates included \$20.3 million for construction of the school, with a total capital requirement budgeted at \$52.8 million.
- As with all new schools, throughout the design process traffic impact assessments were conducted which informed how the campus and traffic infrastructure was developed.
- Parking (on and off campus) was approved by the City of Whitehorse as part of the issuance of the development permit for the project.
- Safety features were built into the school's design, and a school safety plan is in place.
- The school has two playgrounds, one of which is accessible, and includes a swing set, an outdoor basketball court, and a school field.
- Bike racks were installed at all major entrances for a total of 96 stalls.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School has nine accessible washrooms, including all-gender and barrier-free washrooms.
  - There are four barrier-free washrooms downstairs with changing stations, adjustable change beds, and benches. The changing stations are rated for up to 250 pounds.
  - Barrier-free washrooms focus on physical accessibility for people with disabilities, while inclusive washrooms prioritize gender identity and expression by providing gender-neutral or single-stall restrooms.
- School Councils are the lead on playground equipment for their respective schools.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School features accessible playground equipment across two playgrounds. One playground is fully compliant with accessibility standards, while the second requires modifications,
  - The department is working towards making this playground fully compliant with accessibility standards.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO19**  
**Spring 2025**

## Whistle Bend School

Education

- Accessible playgrounds are designed to remove barriers that prevent children with disabilities from using playground equipment. Accessible playgrounds ensure that spaces are user-friendly for children with disabilities, such as those who are blind, deaf, or physically limited.
- Inclusive design focuses on providing a user-friendly experience for everyone with a wide range of factors such as age, culture, economic situation, education, gender, and geographic location.
- Accessibility and inclusion are important for creating playground/school designs that ensure equal access for everyone.
- The installation of the Bubble Tube was completed in December 2025, ensuring its security and safety for students' use.
- Ketza Construction Corporation was granted substantial performance on April 17, 2024.
  - The warranty period will end on April 17, 2025, except for components with extended warranties (such as the roof) and landscaping, which was only completed this past spring/summer.
  - HPW is extending the contract with Colliers Project Leader for advisory services to October 31, 2025, to line up with the end of the warranty period for outdoor work that was completed in summer/fall 2024.
- The building's design, influenced mainly by the Project Advisory Committee, meets barrier-free access requirements set out by the Building Code and applicable regulations.
- Ketza Construction is aiming for a Gold Certification through the Rick Hansen Foundation.
- In 2024-25, Whistle Bend School has a \$1.193M increase related to estimated costs and construction.

### Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025

2024-25 Actuals to date)	2024-25 Supplementary Budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total project actuals to date	Total project estimated budget
\$3,347,371	\$3,693,000	\$50,000	\$48,951,695	\$52,800,000

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO19**  
**Spring 2025**

**Whistle Bend School**

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-05-01](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Whitehorse Downtown School - Future

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Education

#### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to SO21

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- École Whitehorse Elementary School's current age, condition, and location present challenges and limitations that make it the top candidate for Whitehorse school replacements.
- Due to capital project timelines, limited educational land reserves, and associated considerations, it is not possible to locate the École Whitehorse Elementary School's replacement school downtown.
- We recognize that many people feel an elementary school in downtown Whitehorse is essential, and we will continue to work with residents, stakeholders, First Nations governments, and the City of Whitehorse so that planning for a new downtown school can occur.
- Downtown residents have told us they value having a school in their neighbourhood. This echoes the feedback we heard in spring 2023 public engagement on capital planning for schools. We've heard that Yukoners value local neighbourhood schools
- The Yukon government understand that a school is at the heart of a vibrant community, offering not only a central hub for learning and growth but a place of connections among residents.
- We are committed to have the planning and development of a new school in downtown Whitehorse part of the 2025–2026 budget.

### Whitehorse Downtown School - Future

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Education

- We are looking forward to inviting you to engage on the new school in downtown Whitehorse in late spring 2025.

#### **Additional response:**

- Our government is committed to ongoing consultation and long-term planning to ensure the educational needs of Yukoners are met.
- We have heard from community members that providing input into school planning is a high priority, and so we are planning an early-stage public engagement on a future downtown school.
- Additionally, we are currently engaging with Takhini residents and educational partners on the traffic study for the École Whitehorse Elementary School's replacement school in Takhini.
- With anticipated development and increased densification in the downtown core, the future of downtown Whitehorse is evolving.
- In response, our government is exploring options to build a new school. We are actively engaging with partners, stakeholders, First Nations governments and the community to understand the future needs and identify potential locations for a new school.
- As part of the due diligence of this work, all existing parcels of land will be explored to determine their feasibility.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

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

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Education

### Background:

- In April 2024, the Minister of Community Services asked the Whitehorse mayor and council to work with the Government of Yukon to identify land within the downtown core larger than École Whitehorse Elementary School's current location for an educational reserve and that the City of Whitehorse make the appropriate changes to the Official Community Plan.
- Current downtown schools include École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School.
- While École Whitehorse Elementary School will be relocated to a new school on the Takhini Educational Reserve Land, the other learning centres will remain in the downtown core.
- The department has had preliminary meetings with various stakeholders regarding the building of a new downtown school. Department officials have met with Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the City of Whitehorse, Yukon Housing and representatives from the Kèjän + Rogers (5<sup>th</sup> & Rogers) Development team: Northern Vision Development, Da Daghay Development Corporation, Kobayashi+Zedda, and Ketza Construction.
- Work on a needs/gap analysis, including population projections for the downtown area are underway.
- \$50,000 has been allocated in the 2025-2026 budget for public engagement on a new downtown Whitehorse school.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-02**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

#### Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to SO22

##### Value:

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

##### Recommended response:

- In August 2023, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd. was awarded the prime consultant contract for the École Whitehorse Elementary School replacement project through a public tender.
- This includes conducting a Site Analysis (Phase 1) and producing a report on potential sites for the new school within the Takhini Educational Land Reserve.
- On October 1, 2024, the Government of Yukon announced that the new École Whitehorse Elementary School will be built at the northwest corner of the Takhini Educational Land Reserve.
- The Department of Education is nearing the end of the pre-design phase (Phase 2), during which, key studies and reports will be completed. These documents will help inform the design of the new school.
- Highways and Public Works received the completed Traffic Impact assessment study, which was shared with stakeholders during the engagement sessions and at an open house on April 10, 2025.

## Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- The traffic study evaluates the impact on major intersections around Takhini and provides recommendations for two roundabouts, parking, access, pedestrian, and cyclist safety along Range Road.
  - If the bus ridership to the new school meets the current 80% ridership of the present École Whitehorse Elementary School, the Normandy Road and University Drive intersections along Range Road are expected to maintain minimal delays (less than 15 seconds per vehicle) and free-flow conditions, ensuring smooth traffic flow.
- Over 110 people attended the April 10<sup>th</sup> open house including a large portion of Takhini residents.
  - Attendees visited tables set up by the Department of Education, Highways and Public Works, and Community Services, to learn more about the Traffic Impact Assessment Findings, Project Details, Busing and Transportation, and Sports Infrastructure Investments.
  - Participants were able to provide feedback on forms and surveys in English and French. 160 surveys were received, and half of the respondents were Takhini residents.
- The verbal feedback received included appreciation for the engagement and wishing for additional Questions and Answers sessions. Site location was a common theme in that participants were curious as to why the Takhini location was chosen.
- Based on the feedback received, a "What We Heard Report" will be produced. The initial input included comments about a desire for safe, active transportation and unanimous positive remarks for a large gym.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Feedback from the survey will help guide the conceptual design phase by identifying community priorities, addressing concerns, and ensuring the project aligns with user needs and expectations.
- The project will require a YESAA assessment to evaluate potential impacts and provide recommendations. Engagement with YESAB will occur at the appropriate stage.
- The project is still in an early planning phase, and based on the current estimated timeline, construction of the new school will commence in the spring of 2027 at the earliest.
- If construction starts in the summer of 2027, the school could be completed by the fall of 2029 and welcome its first students in 2029-2030.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude establishing another downtown school in the future.

#### **Additional response – engagement:**

- Representatives from the Government of Yukon met with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association on October 18, 2024, to better understand the community's key concerns, including the need for a traffic study and ongoing engagement.
- The *Choosing the future site for École Whitehorse Elementary School* location report was updated on Yukon.ca as of October 28, 2024.
- The Department of Education will continue engaging with the Takhini Neighborhood Association as planning proceeds.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Future opportunities for all partners and stakeholders to discuss the project will be provided.
- This is a valuable opportunity to enhance French immersion programming in a new, modern learning environment.

#### **Additional response - Site options:**

- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large, serviced parcel of land that offers a central location with improved access to green space, meeting modern learning needs.
- Some trees on the chosen site are unhealthy or unsafe due to damage from annual spring flooding and will be removed to make room for the new multi-sport field. The design team has worked closely with a landscape architect to identify which trees are healthy and which pose risks.
- Only a small portion of the existing trees, which are mostly unhealthy, will be removed. Most of the forested area will remain to minimize the environmental impact.
- The First Nation School Board are engaged in these discussions and will provide input on the final design decisions.
- Rezoning will be required for the new school location. Discussions with the City of Whitehorse to address rezoning will begin during the conceptual design phase.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- MLAs have been vocal about keeping a school in the downtown core. On October 21, 2022, the Minister met with concerned downtown residents.
- Takhini residents have been vocal on social media about their concerns over removing trees in the location of the future multi-sport field.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

#### Background:

- Department officials continue to meet with Softball and Sport Yukon, and a commitment has been made to ensure they remain informed as the project progresses. The agreement focuses on relocating softball infrastructure while ensuring the sport remains vibrant in the community.
- The Departments of Education, Community Services, Highways & Public Works, and Sport Yukon are working on an agreement to collaborate on expanding school gymnasiums in Whitehorse. The agreement aims to address the significant deficit in large gymnasium space and support community health and recreation.
- The École Whitehorse Elementary School Council wrote to the Minister of Education on October 29, 2024, emphasizing the importance of building a modern and safe educational facility.
- The School Council expressed support for the Government of Yukon's commitment to building a new École Whitehorse Elementary School and willingness to continue working with stakeholders and the Project Advisory Committee.
- École Whitehorse Elementary School was built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The school cannot meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders, and the Government of Yukon. Meetings were held on:
  - October 3, 2022
  - November 10, 2022
  - May 15, 2023
  - August 28, 2023
  - November 23, 2023
  - January 11, 2024

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- April 18, 2024
  - October 17, 2024
  - November 14, 2024
- On November 23, 2023, a representative of the Takhini Neighborhood Association joined the Project Advisory Committee.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Council
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
  - City of Whitehorse
  - Government of Yukon
  - Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
  - Kwanlin Dün First Nation
  - Takhini Neighbourhood Association
- The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- Other schools are currently located downtown: the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, and the Aurora Virtual School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.
- Issues have been raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed building code upgrades, and overall accessibility.
- Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate the build.
- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations, and the public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key design milestones.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- In March 2024, various partners and stakeholders were invited to a meeting to review the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit report, and subsequent meetings were held with the EWES school council (April 15, 2024).
- As the Takhini Neighborhood Association requested, Department of Education Operations staff met with Takhini residents on April 24, 2024, to share the draft Site Analysis and Test Fit Report.
- The meeting with the Takhini Neighbourhood Association was attended by a number of residents, including MLA Kate White.
- On October 2, 2024, Kobayashi + Zedda Architects Ltd., the consulting firm responsible for designing the new EWES, organized site visits to five modern schools in Vancouver. These visits provided the project team with valuable insights. Participants included representatives from Highway and Public Works, Education, and two members of the Project Advisory Committee. The tours highlighted contemporary educational environments that emphasize innovative design, revealing effective strategies for enhancing student learning and support, which will inform the development of the new EWES school.
- On October 17, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee convened for a meeting at which the Kobayashi + Zedda Architects team presented insights on 21st-century schools. They also provided an update on the recent Vancouver school tour, sharing key takeaways that could inform the planning of the new school.
- On November 14, 2024, the Project Advisory Committee held a meeting at which the EWES school principal and staff shared their insights and suggestions for the new school. They provided several recommendations regarding its design.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve:
  - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
  - There are not a lot of other vacant sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school.
  - To look at a different site would entail going through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity, etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.

### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Work to identify suitable land for educational purposes for future school builds is in the preliminary stages.
- The consultant is currently in phase two of seven. These phases include:
  - Site analysis and test fit
  - Pre-design
  - Conceptual design options
  - Schematic design
  - Detailed Design and Specifications
  - Contractor procurement
  - Construction administration and warranty
- Potential site analysis and pre-design have been completed, and community engagement is underway. The engagement process includes information from the Traffic Impact Assessment, Site Analysis, the project's next steps and participant survey collection.
- Information about participating in an Open House on April 10, 2025, will be shared in a press release the week of March 31, 2025.

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

- The Takhini Neighborhood Association ran an online survey between October 13 and 17, 2024 and received 144 unique responses.
- The survey asked three questions focused on 1. key messages for the Minister for the relocation project, 2. support of WES's relocation to the Takhini Educational Reserve, and 3. reasons for support or lack thereof.
- Question 1 - What's the most important message that the Minister of Education needs to hear regarding the WES relocation project?
  - Traffic concerns
  - The need for consultation
  - The lack of transparency in the decision-making process
- Questions 2 and 3 - Do you support the relocation of WES to Takhini?
  - Maybe: 21% - Traffic concerns, green space, softball fields, downtown needs school.



### Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

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Education

- Yes: 19% of respondents were excited about a French immersion school in the neighbourhood, believed that it would be good to have a walkable new school in the neighbourhood, and looked at the school situation in Whitehorse as a whole.
- No: 60% - Traffic concerns, loss of green space, lack of consultation, question why two schools would be next to each other.
- As part of the current engagement strategy, survey information will be collected for a What We Heard Report.

#### Bussing at École Whitehorse Elementary School

- Currently, approximately 80% of École Whitehorse Elementary School students are registered for bus transportation.
  - According to daily bus ridership logs, approximately 90% of those students take the bus on any given day.
  - Variations in usage may arise due to factors such as illness, appointments, parental pickups, field trips, after-school care, sports activities, or forgotten items like lunchboxes.

#### Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funding

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

#### Budget

- For 2024-25 fiscal year, \$2.08M is being deferred due to ongoing adjustments in the work and extending planning and engagement opportunities.
  - The department is being responsive to concerns by stakeholders such as traffic concerns and is taking the time to do additional work and ensure we are getting it right.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT14/SO21

Spring 2025

## Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project - EWES

Education

- For 2025-26 fiscal year, we are estimating \$1M for this year. As such timing of the 5-Year capital plan has been adjusted.

### Summary of expenditures and budget as of April 24, 2025

2024-25 Actuals	2024-25 Supplementary budget #2	2025-26 Main Estimates	Total project actuals to date	Total project estimated budget
\$425,969	\$420,000	\$1,000,000	\$744,592	To be determined

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-25

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning**

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Education

### **Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to HOT14/SO21**

#### **Value:**

- Our government is investing in Yukoners by investing in school infrastructure.

#### **Recommended response:**

- It's important that we ensure our schools meet the demands of our growing population and provide modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- The Yukon government recognizes the fundamental role of schools in healthy, thriving communities.
- The 2023 school facilities engagement results inform the development of an updated Whitehorse school replacement plan and a workplan for small and medium renovations to Whitehorse schools.

#### **Additional response:**

- The department will continue working closely with the two Yukon school boards, the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, on their vision for education and capital needs.
- As part of the Whitehorse school facilities engagement, the department also had conversations with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- The Department of Education continues to invest in all our schools across the territory, and conversations about capital projects in rural schools will continue at the community level.

## Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning

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Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is considerable public attention around school replacements and locations in Whitehorse, and a public engagement was completed in 2023.
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### Background:

- In spring 2023, the Yukon government opened a public survey and conducted open houses to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with their school facilities and how to meet the K-12 programming needs better.
- In addition to the survey and open houses, the department hosted focus groups for educators, learning stewards, and students.
- The purpose of the engagement was to:
  - build relationships with school communities;
  - inform Yukoners about the school capital planning and development process; and
  - collect stakeholder feedback on their ideas and considerations for a 21st-century learning environment.
- The department reached out to many educational partners, organizations, and community groups with ideas and experiences to inform them of the engagement and how to participate.
- Approximately 1,000 Yukoners participated in this engagement and a What We Heard Report was published in November 2023. The report is available on Yukon.ca.
- The department published the engagement's What We Heard report and shared the report with the First Nations Education Council and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee, recognizing that students from communities may attend school in Whitehorse.
- The following groups were engaged as part of the engagement process:
  - Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees

## **Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning**

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Education

- Catholic Education Association of Yukon
  - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee
  - Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Yukon Employee's Union
  - Yukon University
  - City of Whitehorse
  - Child Youth and Advocate Office
  - Softball Yukon
  - Association franco-yukonnaise
  - LDAY Centre for Learning
  - Autism Yukon
  - Child Development Centre
  - Yukon Literacy Coalition
  - Yukon Learn
  - Whitehorse Downtown Resident's Association
  - Whitehorse-area community associations
- Overall, participants in the engagement emphasized the importance of:
  - Connecting with the outdoors and outside spaces for learning or social time, including accessing surrounding green spaces or trail networks for active transportation.
  - Creating culturally inclusive and accessible spaces, including meeting the needs of neuro-divergent students and those living with hearing, visual or physical disabilities.
  - Creating modern learning environments by applying technology in learning, spaces for collaboration and spaces for spiritual, cultural, and mental health-related activities and programming.
  - Fully integrating schools within neighbourhoods based on populations and growth projections with sufficient access for school buses and trails for active commuters.
- Whistle Bend Elementary School was completed and opened for the 2024-25 school year.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO22**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-Term Capital Planning**

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Education

- Short-term measures such as portables have been added or are planned for several Whitehorse schools to alleviate enrolment pressures.

**Approved by:**

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-31](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **GOLDEN HORN Elementary School issues**

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Education

### **Value:**

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium, and long-term facility needs.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government continues to invest in school infrastructure to ensure that our schools meet the demands of the unique school communities they serve.
- In the mid-term and long-term, we will continue to work with the Golden Horn Elementary School community to identify any required maintenance or upgrades and address those through the capital and maintenance planning process.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- At the Golden Horn Elementary School council meeting on February 6, 2025, which was attended by MLA Scott Kent, the council and administration raised several facilities and other issues.

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### **Background:**

- In recent meetings, administration and school council brought up the following maintenance concerns:
  - The school entrance door hardware and public announcement (PA) system are operational. The lockdown system is functional for all but three doors, which are not set up with electronic FOB entrance capability. The contractor for the job was unable to complete the work, and the contract has been cancelled. The contract has been re-tendered with work to be scheduled this summer.
  - Concerns with a portable - the portable door has since been fixed. Highways and Public Works have scheduled for repair to heater in the summer to avoid disruption in the classroom.

## GOLDEN HORN Elementary School issues

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Education

- The school is coordinating to have the activity bus windows repaired and the cage tightened.
- The concessionary needs upgrading to meet code – requires dishwasher & ventilation.
- Barrier-free bathrooms may not be suitable for the future needs of a student enrolled at this school.
- The overflow parking for parents is not large enough which causes traffic congestion in the parking lot.
- More signage is needed for the student/parent crosswalk to alert drivers to pedestrians.
- One basketball net that was removed from tarmac area and needs replacement to have four playable nets.
- The school council asked for updates on:

### Playfield report:

- In December 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) completed a study to explore options, including capital costs, operations and maintenance costs, and a lifecycle cost estimate to upgrade the school's playfield.
- The report includes three options, including budget and operational costs:
  - Servicing existing field (\$263,000 and \$5,000 annual maintenance)
  - Natural Turf (\$1,7M and \$80,000 annual maintenance)
  - Artificial Turf (\$2,7M and \$30,000 annual maintenance)
  - Costing for a fourth option (clover field), which was requested by the Operations Team is anticipated to be received in May 2025.
- The Operations Team met with the Golden Horn School Council on April 3, 2025, to provide an update on the progress of updating the play field. Once the costing for the fourth option is received, Operations will meet with the school council for a further conversation.
- Education and HPW will develop recommendations based on school and school council feedback.



# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SO23**  
**Spring 2025**

## **GOLDEN HORN Elementary** **School issues**

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Education

- Education created a scan that has provided a comprehensive review of the state of all school fields (urban/rural). The scan identified required field upgrades.

### **Tarmac repair**

- In the summer of 2023, the playground tarmac was repaired in places. It subsequently became degraded again by May 2024 and requires repair.

### **Water testing:**

- In the fall of 2024, Education tested 25 drinking water fixtures. Only one fixture exceeded the Health Canada Guideline for lead in drinking water in the dental room. A flushing procedure was provided for the Dental Program to ensure the water is safe to use.

### **Educational assistants**

- The recruitment and retention of educational assistants.

### **Door hardware (FOB)**

- HPW is expediently procuring a new contractor to install the new door hardware and access controls for the school over the summer break.

### **Epson interactive whiteboards**

- The school requested five Epson interactive boards and to date has received three.
  - During a period of spend-monitoring, we made a fiscally responsible decision to purchase three for the school. In the next fiscal period, the school will receive an additional two.

### **Bus Operation**

- Standard Bus policy requires drivers to use an internal or external spotter while backing up.

#### **Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-08**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

#### **EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process: refer HOT06/SSS02**

##### **Value:**

- Working with partners to ensure all voices are heard is an imperative step towards making sure all students are included and supported to meet their potential.

##### **Recommended response:**

- The letter tabled on April 16, 2025 has been addressed in a response on February 26, 2025.
  - The response states that the Yukon Association of Education Professionals had been informed in a meeting on February 12 that the Department of Education was reverting to the previous (2022-2023) rubric and process for this year so that formal consultation could continue.
- Departmental staff remain committed to working collaboratively with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to understand their views on a successful educational assistant allocation process.
- Departmental staff also continue to engage with partners to hear their concerns and hopes for an equitable process.
- Currently, there is a Joint Management Committee reviewing the training plans for educational assistants and teachers on call.
  - Part of the work of this committee is to collaboratively define the role of the educational assistant moving forward and produce a training plan that meets the needs of all Yukon students and education professionals.
- The membership of this committee includes:

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- the president of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals,
  - the president of the Association of Yukon School Administrators,
  - the President of the Special Education Teachers Sub association of Yukon Association of Education Professionals,
  - the Executive Director of Autism Yukon,
  - the Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon,
  - the Executive Director of Yukon First Nations Education Directorate,
  - along with members from First Nations School Board, Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and Yukon Education Authority.
- The committee has been meeting biweekly since February 2025 and will continue to do so until the end of May 2025 to carry out this important work.
  - Following the conclusion of the committee's work, its outcomes will go through the usual consultation process with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
  - The next steps in the educational assistant allocation process will be guided by the collaboratively defined role of an educational assistant.
  - The Department of Education continues to receive feedback from schools during the current educational assistant allocation process and will continue to engage formally with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals regarding educational assistant allocations.

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- Both school boards and the Yukon Education Authority are engaging with their staff and communities and are also involved in the educational assistant allocation consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- The Department of Education aims to ensure that the allocation of educational assistants is transparent, consistently applied, and objectively considers the diverse needs of learners, while aligning with the resources available, and supports all three school authorities as they seek to update their systems.
- Department officials will continue working with partners to understand their concerns and co-develop an open, transparent allocation process that addresses the needs of Yukon learners, within the context of all the available support resources.

### **Additional response - Fall 2023/Spring 2024 work and ongoing process improvement:**

- Partners asked the Department to take urgent action to implement the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education agenda and this included conducting a review of the current educational assistant allocation process.
- EnGauge Consulting was contracted to facilitate and gather diverse perspectives about the current educational assistant allocation process, which included individual, confidential interviews with approximately 30 individuals, including educators, administrators and representatives from the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

- The consultants also hosted a two-day session and information gathering process in fall 2023, where many partners, including the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, confidentially provided their perspectives on the overall educational assistant allocations and offered concrete solutions.
- The final report based on these conversations was shared with stakeholders and the public in April 2024 and will help guide the department's next steps with partners.
- The department paused this work over summer 2024 to respect partners' schedules.
- Since this time, staff from the department have met individually with partners to continue discussions regarding the new rubric and allocation process.

#### **Additional response – YAEP Consultation:**

- The department is continuing its formal consultation process with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals. Meetings are ongoing.
- Department leadership will review and consider any recommendations received through consultation with the education assistant allocation process.
- The department values the active participation of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals on the Joint Management Committee to define the role of the Educational Assistant and provide valuable input into training plans for Yukon Association of Education Professionals' membership.

### EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

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Education

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The issue of updates to the education assistant allocation process was raised numerous times in the Spring 2024 session, in the media and by education partners.
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#### Background:

- Interested parties involved in these discussions and engagements have included: Educational assistants, administrators (principals and vice principals), YAEP, LATs, classroom teachers, Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees, superintendents, Executive Director of the First Nations School Board, Executive Director of the CSFY, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, the Child Development Centre, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office, and partners within the Department of Education, Autism Yukon, the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon.
- A community of inquiry examined better ways to align funding models and staffing allocations with student needs. Draft recommendations have been submitted to the department.
- In the fall of 2023, Student Support Services contracted an external consultant to confidentially interview stakeholders on the current EA allocation process. Through this work recommendations have been put forward on possible changes to the process.
- The Public Service Commission received a grievance from YAEP in spring 2024. Consultation timelines may be impacted as the department also works through the grievance process. In February 2025, YAEP added both school boards to the active grievance process.
- The EnGauge Consultants report was shared with interested and involved parties and publicly released in April 2024. The report itself contains short, medium, and long-term goals. Part of the work that we will do with our partners includes analyzing and considering these recommendations.
- On April 25, 2024, department staff met with partners to hear concerns about the update to the rubric form which remains part of the allocation process. The

### **EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners**

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Education

department continued to collaborate with partners over 2024 and will continue to collaborate over 2025.

- On July 12, 2024, Yukon Association of Education Professionals formally requested that all consultation regarding the role of the Educational Assistant be paused as the Yukon Association of Education Professionals considered it a bargaining issue. Yukon Government agreed to respect this opinion and did not consult further with any Yukon Association of Education Professional member or the union itself pending the outcome of bargaining.
- Now that bargaining is completed, a Joint Management Committee has been created to update the role of Educational Assistant, and Yukon Association of Education Professionals are key members of this committee.
- The procurement of the out-of-territory consultants who led the fall 2023 work followed the government's procurement policies. The consultants were chosen based on a proven track record of working in the Yukon.
- The updates to the process that were initially sent out in February 2024 were based on work with the consultants, input from partners and research into best practices. These updates included:
  - Better sharing of information with educators and administrators, including increased transparency in the educational assistant allocation form by clearly noting how the holistic needs of the students are being considered. This includes the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, and socio-emotional skills.
  - Updates to the base calculation.
- On April 25, 2024, a facilitated conversation with education partners was held to understand and discuss concerns, and to collectively discuss a path forward.
- In fall 2024, Student Support Services reviewed the feedback gathered during the consultation process. In February 2025, schools were sent a package which contains a rubric to fill out. This rubric was an information tool to provide information regarding the needs of each student. The scores of these rubrics were totaled, and a final school need calculated with input from Superintendents and discussions with school administrators. After March

### EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

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Education

break 2025, Student Support Services staff will meet to discuss the results with school administrators and learning assistance teachers.

- Often the calculated need is higher than the amount of full-time educational assistants available, and difficult decisions have to be made. The department anticipates communicating the EA allocation results to schools in April 2025.

#### EA Allocation Process Timeline of Meetings

September 2023	Hired Engauge Consulting to support discussions on EA Allocation process
October 2023	One-to-one meetings with education partners, school staff and central administration staff
November 2023	2-day workshop with education partners, school staff and central administration
October/November 2023	Jurisdictional scan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Educational Assistant Allocation process (including rubric/criteria)</li><li>- Educational Assistant training</li></ul>
January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Meetings with Superintendents and Executive Directors of school board to discuss updated rubric and base allocation</li><li>- School Boards given set number of EAs to allocate within their schools</li></ul>
February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Educational Assistant Allocation packages sent out to schools (with updated rubric)</li></ul>
March 2024	Request to pause Educational Assistant Allocation Formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals began Letter received from education partners with concerns (Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, LDAY Centre for Learning, Autism Yukon, Association of Yukon School Boards and Committees)
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Final Report from Engauge Consulting publicly released</li></ul>



# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT05/SSS01

Spring 2025

## EA Allocation: Next steps and work with partners

Education

	- Meeting with Education Partners April 25, 2024, to discuss rubric
June 2024	Schools notified to hire Educational Assistants based on previous year allocation Schools began hiring Educational Assistants for 2024-2025
July/August 2024	Pause of formal consultation with YAEP – office closure
September-November, 2024	Formal consultation commenced
December 2024	Formal consultation pause for YAEP office closure
December 2024- January 2025	LDAY Centre for Learning and Autism Yukon to hear concerns on new rubric
February 12, 2025	Department officials met with YAEP to continue formal consultation
February 17, 2025	EA allocation needs assessment tools distributed to schools for Area 1 and 2 using 2022-23 process.
February 27, 2025	Department officials met with YAEP to continue formal consultation.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

**EA Allocation - Next steps and work with partners: refer to  
HOT05/SSS01**

#### Value

- Every student deserves the necessary support to fully access their education and be included within the school community.

#### Recommended response:

- The 2025-2026 educational assistant allocation process is underway for all three school authorities (First Nation School Board, Commission scolaire francophone de Yukon, Yukon Education Authority).
- The allocation of educational assistants in schools across the territory takes into account several factors including student need, school community context, and number of full-time equivalents available for allocation.
- All partners play a valuable role in ensuring that students receive support to learn and be included. There is a range of student support available, and providing an educational assistant is one of the most intensive options.
- Changes to the educational assistant allocation process were on hold during the Yukon Association of Education Professional's collective bargaining period.
- With bargaining complete, the department, as well as both school boards, are continuing with formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.
- There are many additional considerations for educational assistant allocations, including transitions from the Child Development Centre, transitions between elementary and secondary school, and the arrival

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

of new students within or into the territory throughout the year. These factors can lead to adjustments in allocations as the year progresses.

- For the 2024-2025 school year, as of March 4, 2025, there are approximately 358 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants across all Yukon schools and school boards.

#### **Additional response:**

- In the spring of 2024, the allocation process for the 2024-25 school year for Yukon education schools was paused due to ongoing consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and work with broader system partners. To respect this work, the department allocated educational assistants for Yukon education schools based on the 2023-24 numbers.
- Under the 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Yukon government committed to increasing the number of educational assistants and learning assistance teachers over three years, starting in the 2023-24 school year.
- For the 2023-24 school year, 40 new positions were added. These positions include educational assistants, learning assistance teachers and school wellness specialists. The department is pleased to provide additional support with direct benefits to Yukon students and learner outcomes.
- For 2023-2024 school year
  - 15 Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs)
  - 13 Educational Assistants
- For the 2024-2025 school year
  - 14 educational assistants

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- 1 learning assistance teachers
- For 2025-2026 school year, the department allocated:
  - 18 educational assistants
  - 1 learning assistance teachers
- The 18 educational assistants for the 2025-2026 school year, are hired and currently working in Yukon schools.
- These time-limited supports will help address the increasing need across the territory's education system.
- For the 2024-25 school year, as of March 4, 2025, there are approximately 362 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers and educational assistants across all school authorities:
  - approximately 57 full time equivalents for learning assistance teachers, and 301 full time equivalents for educational assistants.

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#### Context:

- The Department has seen a significant increase in educational assistant requests from schools.
- There is CASA commitment to increase educational assistants and learning assistance teachers in schools for the 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years.

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#### Background:

- As of April 2025, there were 240 educational assistants working in Yukon Education Authority schools.
- Within 2025-2026 transfer payment agreements for the First Nations School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, budget was provided to support the following allocations:
  - 49 educational assistant FTEs for FNSB

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- 17 educational assistant FTEs for CSFY
- The educational assistant allocation process for 2025-26 is ongoing and involves aligning the budget with student needs across all schools in the Yukon.
- The department will continue to evaluate staffing proposals as enrollment and school-based needs are identified.
- Both school boards have the authority to adjust the educational assistants through their internal budgeting processes, based on school board priorities and student needs.
- For Yukon Education Authority schools, the educational assistant allocation process remains underway.
- The identified budget for 2025-26 is \$16,303,808, sufficient to hire approximately 235 educational assistant FTEs.
- The process that the department followed for Yukon Education Authority schools is:
  - Student Support Services shared material for school staff to request educational assistant support for their students. This material includes a rubric for shared and intensive support that considers areas like the safety of the child, independence, communication, academics, medical needs and social-emotional skills. This follows the established process from 2022/23.
  - School staff complete this paperwork and share it back with Student Support Services.
  - Student Support Services, school staff and superintendents discuss requests for educational assistant support, including students who may not have scored highly on the rubric but who may also require additional support.
  - Student Support Services and Superintendents jointly assign educational assistant support for each school based on conversations, needs-informed evaluation and budgeted full-time equivalents. Increased collaboration between Student Support Services and the Schools division ensures that those who understand the needs in schools are actively involved.

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

- Schools work with human resources to hire educational assistants.
  - Principals assign educational assistants within their school based on need.
- For the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and the First Nation School Board, the school boards decide how they will allocate the Educational Assistant positions within their overall allotments. They are also able to purchase additional Educational Assistant positions as required if they have room in their budget.
- The allocation for the 2024-25 school year in Yukon Education authority schools was based on the actual educational assistants hires as of March 2024.
- Allocation numbers for schools can vary each year as school and students' needs and school enrolments change.
- Many students have goals to develop independence and self-advocacy skills. When progress is made, the need for educational assistant support may be reduced after evaluating their successful skill development.
- School administrators continue to be responsible for determining day-to-day educational assistant schedules to maximize meeting both individual and shared needs of students.
- There is an increase in educational assistant allocation requests from schools. Schools are still focused on recovery from the pandemic years and working to better understand the needs of students and how best to support their educational programming.
- The FTE count (the number of education assistants working in schools) was 241 for Yukon Education Authority schools for the 2024-25 school year, which exceeded the FTE allowance. The additional FTEs were managed through vacancy factors.
- For 2025-26, risk managing additional FTEs through vacancy factor is not viable, based on a review and updating of allocations for the 2025-26 school year, there will now be 235 FTE in both Student Support Services (whose educational assistants serve all Yukon schools) and Yukon Education Authority schools.
  - As a result, most schools' educational assistant FTEs will remain consistent or decrease slightly, although needs have significantly risen.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# HOT06/SSS02

Spring 2025

## EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

Education

- The department is monitoring needs for 2025-26 and overall staffing proposal requests will include need requirements for Educational Assistants.

### Educational assistant allocation

	Budget FTE Educational Assistant Allocation	Budget \$	Note:
2024-25 Supplementary #2	290.4	\$22.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and K-12, includes realignment of CASA FTEs to meet the needs of the students.
2024-25 Mains	275.4	\$18.9M	Includes CSFY, FNSB and 10 new for 2024-25 CASA commitments and 13 for 2023-24 CASA commitments that were not included in 2023-24 Mains. Funding for CASA commitments were provided at a subsequent budgeting exercise
2023-24 Supplementary #2	251.4	\$18.6M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA FTEs were added in 2023-24 Mains and personnel funding was provided in Supp #2
2023-24 Mains	251.4	\$18.1M	Includes CSFY, FNSB. CASA commitments were added in supplementary 2023-24 budget exercises (13 new for 2023-24)
2022-23 Mains	249.9	\$17.3M	Includes CSFY and FNSB
2021-22 Mains	248.4	\$16.2M	Includes CSFY
2020-21 Mains	245.4	\$15.9M	Includes CSFY
2019-20 Mains	245.4	\$15.1M	Includes CSFY

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

### EA Allocation in Schools – Current Process

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Education

#### Educational assistant allocation process

- In 2015-16, an 'Educational Assistant Allocation Advisory Committee' recommended a needs-informed allocation process. Within this process:
  - Each school assesses its needs and submits a request for educational assistants to the Schools and Student Services Branch.
  - The Student Support Services staff review the schools' requests and use a needs-informed formula to initially allocate educational assistants.
  - Adjustments may be made if the assessed request total exceeds the number of educational assistant positions available.
  - Educational assistants are allocated to schools in the spring, and the principal assigns them within the school to best meet student needs.
  - At the beginning of the new school year, adjustments are made to the allocations based on actual student enrolment, needs at each school, the number of applications received, and positions filled.
  - Allocations may be further adjusted during a school year as needs change.
  - The department receives more requests for educational assistants from schools than it has full-time equivalents, and Student Support Services supports classroom teachers and Learning Assistance Teachers to meet a student's unique needs as part of the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education work.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-16**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



#### Value:

- The Department of Education's goal is to provide students with educational programs that meet their learning needs.

#### Recommended response:

- Individualized Education Plans, Student Support Plans, and Behaviour Support Plans are planning tools available to support student needs.
- Regardless of the type of learning plan a student has, educators are aware of the plan, as well as the support and strategies that the student requires.
- If school staff require assistance to implement the strategies, they can seek help from the school administration, school-based team, and the Student Support Services branch.
- At any time, parents and guardians are encouraged to bring forward concerns to their school to ensure a student is being effectively supported.
- An Individual Education Plan, or IEP, can be created for any student who requires special education, as outlined in the Education Act.
- Students on an Individualized Education Plan or any other type of learning plan graduate with a full Dogwood high school diploma if they earn all the credits required to graduate, just like any student without a learning plan.

#### Additional Response—RISE:

- The Department of Education is reviewing the services and supports for inclusive and special education, including the development and delivery of learning plans.
- The department has received the recommendations of a Community of Inquiry, made up of education partners and department staff, which

specifically looked at Individualized Education Plans. The recommendations will be reviewed with education partners through a sub-committee on Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).

#### **Additional response - Types of learning plans:**

- There are three types of learning plans available in the Yukon: Individualized Education Plans, Student Support Plans, previously known as Student Learning Plans, and Behaviour Support Plans.
- All learning plans are designed to provide the learning supports individual students need to be successful in school.
- The type of learning plans a student has does not limit the type of learning supports that are available to the student.
- Schools provide all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan.
- Information about support for students with diverse abilities or special needs, and how they are provided, is available on Yukon.ca.
- Department officials are working with partners to create useful tools, to share information and increase understanding about different assessments and learning plans.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions about Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) were received during the Standing Committee on Public Accounts hearing in January 2022 and it was suggested regular meetings with families and plan updates were not happening. Since this time the Department of Education has addressed the backlog of IEP and assessment requests.
  - One of the CASA commitments is to ensure that all students in need of special education are provided with the option of an IEP.
-

#### Background:

##### Student Support Plans (SSPs) and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)

- These plans are typically for students who need 'adaptations' to their education programs to meet the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum.
- These adaptations are designed to 'level the playing field' for a student so that the student can successfully access the prescribed curriculum.
- Student Support Plans (formerly known as Student Learning Plans) were created to support students who benefit from accommodations to achieve the curricular goals and do not need, or want, to have an IEP. Student Support Plan is the name used in the Department of Education's Student Information System (ASPEN).
- Behaviour Support Plans (BSP) set out the adaptations required for students who demonstrate behaviors that are not expected in the school environment. BSPs can also include Safety Plans.
- The support and adaptations that are put in place through Student Support Plans and Behaviour Support Plans depend on the specific needs of the student. Examples include allowing additional time to complete tasks, allowing the use of a calculator in math to support numeracy, providing access to audio books to support literacy, or behaviour supports such as scheduled breaks throughout the day to help self-regulate.
- Students on these plans may access other support such as assistive technology or speech therapy, depending on what they need.
- Students with SSPs and/or BSPs have their plan documented in the Student Information System (ASPEN) and their progress is reported.
- Students with SSPs and BSPs are generally expected to be able to graduate with a Dogwood diploma.

##### Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- IEPs are typically used for students determined to have special educational needs as outlined in the Education Act.
- Although a formal psychological assessment is not required for the creation of an IEP, an assessment can inform which supports are required.

- IEPs state how the student will be supported and set out the student's goals. They can include modified or adapted approaches to the curriculum.
- Having an IEPs does not automatically mean a student will be assigned an educational assistant. There is a separate process to request educational assistant support.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring the learning goals of IEPs are being met, and that the plans are evaluated and updated at least three times a year.
- The learning assistance teacher case manages IEPs within the school, and tracks IEP progress as a student moves between different grade levels and teachers.
- Students with IEPs and their learning goals are tracked in the student information system.
- Educators are responsible for the implementation of an IEP's goals and objectives and the supports and interventions.
- The central administration staff are monitoring that IEPs are being updated by each school. We are currently focused on using the data from the Student Information System to produce more relevant and meaningful reports on IEPs to help to monitor these updates.
- The department continues to support and train educators, learning assistance teachers and administrators on how to communicate student learning for those students who are on an IEP.
- Each student is unique. Some students with an IEP are eligible to graduate with a Dogwood diploma, while others may receive another certificate.
- Communication with students and their parents/caregivers is key in determining graduation planning.
- Number of Learning Plans:

Learning Plans	
Individual Education Plans (all school authorities)	426 as of April 15, 2025
Student Support Plans (formerly Student Learning Plans)	949* as of April 2025
Behaviour Support Plans	78* as of April 15, 2025
Safety Plans	31* as of April 15, 2025

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS03

Spring 2025

## Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)

Education

*\*The department is working with schools to make sure that they are consistently reporting this data.*

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-16

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions

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Education

**For Type 1 Diabetes Strategy: see tab SSS11**

### Value:

- The health, safety, and wellbeing of students and staff is the Department of Education's highest priority.

### Recommended response:

- Schools accommodate students with a wide variety of chronic and severe medical conditions, such as diabetes or anaphylaxis, who may require medication and other care while under school supervision.
- All Yukon schools follow the Administration of Medication to Students Policy, which requires planned care and support for students with various medical conditions, including diabetes.
- These students receive planned care and support at school, on field trips, and while being transported to and from school to ensure their health and safety.

### Additional response:

- School staff have a duty of care to students who are at risk from medical conditions and require up-to-date information and guidance about their specific condition.
- Schools take a collaborative approach with each family to develop a detailed and specific response plan for each student who is living with a condition that may require medication in the schools.
- Schools and department staff collaborate with parents and guardians to provide information and occasionally training for specific situations, as the student and their loved ones are the experts in the lived experience and specific needs of the student.
- A memorandum of understanding between Health and Social Services and Education provides for extra training and support for Education

### Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions

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Education

staff when it is needed in supporting students with complex medical conditions. When it is student specific, this training is always undertaken with the full consent of parents and guardians, who may choose whether to participate in the training.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised in the legislature, and by the public and media on how schools handle medical conditions such as diabetes and allergies.
- 

#### Background:

- The Administration of Medication in Schools Policy and related procedures outline roles and responsibilities among school staff, parents, and students regarding medical care and medication.
- The Administration of Medication in Schools Policy was in effect as of November 15, 2005, and was last updated on June 1, 2013.
- The Anaphylaxis Policy came into effect on September 12, 2012, and was last updated on July 1, 2015.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-04

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **Mental Health - Comprehensive Approach**

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Education

**Mental Health – Supports for School Staff and Students: refer to SSS06**

**CASA – Wellness Specialists: refer to CAS10**

**CASA – Mental Health Outcomes for Youth: refer to CAS05**

#### **Value:**

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

#### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education is developing a comprehensive mental health and wellness approach. This is an important part of the overall work the department is doing to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- The department is taking a holistic approach to mental health and wellness, focusing on prevention and promoting mental wellbeing. This approach includes providing timely support and interventions both within schools and in the broader community, ensuring comprehensive care when needed.
- The mental health and wellness approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- Department officials are currently seeking input from education partners on the draft comprehensive mental health and wellness approach.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education is working to strengthen connections between community-based mental health and wellness resources provided by partners and stakeholders, and those available within the school environment.



### Mental Health - Comprehensive Approach

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Education

- The approach will align with Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy and is guided by the recommendations from the Yukon Youth Territorial Strategy from the 2024 Youth Summit, which shares important perspectives from youth on supports that work for them.
- I am proud of the work the department is doing to support mental health, and I look forward to sharing the Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is funding through a CASA commitment to invest an additional annual investment of \$1,000,000 (across Yukon government) to improve mental health outcomes for youth (\$500,000 for Department of Education and \$500,000 for ECO, Youth Directorate).

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#### Background:

- Work on the Comprehensive Mental Health Approach started in 2023.
- The development of this approach has been supported through \$500,000 in CASA funding for three year starting in the 2023-24 and ending in 2025-26.
- There is public demand for more mental health support – especially for youth – response to the pandemic and the substance use health emergency. The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and Child and Youth Advocate Office have been advocating for clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### **Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students**

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Education

**Mental Health - Comprehensive Approach: refer to SSS05**

**CASA - Wellness Specialists: refer to CAS10**

**CASA - Mental Health Outcomes for Youth: refer to CAS05**

**Ready to Learn Schools: refer to RI02**

#### **Value:**

- The health, safety, and wellbeing of staff and students is our first priority. Supporting employee and student wellbeing is a crucial part of our work towards creating an engaging and inclusive educational environment.

#### **Recommended response:**

- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility in addressing a range of needs.
- This can include raising awareness of mental wellbeing for all students through inclusive, culturally appropriate programs, to targeted services for acute mental health challenges.
- Department of Education officials continue to work with School Boards and Councils, First Nation governments and other education partners, including youth, to determine how best to:
  - coordinate student supports and access to services;
  - provide additional training for school counsellors;
  - enhance student outreach and awareness; and
  - offer training and supports to school staff in developmentally responsive approaches to mental wellness and awareness of mental wellness needs.

## Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students

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Education

### Additional response—Students:

- The department is helping students and staff learn more about mental health, through increased awareness, the school curriculum, and developmental supports. This includes teaching students and staff the language to talk about it and where to seek support.
- School counsellors support students in achieving their academic development and their career potential as well as connecting with students to meet their social and emotional needs.
- The department is implementing two new positions through the Confidence and Supply Agreement that will help support the mental wellbeing of the school community. These positions will be served by two specific roles:
  - a School Wellness Specialist – that requires a minimum of a Bachelor of Social Work; and,
  - a First Nation government-led wellness support, which department officials are developing in collaboration with First Nation governments – this could be an Elder, traditional knowledge keeper, or a traditional healer.
- The department is developing a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach for students that:
  - Includes prevention as well as developmental, cultural, and clinical responses,
  - Creates connections to mental health and wellbeing activities provided by partners and stakeholders; and
  - Aligns with the Yukon's Forward Together: Mental Wellness Strategy.

## **Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students**

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Education

- Through the Yukon's school curriculum, students learn about social-emotional skills, decision-making about their health and safety, and strategies to strengthen their resilience and wellbeing.
- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community - including clinical counselling services.
- Yukon government is a signatory on the 2024 Territorial Youth Strategy and supports the priorities as outlined. Within this Strategy, the Department of Education will support priorities around mental wellness and access to learning and education.

### **Additional response – Staff:**

- Ongoing training and supports are available for administrators and school staff to help recognize and respond appropriately when individuals or colleagues may be struggling with their mental health.
- The department offers all employees and their families a range of confidential and expert help and well-being services through the Employee and Family Assistance Program and through their extended health benefits as employees of the Yukon government.
- The Employee and Family Assistance Program provides counseling and critical incident services, as well as nutritional, financial and wellbeing services to get support to deal with life's challenging situations.
- When school staff are dealing with critical events, department officials work with LifeSpeak to provide counselling resources, support and debriefing for staff.

## Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students

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Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is constant public conversation and demand for more mental health supports – especially for youth – in light of the pandemic, the opioid crisis, and health data research.
  - There have been calls to staff clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.
- 

### Background:

- Education is working on initiatives that are focused on both prevention and intervention measures to support students and staff.
- According to the 2022 *Health Behaviours of School-Aged Children Survey*, a significant proportion of Yukon students are still feeling depressed or low at least once a week. This statistic is still an ongoing factor that was also outlined in the 2018 survey.
- The report on the results of the 2022 Health Behaviour of School Aged Children Survey is projected to be released to the public in March 2025 by the Department of Health and Social Services.
- The 2021 third survey on student learning during COVID-19 found almost half of student respondents said the pandemic had very negatively or negatively impacted their mental health and wellness.
- There is growing recognition within Canada of the critical nature of improving the mental health of young Canadians with a particular emphasis on building positive mental health, in contrast to historically focusing on mental illness.
- The Yukon is a member of the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium of School Health, a partnership of 25 Ministries of Health and Education across Canada working to promote a Comprehensive School Health approach to student wellness/wellbeing and achievement/success for all children and youth.
- The Department of Health and Social Services 10-year strategy titled “Forward together: Yukon Mental Wellness Strategy 2016-2026” was released in 2016 and provides over-arching direction for the various mental health services across the territory.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS06

Spring 2025

## Mental Health - Supports for School Staff and Students

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Education

- In the spring of 2024, the Department of Education signed in support of the Territorial Youth Strategy with the intention of creating greater access to mental health resources for Yukon youth.
- The department is currently requesting input from education partners on the draft Mental Health Approach.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-17

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- All children deserve to have access to an education that meets their needs and to be included with their peers.

### Recommended response:

- A shared resource program is classroom designed to meet the needs of students with complex special educational requirements.
- These special educational requirements include supports for complex medical conditions, substantial curriculum adaptations, and managing complex behavioural challenges.
- As of January 2025, there are five shared resource programs at the high school level in Whitehorse and one at the elementary level.
- Most students in shared resource programs are not currently able to complete the work at their grade level. However, with extra support, some may catch up and re-enter mainstream programming.
- Each student in a shared resource program has an Individual Education Plan that outlines the student's and their family's goals for their educational journey.

### Additional Response:

- The teacher in charge of a shared resource program is a specific type of teacher called a learning assistance teacher, or more commonly, an LAT.
- In most cases, learning assistance teachers have received special training to ensure they can meet students' special needs. They are also supported by Student Support Services staff, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists, school psychologists, behavioural analysts, speech and language pathologists, and teachers

specialized in working with students with low vision and hearing impairments.

- Shared resource programs are one way that the Department of Education accommodates students with special learning needs. Many students with special learning needs, in the Yukon, learn alongside their grade-level peers, with accommodations and modifications provided within their classrooms.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Every shared resource program is currently at capacity in the Yukon.
- Some students have not been able to attend school due to safety concerns.
- There have been news reports by CBC in British Columbia regarding school exclusions – students staying home or not being included in regular programming because the schools were not prepared to accommodate their needs.
- The president of the F.H. Collins Student Council and president of the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees has raised the Shared Resource Programs as an example of why more EAs, or even nurses, should be allocated to schools.

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### **Background:**

- There are five shared resource programs at the high school level in Whitehorse. Two are for highly impacted students who have multiple exceptionalities and two are for students who require substantial learning assistance, and one is for students with mixed needs.
- The names were predominantly chosen by the students and are not indicative of what the program's entry criteria are or the material covered in the program.
  - Two are at Porter Creek Secondary School, called: HOPE and ABEL;
  - Two at F.H. Collins Secondary School, called: STEP and FLEX; and
  - One at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School, called: GRACE
  - There is one active shared resource program at the elementary school level in Whitehorse. It is called PASS and it is at Jack Hulland Elementary School. It is for children with medium to high intellectual disability.



- The Grove Street program, which operated at Jack Hulland Elementary was a shared resource program until 2022.
- The Student Support Services branch has received an increasing number of applications for shared resource programs over the past few years.
- The Department of Education is exploring ways to ensure students learn alongside their grade-level peers when appropriate, while also expanding and supporting shared resource program spaces to meet all students' needs.
- The Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education work plan for 2025-2035 is under development and will provide guidance on addressing the needs of all students.
- Several Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office files were opened in 2024 when there were inadequate spaces and provisions made for students requiring this type of programming.
- Both Disability Services and the Child Development Centre report approximately 30% increases in caseloads, meaning the absolute number of clients served by the organizations, compared to five years ago. In addition, both organizations also report that the clients served have increased substantially in behavioural and medical complexity since this time.
- Shared resource programs are resource and financially intensive, but less so than accommodating these students alongside same-age peers in the general student population.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-31**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

**Ombudsman Report on Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to HOT09/DPT09**  
**Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP04**  
**Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: refer to DPT04**  
**Ready to Learn Schools: refer to RI02**

#### Value:

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

#### Recommended response:

- All students, staff, and parents have a right to feel safe, and to be safe, in Yukon public schools.
- The Department of Education's ongoing work on the Safer Schools Action Plan has identified additional work to ensure Yukon schools are safe and inclusive.
- Proactively addressing student-to-student harm is crucial. This includes serious consideration of all incidents and reviewing department policies, protocols, and procedures to better support victims and plan for school safety.
- In case of serious incidents, the department adheres to emergency plans and response protocols, collaborating with the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other agencies, and offers support to affected students and families with their consent.
- The department has developed communication guidance to assist school administrators in providing clear and consistent information to families.

## Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

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

### Additional response:

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

### Resources and Supports:

- The department is focusing on training and onboarding to:
  - support staff in building connection with students.
  - identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours; and respond with effective support to help with de-escalation.

## Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

- The department shares resources with staff, students and families about restorative practices to strengthen school communities.
- The wellbeing and safety of children in the digital age is a priority for the Yukon government. There are many challenges posed by online threats such as cyberbullying and sextortion, and the department is committed to equipping students with the necessary skills to navigate these challenges.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

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

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### Background:

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

### Training and supports for staff

## Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

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

### Process for dealing with incidents of concern

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

### Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

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

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

#### Cyberbullying

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

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS08

Spring 2025

## Student to Student Harm in Schools

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-01-31](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Supports for Students Living with Autism

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Education

### Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education: refer to RI03

#### Value:

- The Department of Education's goal is to provide students with educational programs that meet their learning needs.

#### Recommended response:

- There is a growing need for specialized programming support for autistic students across the territory.
- According to information from the National Autism Strategy, prevalence of autism in Canada is about 1 in 50, or 2 per cent of children and youth aged 1 to 17. This is an increased prevalence of all presentations of autism and reflects a growing need for inclusion and innovation in all educational settings.
- Department officials are working with partners to be responsive to the growing number of Yukon students who are being diagnosed with autism through the Child Development Centre (Pre-school Diagnostic Clinic) and Health and Social Services, Disability Services (School-aged Diagnostic Clinic).
- The Department is reviewing the possibility of hiring an Itinerant Teacher for Autism. This position could help with curriculum adaptations and teaching strategies to support autistic students with educational resources necessary for their learning goals. The department has similar positions for blind and low vision students and students who are deaf and hard of hearing.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada released the national framework on autism spectrum disorder in fall 2024, as part of the



## Supports for Students Living with Autism

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Education

implementation of the *Federal Framework on Autism Spectrum Disorder Act*.

- The Department of Education will continue participating in important national conversations and initiatives such as this to ensure the voice, experiences and unique perspectives of Yukoners are included.

### Additional response:

- The Department of Education works with parents and partners – such as Autism Yukon – to help with the development and implementation of neurodiverse programming to better support educators to improve inclusive practice.
- At Hidden Valley Elementary School, the Department of Education is working on a draft evaluation framework of the neurodiverse classroom, otherwise known to that school as the Porcupine Room. This will help the department evaluate successes, understand what is working and outline what best practices are for neurodiverse classrooms in the Yukon.
- This is a new and creative programming approach in providing support in line with the recommendations from the final report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Child and Youth Advocate, MLAs, and families at Hidden Valley Elementary School (HVES) previously called for more educational assistants and specialized programming support.
- Autism Yukon has raised concerns about the under reporting of the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in the territory based on the National Survey Report published in 2018.

### Supports for Students Living with Autism

Education

#### Background:

- It is estimated that approximately 2 per cent of Canadian children and youth between 1 and 17 years old have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- The department continues to offer ongoing training for educators on supporting students with autism spectrum disorder.
- Starting in the 2022-23 school year, Hidden Valley Elementary School hired a learning assistance teacher that supported the development and implementation of programming for students on the spectrum, as well as students with other neurodiverse needs. This position continued in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years and is out for hiring as the incumbent has recently taken another job.
- The department has representation on the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Autism.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-03-18

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

- The Department of Education is dedicated to creating an inclusive, equitable and effective learning environment for all students, including students with diverse backgrounds and learning needs.

#### Recommended response:

- In October 2024, department staff met with the organization to explore opportunities moving forward.
- The department recognizes the considerable effort invested in preparing the program and looks forward to discussing next steps

#### Additional response:

- The department continues to work with the organization on how it can support this program.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- In May 2024, the Therapeutic Farm School program received \$500,000.00 from the Arctic Inspiration Prize to support the advancement of their program.

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#### Background:

- The Therapeutic Farm School Program has been developed as an alternative, holistic learning environment designed to support students with neurodiversity and other exceptionalities.
- This initiative aligns with the Department of Education's Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education Initiative and aims to address existing gaps in support for these students.
- On February 5, 2024, the Department of Education provided a letter of support for the Therapeutic Farm School's program application to the Arctic Inspiration Prize.
- On June 25, 2024, a letter from the department was sent to the Therapeutic Farm School Program outlining next steps to set up a meeting over the summer months

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SSS10**  
**Spring 2025**

## Therapeutic Farm School

Education

to discuss questions outlined in the communication. No meeting time was established.

- On August 14, 2024, the Therapeutic Farm School Program wrote to the Premier attempting to secure in kind donations of materials and requested financial assistance through a contribution agreement.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

#### Value:

- The health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff is the Department of Education's top priority.

#### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education is working with Health and Social Services and the T1D Support Network on several of the recommendations from the draft Yukon Type 1 Diabetes Strategy. This year the department has advanced:
  - Training for education staff on type one diabetes. Training was provided at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, from the Chronic Conditions Support Program from Health and Social Services, and during a professional development day for Educational Assistants in January 2025.
  - Work with Health and Social Services to finalize a new Type 1 Diabetes support care plan. This plan will help families share essential information specific to type one diabetes with schools.
  - Training is ongoing and can be requested by schools at any time.
- The department has worked with the T1D Support Network to review the existing *Administration of Medication to Students Policy* and procedures and to identify and remedy any gaps, specifically for students with type one diabetes.
- All Yukon schools will follow this policy which requires planned care and support for students with various medical conditions, including diabetes.
- The department has successfully recruited a Type 1 Diabetes Support Case Manager, who started in January 2025. This position will help

students, schools and families navigate the complexities of living with type one diabetes at school.

- The Department of Education is exploring the role of educational assistants for students with type one diabetes, with a focus on individualized approaches that support student independence, safety, and access to education.
- The department looks forward to formally implementing Education's action items following the official launch of the Yukon Type 1 Diabetes Strategy and has already been progressing towards these actions in preparation for the launch.

### **Additional response:**

- Department officials have met with the Yukon T1D Support Network numerous times over the last few years on how best to approach supporting students living with type one diabetes in the school setting.
- The Department of Education thanks the T1D Support Network for its ongoing advocacy and efforts to ensure that students with type one diabetes receive the right supports in school.
- The department remains committed to ensuring that both staff and students are supported in schools and are taking the steps to do this properly in collaboration with the T1D Support Network and the Department of Health and Social services.
- An updated *Administration of Medication to Students Policy* and associated procedures will be finalized pending consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion in fall 2021 for the development of a Yukon diabetes strategy.

### Background:

- Education and Health and Social Services met with the T1D Support Network on several occasions during 2023-2025:
  - April 5, 2023 (with Director of RISE and Student Support Services)
  - October 18, 2023 (with ADM Student Wellbeing and Inclusion)
  - February 1, 2024 (Deputy Minister of Education and Health and Social Services, ADMs at Education and Health and Social Services)
  - February 28, 2024 (Minister of Health and Social Services, Deputy Ministers of Education and Health and Social Services, ADM Education)
  - April 3, 2024 (ADM Education and Education policy)
  - May 7, 2024 (ADM Education and Director of HR, Education, Policy representative)
  - September 24, 2024 (ADM of Health and Social Services and Education)
  - March 4, 2025 (Director of Student Support Services and Case Manager T1D, Student Support Services)
  - April 28, 2025 with Dr Metzger, pediatric endocrinologist and his team from the British Columbia Children's Hospital, supported in the Yukon by Lynx Pediatrics (Director of Student Support Services and Case Manager, T1D, Student Support Services)
- The Department of Education has advanced many recommendations from the T1D Support network.
- Student Support Services is working with Health and Social Services to plan for the provision of Glucagon medication, in schools where students with T1D attend, for emergency usage.
- Student Support Services is working with schools to ensure technological and privacy adaptations for students who utilize Dexcom and other similar technologies in schools to monitor glucose levels for T1D.
- School staff have a duty of care to students who are at risk from medical conditions and require up-to-date information and guidance about their specific condition.

### Type 1 Diabetes Strategy

Education

- These students require and receive planned care and support at school, on field trips, and while being transported to and from school to ensure their health and safety.
- During Welcome Week in August 2024, the Department of Education provided training and information sessions for educators and school staff, equipping them with information needed to support students living with Type 1 Diabetes.
- The department provided follow-up training on January 20, 2025, during the Professional Development Day for educational assistants.
- The Department of Education has worked with the T1D Support Network as part of the implementation of the draft Yukon Type 1 Diabetes Strategy. This includes:
  - Updated the Administration of Medication in Schools policy and procedures (will be released pending consultation with Yukon Association of Education Professionals).
  - Work with Health and Social Services on appropriate storage of Glucagon in schools.
  - Created a health care plan based on type one diabetes specific information with input from the T1D Support Network and Health and Social Services.
  - The Department of Education has created a position that supports students with type one diabetes. The new Type 1 Diabetes Support Case Manager began in January 2025.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-30

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## **Competency Based Individual Education Plans**

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Education

### **Value:**

- All students who require one should have access to an individualized education plan that meets their needs, highlights their strengths, and guides their educators in planning and meeting their educational goals.

### **Recommended response:**

- Currently, all schools in the Yukon education system utilize the British Columbia Individualized Education Plan format.
- British Columbia is completing its transition to a competency based Individualized Education plan this year.
  - The competency based Individualized Education Plan format is based on the British Columbia curriculum, which Yukon also follows
- The Department of Education is working with partners towards aligning with British Columbia's shift to a competency based Individualized Education Plan,
- The change will not affect which students are eligible for an Individualized Education Plan or any monitoring schedule for how Individualized Education Plans are managed in Yukon schools.
- To support making such a change in the Yukon's education system, the department will formally engage with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and develop a plan to support staff through the transition - both of these steps are currently underway.

### **Additional response:**

- The competency based Individualized Education Plan format connects with the core competencies and the curricular competencies in the

## Competency Based Individual Education Plans

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Education

British Columbia curriculum, which are key to development of the whole child.

- The competency based Individualized Education Plan development process is intended to be student centered and inclusive of the voice of the learner, reflective of the learner's strengths, interests and needs, and developed in consultation and collaboration with the student, family, school staff and larger team.

### Consultation with YAEP:

- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals has participated in one of several information sessions regarding the competency based Individualized Education Plan.
  - This participation does not replace formal consultation.
- The Department of Education is starting to plan training and share information early because the current Individualized Education Plan software no longer receives technical support.
- The department wants to give as much information as possible to members and leadership of the Yukon Association of Education Professionals now, so they can make good decisions and have strong, informed conversations.
- Formal consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals will occur before the decision on whether to move to competency based Individualized Education Plans can be finalized.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes providing all students in need of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan, also known as an IEP.

## Competency Based Individual Education Plans

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Education

- There may be questions about whether or not the move to a CB-IEP format will affect this commitment or the access of students to IEPs generally
    - The answer to this is no; this proposed move will have no effect on a student's eligibility for an IEP or their ability to access supports.
  - YAEP was notified immediately upon the department considering this move, and expressed concern that regular consultation processes might not be followed. The department staff have assured the YAEP that normal consultation processes will be followed.
- 

### Background:

- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are defined in the *Education Act* as “a document which outlines the educational program for a student as determined by a school based team, containing a description of the student's present level of functioning; long term or annual goals; short term goals or specific behavioural objectives; special resources required; suggested instructional materials, methods and strategies; IEP review dates; persons responsible for the implementation of the IEP, including parents; and parents' written, informed consent for implementation.
- IEPs are typically used for students who have been determined to have special educational needs and therefore require an individualized curriculum with modified or adapted learning outcomes to support those special educational needs.
- The department is offering weekly training during school session on an ongoing basis to Learning Assistance Teachers to support schools with the management and implementation of IEPs utilizing the current process, as well as to ensure that procedures align with best practices.
- In 2023, the department publicly clarified that students on an IEP could graduate with a dogwood diploma as long as they got the required credits, but students who were on a heavily modified curriculum may not obtain all the credits required to graduate.
- In 2021, the department moved some students who had been on IEPs onto Student Support Plans. This move was subsequently reversed, but not before there was substantial public opposition.

# Session Briefing Note

Tab# SSS12

Spring 2025

## Competency Based Individual Education Plans

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Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-04-24

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value

- The Department of Education provides flexible support and training opportunities for Yukoners pursuing in-demand, diverse and meaningful careers in skilled trades and technology.

### Recommended response

- Apprenticeship and Trade Certification at the department continues to see new apprentices signing up. As of April 28, 2025, there were 466 active apprentices. 113 of those apprentices identify as Indigenous and 65 are women.
- In 2023, the department issued 56 journeyperson certificates. In 2024, Education issued 72. As of April 28, 2025, the department has issued 28 journeyperson certificates.
- On September 12, 2024, I was delighted to attend our latest Apprenticeship Excellence Awards. We celebrated 50 apprentices with outstanding achievements and honoured 44 apprentices with completion awards.
- The Department of Education budgets over \$2.5 million toward supporting apprentices annually.
- The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification unit continues to support registered Yukon apprentices to complete their program requirements in partnership with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship.

### Additional response: Regulations and board

- The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification team continues to move forward with implementing recommendations made by the Apprenticeship Advisory Board.

- I wish to acknowledge the important role of the board and welcome their advice in respect to the delivery of Yukon's apprenticeship program.
- Specifically, I want to thank the board for their valuable input on the interim level evaluation process.

### **Additional response: New interim level evaluation process**

- To support apprentices on their learning path, while also upholding high standards in the trades, a new interim level evaluation process was introduced in September 2023.
- The interim change was needed because many of the level exams the Yukon uses include outdated questions connected to practices no longer taught. It's important to provide some consideration for this while exams are updated.
- Test scores above 60% are considered, alongside technical in-school training marks and workplace performance, to determine if an apprentice will advance to the next level.
- Apprentices can ask for a re-evaluation of exam marks back to January 1, 2022. Since September 2023, 54 apprentices have advanced levels under this new process.
- Most exams have now been updated. This process is only available for apprentices whose level exams have not been updated.

### **Additional response: Apprentices working for YG**

- Most Yukon apprentices are employed by the Yukon's private sector, with 9 apprentices employed by the Yukon government as of April 28, 2025.

- While the Yukon government employs journeypersons in various trades, sometimes the positions available within the Yukon government may not offer the scope of work required for apprentices to meet the training requirements for certification.

### **Additional response: Apprentices not eligible for Yukon Grant**

- While apprentices are not eligible for the Yukon Grant, Yukon apprentices have access to a robust and comprehensive support program. These supports include:
  - Covered tuition and seat fees through the Yukon government's agreements with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship.
  - Funding supports through the Yukon government's Working Up program to cover the costs not eligible under Employment Insurance while taking technical training, which may include funding for travel, books, commuting, a second residence, living allowance and child care costs.
  - Eligibility for Employment Insurance through the Government of Canada.
  - While the Government of Canada is sunsetting their Incentive and Completion Grants for apprentices on March 31, 2025, interest-free loans will still be available to support all stages of the apprenticeship journey.
  - In addition to financial support, Yukon apprentices have access to the Virtual Learning Strategy program to support their diverse learning needs, tutoring and exam preparation.

### **Additional response: Dual Credit**

- The Department of Education has a Dual Credit program, where high school students can take post-secondary courses and receive credit for them.

- This helps create more options for high school students to partake in pre-apprenticeship and other apprenticeship programs to advance their careers at an earlier age.
  - High school students also have opportunities to take trades courses at school and participate in exploratory programs offered by partners such as Skills Canada Yukon.
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There has been an interest in what supports are available to apprentices and adult learners and how many apprentices the Yukon government employs.
  - A new interim process for evaluating Yukon apprentices was introduced in September 2023.
- 

### **Background:**

- For the 2024-25 academic year (August 2024– July 2025), a total of 111 Yukon apprentices have either completed or are registered for training at Yukon University, while 97 others have completed or are enrolled in various institutions in Alberta.
- As of April 28, 2025, the Yukon has 466 active registered apprentices. The program area completes a file review annually to identify registered apprentices who have been inactive for more than two years. Communication is sent out to apprentices to verify their status. Files can be reactivated at any time.
- As of April 28, 2025, Indigenous apprentices make up 113 of the 466 apprentices and there are now 65 women apprentices.
- A total of 56 journeyperson certificates were issued in the 2023 calendar year. In 2024, the department issued 72 journeyperson certificates. As of April 28, 2025, 28 have been issued.
- Yukon University offers technical training in the “construction trades” which are the most in-demand trades. These trades are carpentry, construction electrician, heavy equipment mechanic and welding. Almost two-thirds of Yukon apprentices are in these trades.



## Apprenticeship Program

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- The availability of certain trade levels can change each year, depending on the number of apprentices and their progress in training.
- The apprenticeship office works with Yukon University to deliver additional trades training as feasible. Examples of plans for the coming year include:
  - Level 1 Pipe Trades technical training, in response to increased interest from plumbing, gasfitter and sprinkler system installer apprentices.
  - Level 2 Carpentry technical training in Dawson City, catering to the multiple level 2 apprentices based there.
- Additionally, the apprenticeship office and Yukon University are also working towards offering technical training for Oil Burner Mechanics, Industrial Mechanics (Millwrights) and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanics.
- In late July 2024, the federal government announced the sunset of their Incentive and Completion Grants as of March 31, 2025.

### Dual credit high school program

- Yukon students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to receive credits through the dual credit program.
- The dual credit program allows students to enroll in a university course that leads to a post-secondary credential and receive credits for both high school and university.

### Apprenticeship interim level evaluation process:

- The interim level evaluation process (until 2026) applies to apprentices who attend school in the Yukon and Alberta and need to write an exam that is outdated. If a student attends school outside the Yukon or Alberta, they will continue to be evaluated using the process that is used by that jurisdiction.
- This interim level evaluation process supports apprentices working to achieve their Red Seal, allows more input from employers, and provides more emphasis on the importance of good marks in the technical in-school training.
  - Process snapshot: If an apprentice does not achieve 70% on a level exam (previously required), but scores between 60-69%, they will be further evaluated. Consideration for the following will determine if an apprentice moves to the next level:

- level exam mark;
  - technical in-classroom training (school) grades; and
  - whether the employer recommends they pass the level (this may involve a conversation with Yukon Apprenticeship, the employer, and apprentice. This is appropriate as 80% of an apprentice's learning is on-the-job).
- The Director of Training Programs will make the final decision based on the above factors, with the employer's recommendation having significant bearing.
  - An apprentice can appeal this decision to the Apprenticeship Advisory Board.
- Yukon's Apprenticeship and Trade Certification will apply this process back to January 1, 2022, to retroactively re-evaluate apprentices that were not able to move on to their next level due to outdated level exams.
  - Since September 2023, 70 apprentices have advanced levels under the interim level evaluation process.
  - Alberta resumed level exams in fall 2023 and activities to update curriculum, exams, and other apprenticeship-related products after suspending both activities during the pandemic. The Yukon is participating in this process.
  - Most level exams have now been updated, with just a few to be completed in the coming year.

### Boards and committees

- In 2023, a Territorial Trades and Technology Committee was formed to identify and address gaps in the support system for apprentices. This group is a partnership between Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Skills Canada, Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, Yukon University, and the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification unit at the Department of Education.
- The Apprenticeship Advisory Board meets a minimum of 4 times per year. An application intake occurred in fall of 2024 and reappointment process for members is complete.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SF01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Apprenticeship Program

Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-29](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs**

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Education

### **Value:**

- The Government of Yukon's student financial assistance programs support students to attend post-secondary education institutions in the Yukon and beyond.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Yukon Grant is available for students attending eligible full-time post-secondary programs in the Yukon and outside. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and regulations.
- The Training Programs Branch also administers the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program. This program is available to eligible Yukon post-secondary students.
- The Student Training Allowance is available for students attending eligible training and skills-development programs at a designated Yukon institution. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the *Occupational Training Act* and regulations.

### **Additional response:**

- There are some programs and courses offered at Yukon University that may not meet the criteria for the Yukon Grant, the Student Training Allowance, or Canada Student Loans and Grants Program.
- If a student or adult learner does not qualify for these funding streams, they may be eligible for funding support through the Working Up program.
- Students are encouraged to contact our Training Programs staff who would be happy to assist them in navigating available funding options.

## **Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs**

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Education

- Department officials continue to work with Yukon University to ensure students are aware of other funding sources that may be available to them for non-traditional programs.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions have been raised in the Legislature because certain Yukon University programs are not eligible for the Yukon Grant since they are not ‘full-time’ within the context of the *Student Financial Assistance Act*.
- There has been a rise in available continuing education and training, particularly through private training institutions or career colleges, which often do not meet the eligibility criteria for the Yukon government’s Student Financial Assistance.

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### **Background:**

- The criteria for post-secondary student eligibility for financial assistance is established in legislation. The Yukon Grant is set out in the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and regulations, and the Student Training Allowance is set out in the *Occupational Training Act* and regulations.
- To be eligible for the Student Training Allowance, a student must attend a program at Yukon University or Alkan Air that is three or more consecutive weeks in duration.
- A private training institute must attain Master Designation List status before their students are eligible for student financial assistance through the department. The Master Designation List is managed by the Government of Canada.
- To be eligible for the Yukon Grant, a student’s program of study must be at least 12 weeks in duration within a timeframe of 15 weeks, and each study period must be no less than six consecutive weeks and no more than 52 consecutive weeks. In cases where a student is enrolled in a program with courses that are less than six weeks in duration, a student may still be eligible for the Yukon Grant if those courses make up an essential element in a program of study which is at least 12 weeks long and takes place within a time frame of 15 consecutive weeks.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SF02**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs**

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Education

- Registered Yukon apprentices receive support through the Working Up program for the duration of the 8–12-week technical training portion for each level of their apprenticeship. These supports include payment of tuition costs and seat fees, funding for travel, commuting, second residence, supplies, and child care costs.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

### Value:

- The Department of Education is committed to encouraging academic achievement in grades 10 to 12 and helping students pursue post-secondary education or training.

### Recommended response:

- Students eligible to receive funding for academic achievement for the end of the 2023-24 school year were notified by letter in early 2025.
- We are pleased to announce that students can apply to redeem their awards and submit receipts for tuition and books through the new streamlined online student financial assistance portal.
- The Training Programs Branch is available to answer any questions related to Yukon Excellence Awards.

### Additional response:

- We are advancing work to modernize the Yukon Excellence Awards and review eligibility criteria.
- This work will create better alignment of the awards with Yukon's school curriculum, as well as recognition of students' skill development, achievement, and learning outcomes.
- The awards are intended to support students attending Yukon secondary schools, to encourage learning about the Yukon's unique social, cultural, and economic context and align with reconciliation priorities.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about eligibility for the Yukon government's Excellence Awards and when students are notified.

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### Background:

- Yukon Excellence Awards are currently awarded to students who receive 80% or higher in 10 qualifying grade 10 to 12 courses.
- The awards help offset post-secondary tuition and/or book costs.
- Yukon residents who choose to attend secondary school outside of the Yukon are not eligible for these awards.
- Eligibility criteria include being a Yukon resident and being entitled to legally remain in Canada. Therefore, a student attending high school without permanent residency can accrue the awards on their student record but must demonstrate they have become a permanent resident to redeem the awards.
- The eligibility criteria for the Yukon Excellence Awards Program have changed several times over its history to reflect changing graduation requirements.
- Work will resume with the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education as well as the First Nation Education Commission to propose changes to modernize the Yukon Excellence Awards.
- The intent will be to recognize both academic achievements, and to allow for school-based awards for achievement or improvement in a student's chosen area of interest or strength (learner outcomes).
- Since the mid-1990s, Education has been accruing awards earned by students. The department holds the awards for 10 years after a student's date of graduation.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Privacy Awareness: refer to DPT11**

**Adult Learners – Supports: refer to AE01**

#### Value:

- The Government of Yukon supports eligible students with several legislated funding opportunities to pursue post-secondary education.

#### Recommended response:

- The Yukon Grant continues to be a significant and meaningful funding program supporting Yukon students to study at Yukon University and designated institutions anywhere in the world.
- As of April 28, 2025, the department has received applications from 1,111 post-secondary students for one or more funding streams for the 2024-25 academic year. 990 of those applications were for the Yukon Grant and 797 applicants were awarded.
- In 2016, the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and its Regulations were updated to include a base rate per week of study. This rate is legislated to increase annually based on the previous year's Consumer Price Index amount.
- The Consumer Price Index has increased substantially over the past few years and has led to a healthy increase to the weekly rate of the Yukon Grant. The legislated increase allows for increases to Yukon Grant amounts to support the higher cost of living.

#### Additional response:

- This 2024–25 academic year, students eligible for the Yukon Grant will receive \$178 per week of study. This is an increase of \$11 per week as compared to last year.

- Every student's situation is unique, and eligibility for funding and amounts are determined by their specific situation.
- Student Financial Assistance Officers are available to assist students with their Yukon Grant applications, required documentation and inquiries.
- In addition to the Yukon Grant, Yukon students can also apply for the Canada Student Financial Assistance Loan and Grant program through the Yukon government's online Student Financial Assistance application portal.
- If a student is not approved for the Yukon Grant, they have the right to appeal. The Student Financial Assistance Committee meets to hear appeals, as needed.
- Eligibility requirements and how to apply are available on Yukon.ca.
- Yukon residents studying at Yukon University can receive either the Yukon Grant, for students who attended high school in the Yukon, or the Student Training Allowance, for students who have established residency and lived in the Yukon for at least 2 years.
- If a student meets the criteria for both legislated programs, the Student Financial Assistance office will work with them to determine which funding program provides the best support based on their specific circumstances.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Due to the recent increase in the Consumer Price Index, the department had to increase its budget for the Yukon Grant in the fall of 2024.
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## Yukon Grant

### Background:

Yukon Grant (and Student Training Allowance) recipients for the past 3 years

	2024–25	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22
# of students that received Yukon Grant	797	763	687	740
# of Yukon Grant recipients at Yukon University	139	101	115	156
# of STA recipients at Yukon University	95	98	100	117

- As of April 28, 2025, the department has received applications from 1,111 post-secondary students for one or more funding streams for the 2024–25 academic year.
- Processing times for the 2024–25 academic year have been expedited with the fully functioning student portal and administration system.
- As of April 28, 2025, students can expect an initial response within 5 days of submitting their application. Prior to 2023, and the department's Student Portal computer system, this response timeline exceeded 8 weeks.

### Yukoners currently attending Yukon University:

- As of April 28, 2025, there are 252 Yukon students attending Yukon University who are receiving Student Financial Assistance from our office.
- 139 students are receiving the Yukon Grant, 95 are receiving Student Training Allowance, and 18 are being funded only through federal Canada Student Financial Assistance which is administered through the departments Student Financial Assistance office. 86 Yukon students are receiving a combination of both a territorial post-secondary grant and funding through the federal Canada Student Financial Assistance program.

### Financial supports – Yukon Grant:

- Students can receive up to 170 weeks of funding over their lifetime if they meet the eligibility requirements at the time of application.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# SF04**  
**Spring 2025**  
Education

## Yukon Grant

- The Yukon Grant is calculated on a weekly basis of \$178/week and paid out in 2 lump-sum payments.
  - For a full academic school year – September to April (34 weeks) a student will receive approximately \$6,052 (in 2 payments).
  - If attending school outside of the territory, a student may be eligible for a travel amount of \$1,500. Students from Yukon communities may also be eligible for an extra travel amount.
- Students receive payments by direct deposit. This was implemented in response to the pandemic.
- Students applying for financial aid are required to provide confirmation of full-time, post-secondary enrolment prior to each funding disbursement (e.g., September and January). Reminders are sent to students to send in the required Program Information Form, which verifies their full-time enrollment in post-secondary studies.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-04-29**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The Department of Education continues to help adult learners and post-secondary students access financial support, advance in their apprenticeships, and find summer employment opportunities.

### Recommended response:

- The department provides individual adult learners with flexible support to best meet their needs.
- Every individual's journey and needs are different, and the department encourages interested Yukoners to connect with the Training Programs team to discuss the supports available to them.
- Students applying for the Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance and Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans and Grants can now apply through the new and streamlined online student financial assistance portal.

### Additional response:

- The department is aware that the 2024 federal budget resulted in \$625 million in cuts to provincial and territorial Labour Market Transfer Agreement funding in Canada. Officials are determining how this will impact the Yukon.
- The Department of Education will continue to work with adult students, Yukon First Nations governments, the Department of Economic Development, and other partners to adapt and develop initiatives to support the needs of Yukon post-secondary students and adult learners.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions around funding support for adult learners, federal cuts to the Labour Market funding, and the status of the online portal implementation.
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### Background:

#### 2024 federal budget cuts to Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA)

- The LMTA supports various organizations and individuals to advance the Yukon's labour market goals, such as:
  - \$1M for Yukon University seat fees for trades training,
  - \$725,000 for Alberta seat fees for trades training,
  - \$340,000 for Yukon University for the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers Program and,
  - \$785,000 for the Working Up program that funds apprentices attending training and other adult clients who need various training supports to enter the labour market.
- The departments of Education and Economic Development are working together to determine the impact the budget cuts will have on our programs.

#### Funding application processing challenges and successes

- For the 2024-25 academic year intake, the Student Financial Assistance Portal is fully functioning. Students can submit their applications and receive funding approvals in record turnaround times. As of January 6, 2025, the Student Financial Assistance office had received over 1,534 funding applications. Emails are being responded to within 2 to 3 days, and new applications are being reviewed within 5 business days.
- In the fall of 2023, contractor and system development challenges temporarily impacted assessment timelines for processing Yukon Grant and Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans and Grants.
- Prior to 2023, it was common for students to wait 6-8 weeks for a response after submitting their funding application.

#### Labour Market transfer to Economic Development

- On April 1, 2022, the labour market component of the Post-Secondary Labour Market Unit moved from the Department of Education to the Department of Economic Development. Individual adult learner support remained with the Department of Education.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Adult Learners - Supports

Education

- 7 FTEs moved from Education to Economic Development, including one director, five labour market development officers and one admin staff.
- Education retained the administration of apprenticeship, training and student financial assistance, and \$3,876,044 of O&M in the 2022-23 budget to deliver the programs.

**Approved by:**

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-03-13](#)

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### International Student Cap (EDU/EcDev)

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Education

#### Value

- International students are an important part of the Yukon's diverse social and economic fabric, and the department will continue to support our Designated Learning Institutions who offer quality learning opportunities.

#### Recommended response:

- Yukon University and Alkan Air Flight School, currently the Yukon's two Designated Learning Institutions, offer high-quality opportunities for international students to study.
- The Government of Canada began restricting the number of international students studying in Canada in early 2024 by allocating each jurisdiction a maximum number of study permit applications which then result in a maximum number of study permits approved.
- In 2024, the Yukon was allocated 417 study permit applications, which could have resulted in 250 approved study permits, based on approval rates. In 2025, the Yukon has been allocated 464 study permit applications, which could result in 339 approved study permits.
- As of January 21, 2024, the Department of Education issued 120 territorial attestation letters (TALs). These letters are sent to the applicant's Designated Learning Institution, who then provide the letter directly to the student. This letter is then included in the student's application to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IIRC) when applying for their study permit.
- The Yukon's allocation meets our international student objectives and positions the territory for sustainable growth, with a balanced student population of Yukoners, out-of-territory, and international learners.



## **Additional response: Attestation letters and ongoing process**

- Taking a client-centered approach, the Department of Education issues the required territorial attestation letters to Yukon University and Alkan Air Flight Academy on behalf of students. We are the primary intermediary between the Government of Canada and these two Institutions in respect to reporting requirements.
- To ensure the safety of any additional personal information collected throughout this new process, a Privacy Impact Assessment has been completed and Information Sharing Agreements between the Department of Education and the Designated Learning Institutions have been signed.
- Education continues to participate in meetings with provincial and territorial counterparts as the new requirements are implemented, ensuring the Yukon's unique interests are brought forward.

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## **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions about the Yukon's allocation under the federal International Student Program allotments and potential impacts on Yukon's international students.

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## **Background:**

### Government of Canada's International Student Program:

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) originally announced changes on January 22, 2024, to the International Student Program (ISP) that would cap the number of international student permits issued to provinces and territories for 2024 and 2025 (two-year temporary measure). Canada has announced this plan will now continue into 2026.
- The cap is based on a zero net-growth model. To achieve this target, the national cap on study permit applications was set at approximately 600,000, resulting in about 360,000 study permits approved in 2024, a 35% reduction from 2023, at current approval rates.

## International Student Cap (EDU/EcDev)

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Education

- On September 18, 2024, the Government of Canada announced a further 10 per cent reduction in study permits for international students in 2025 and throughout 2026 as well.
- The goal of assigning a cap is to help manage volume growth and improve the integrity of the International Student Program.
- IRCC originally allocated a portion of the cap to each province and territory based on population, this approach was refined in the most recent allocation by also using average approval rates in each jurisdiction.

### The Yukon's 2024 and 2025 allocations, attestation letters:

- In addition to the cap, each study permit application requires an attestation letter from the province or territory in which they will be studying. Provinces and territories were expected to establish a process for issuing these attestation letters and for distributing the allocation among its designated learning institutes (DLIs) by March 31, 2024. Yukon went live with this process on March 28, 2024.
- In 2024, Canada proposed Yukon's allocation target at 417 study permit applications, which could have resulted in up to 250 approved study permits based on current approval rates. This was in addition to those international students exempted from the allocation (K-12, family members of study and work-permit holders, and those studying at the masters or doctoral levels).
- For 2025, the Yukon's allocation is 464 applications that may result in 339 approved study permits. Graduate level (masters or doctoral) students are no longer exempt and are included in the allocation targets for all jurisdictions.
- As Yukon government provided 120 territorial attestation letters to international students applying for study permits between March 2024 and January 2025, we expect that our current allocation will continue to exceed current enrollment.
- Yukon University as one of Yukon's Designated Learning Institutions maintains international student targets that are below the federal allocation.

### Work permits:

- Students apply directly to IRCC for study and work permits. Under the new requirements, a student must provide a letter of acceptance from an institution and a

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE02**  
**Spring 2025**

## **International Student Cap (EDU/EcDev)**

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Education

provincial [territorial] attestation letter at the time of applying for a study permit thereby confirming they are within the jurisdiction's cap.

- Many international students hold jobs on and off campus, supporting the Yukon's local labour market. The changes in respect to spousal work permits are not anticipated to negatively impact the Yukon's workforce as most international students are single.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The Department of Education will continue to ensure quality and enriching post-secondary academic programs and experiences.

### Recommended response:

- Institutions that offer more than 45 hours of training in an occupation listed on the National Occupational Classification system can apply to be registered as a private training institution in the Yukon.
- The Department of Education's application and review process is thorough and takes approximately one year to complete.
- A private training institution must be in operation for at least one year and graduate one domestic cohort before being considered for Designated Learning Institution status. This designation allows a school to host international students.
- To ensure quality and local oversight, a private training institution must be physically located in the Yukon, have a staff person physically located in the Yukon and provide financial assurance.

### Additional response:

- Elements Esthetics Academy was registered as the Yukon's newest private training institution at the end of January 2024 and is approved to offer an esthetics diploma program.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Government of Canada's messaging around changes to the International Student Program and enrollment cap includes addressing private training institutions or private career colleges in Canada that may prioritize financial gain and immigration pathways over the delivery of quality education.
- Some jurisdictions are increasing the length of time an institution must be in operation before they can apply for Designated Learning Institution status and thereby host international students.

### Background:

- The Yukon has three registered private training institutions: Alkan Air Flight Academy, Yukon Tourism Education Council and Elements Esthetics Academy.
- Private training institutions or trade schools are governed by the *Trade School Regulation Act* and *Trade School Regulation*. A trade school (or private training institution) must be registered with the Government of Yukon to operate in the territory.
- The fee to register a private training institution is \$100 per year. The initial payment is due at the time of first registration. Annual registration payments are due September 1 every year thereafter.
- To register, a private training institution must:
  - offer training totaling more than 45 hours in an occupation that is listed on the National Occupational Classification system
  - have the institution physically located in the Yukon
  - have a staff person be physically located in the Yukon while the school is registered
  - provide a bond. The bond is a \$10,000 irrevocable letter of credit. It helps ensure that a school meets its contractual obligations and has the resources to deliver the programs
  - contribute to a Training Completion Trust Fund to ensure students can complete their training elsewhere if a program or course ceases to exist or becomes insolvent

### International Students:

- A Private Training Institution must be in operation for at least one year and graduate one domestic cohort before being considered for Designated Learning Institution (DLI) status. A DLI is a school approved to host international students.
- The process to become a DLI is administered by the Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

### Master Designation List:

- Private Training Institutions may also work towards gaining “master designation status” which then allows for their students to access student financial assistance.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE03**  
**Spring 2025**

## Private Training Institutions

Education

- This is a national process administered by our office. Elements Aesthetics is currently working towards this status.

### Degree granting:

- Should a private training institution or private career college or university wish to operate and offer degree-granting programs in the Yukon, approval would be needed by the Commissioner in Executive Council.
- Yukon University's degree granting authority is governed by the *Yukon University Act*.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

### Value:

- The Department of Education is committed to supporting and fostering vibrant arts, cultural and creative industries in the Yukon.

### Recommended response:

- The Department of Education has supported the School of Visual Arts, or SOVA, since its inception in 2007.
- SOVA provides developing artists with skills that can be applied to a career in a creative industry. The credits earned at SOVA can be transferred to partner universities, so students can continue their academic arts programs outside of the territory.
- Education continues to provide \$634,794 in support of SOVA. Funding is provided through the existing transfer payment agreement with Yukon University.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- SOVA's governance council is exploring the creation of an Indigenous Fine Arts program. Yukon University updates the Department of Education on the program's development.

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### Background:

- The SOVA governance council includes representatives from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government, Yukon University and the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture.
- In 2019–20, the department worked with Yukon University to create a core funding agreement. Funding for SOVA moved from core operations to strategic initiatives, enabling the department to engage directly with the SOVA governance council members regarding the Indigenous Fine Arts program development.
- In 2023–24, an increase of \$130,000 was provided to reinstate personnel in the SOVA Library (\$60,000), and to ensure ongoing access to funds for maintenance of equipment and technology as well as requisite expendables.
  - There is no anticipated increase for 2024–25 in funding levels for SOVA.

- On October 1, 2021, one-time bridge funding was requested and approved for \$36,794 for fiscal 2021–22.
- Included in a request made on October 1, 2021, was an additional funding request of \$213,069.49 over four years to support a First Nations Community Liaison and Indigenous Arts Program Dialogue.
- Future funding requests will come through the Yukon University Senior Oversight Committee (formerly known as the Joint Agreement Management Committee) rather than directly from SOVA.
- The Senior Oversight Committee meets monthly and includes the following representatives:
  - Yukon University: Vice President of Academic, Vice President of Finance & Administration, Manager of Budgets
  - For YG: ADM, Corporate Services and Programs, Director of Finance (Education), Director of Training Programs (Education) and a representative from the Department of Health and Social Services has an open invitation.
  - The parties may designate advisors to attend meetings.
- Strategic Initiatives funding requests are developed by the Department of Education and Yukon University officials through the Transfer Payment Agreement negotiation process.
- Strategic Initiatives funds are provided in addition to core funding.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2025-01-27

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



## **Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentices Grants**

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Education

### **Value:**

- In late July 2024, the Government of Canada informed apprenticeship authorities across Canada they were ending the Incentive and Completion Grants for apprentices as of March 31, 2025.

### **Recommended response:**

- Our Yukon apprenticeship office informed all apprentices of this change via email on September 17, 2024.
- Of the 110 Yukon apprentices enrolled in school as of Fall 2024, it is anticipated that 86 would still be able to receive federal grant funding prior to the program's termination.
- With assistance from apprenticeship officers, 77 apprentices of the 86 ended up successfully applying for the federal grants, prior to the March 31, 2025, deadline. The other 9 did not accumulate enough work hours or failed to pass their in-school technical training.
- Yukon apprentices benefit from a very comprehensive financial support system throughout their apprenticeship journeys.
- While the discontinuation of these supplemental federal grants may be disappointing for some apprentices, it will not impede their progress or completion of their apprenticeship programs.

### **Additional response:**

- The Incentive Grant rewarded an apprentice for successfully completing levels 1 and 2 of their apprenticeship. The apprentice received \$1,000 after completing each level to a total of \$2,000. This grant began in 2007.

## **Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentice Grants**

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Education

- The Completion Grant rewarded an apprentice with \$2,000 after successfully completing their apprenticeship. This grant began in 2009.
- The Yukon government financially supports apprentices with:
  - free tuition at Yukon University or an Alberta institution;
  - travel costs;
  - Child Care Subsidy; and
  - Financial supports such as books, commuting costs, and other eligible living expenses.
- The Yukon government also provides apprentices with a program called Virtual Learning Strategy. This program helps apprentices with different learning options, learning assessments, identifying accommodations, and offers trade-specific, one-on-one tutoring. This program is free for Yukon apprentices.
- Most apprentices are laid off and collect Employment Insurance while they attend their mandatory schooling.
- The Government of Canada's Apprentice Loans remain available. These are interest-free loans of up to \$4,000 per period of technical training.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Apprentices and the trades industry may be upset with the discontinuation of these two grants and ask what the Yukon government will do to help.

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### **Background:**

- The Government of Canada sent all Canadian apprenticeship authorities an email on July 22, 2024, informing us that they were ending the Incentive and

## **Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprentice Grants**

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Education

Completion grants as of March 31, 2025. They also updated their website to reflect this change.

- The Government of Canada asked apprenticeship authorities to inform their apprentices of this change. The Department of Education informed all Yukon apprentices of this change.
- The Incentive Grant began in 2007 and provided apprentices with \$1,000 when they completed Level 1 and another \$1,000 when they completed Level 2.
- The Completion Grant began in 2009 and rewarded apprentices with \$2,000 when they successfully completed their apprenticeship and became a journeyperson.
- Yukon apprentices benefit from a very comprehensive and financially supportive system. They do not have to pay for their tuition costs (whether they go to technical training in Yukon or Alberta). The Yukon government reimburses apprentices for their travel to/from Alberta, or to/from Whitehorse if from a community. The Yukon government also provides \$20/week for transportation/commuting costs and \$200 per training period for books.
- Eligible apprentices can also receive a living allowance of \$170/week to help offset paying rent in two places while they go to school.
- The Yukon's Child Care Subsidy can assist apprentices with childcare costs while they work and go to school.
- Most apprentices are laid off and receive Employment Insurance benefits while they attend their technical training.
- The Government of Canada's Apprentice Loan program offers \$4,000 in interest-free loans per period of technical training. No interest will accumulate until after an apprentice completes or leaves their apprenticeship.
- Yukon University typically finalizes and releases their class schedules in May for the upcoming academic year, which starts in September. In 2025, there was one Level 4 class that was scheduled to finish after the March 31, 2025 deadline. This affected 10 apprentices who will not be eligible to receive the Federal government Completion Grant.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE05**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Sunsetting of Federal Government Apprenticeship Grants**

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Education

Approved by:

[Mary Cameron](#)

[2025-04-07](#)

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**International Student Cap: refer to AE02**

**YukonU Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement AE07**

**Value:**

- The Government of Yukon is proud of the collaborative approach that helped establish Yukon University as the first university north of 60, and we look forward to working with Yukon University as it continues to grow.

**Recommended response:**

- Yukon University, as a hybrid institution, provides a broad range of academic and vocational programs to meet the diverse learning needs of Yukon communities. These include degrees, diplomas, certificates, career and trades training, second language support, and upgrading courses.
- Department of Education 2024–25 funding to Yukon University was just over \$33.3 million.
- The Department of Education is currently in talks regarding funding allocation for 2025–26 with the University. Funding is expected to be comparable to the current level.
- The Department of Education maintains an ongoing collaboration with Yukon University to advance its strategic initiatives. This is achieved through an oversight committee comprising of key members from both the university and the Department of Education.
- I want to recognize that in October 2024 Yukon University achieved a significant goal when it became a member of Universities Canada, as member institutions must meet strict criteria and adhere to principles of institutional quality assurance.

- The Department of Education is working with Yukon University and Yukon First Nations governments to develop an accountability framework for the university.
- Yukon University provided an initial draft of this framework. The Department of Education hired IRP Consulting to support Yukon First Nations engagement on the initial draft framework. The department has since shared a comprehensive working draft with Yukon University staff as of January 2025.
- The department looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Yukon University to help it achieve the commitments outlined in its strategic plan.

## **International Students:**

- In 2024, Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada limited allocations for international student spaces by jurisdiction, but this did not negatively impact the number of students the Yukon accepted.
- The department worked with Yukon University and finalized a process for tracking international study permits within the Yukon's allocation.

## **Polaris Building:**

- Government of Yukon is committed to supporting Yukon University and has identified \$13M through the capital planning process to be distributed in conjunction with the University's construction timeline.
- The departments of Highways and Public Works and Education continue to work collaboratively with Yukon University on next steps.

## **Violence, harassment and discrimination prevention and response:**

- Yukon University has made it clear that any form of discrimination against specific communities on the university campus will not be tolerated. This includes anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, and discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

- Yukon University has robust policies that guide and direct their approach to addressing any discrimination and harassment, such as:
    - *Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination Prevention and Response – HR 12.0* (Part of Health and Safety Policy)
    - *Emergency and Threat Response – SS 11.0* (Part of Safety and Security Policy).
- 

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Yukon University Act came into force on February 6, 2020, and the university continues to transition from a college.
  - Yukon University released its five-year strategic plan on April 4, 2022.
- 

### **Background:**

#### President and Vice-Chancellor

- Dr. Lesley Brown was appointed President and Vice-Chancellor of Yukon University on August 16, 2021.

#### Board of Governors

- The university Board of Governors has 17 members and is chaired by David Morrison.
  - Ten members are appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council. Appointments include members with extensive leadership experience:
    - Shaan Tlein Carol Geddes, former Council member of Teslin Tlingit Council.
    - Aan Goosh oo Mark Wedge, former Khà Shâde Hénì (Chief) of Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
    - Chris Mahar, a former ADM of Finance with the Yukon government.
  - Seven members are established through virtue of office and university elections process. Appointments include Jason Bilsky, former CEO of Yukon Hospital Corporation.

#### Funding

- The Department of Education is currently in talks regarding funding allocation for 2025-26 with the University. Funding is expected to be comparable to the current level.
- Yukon University O&M and transition activities are funded through a Transfer Payment Agreement with the Department of Education.
- Transition funding for Yukon University of \$1.5 million in O&M began in April 2019 and will be maintained in the department's 2025–26 budget. This funding is now included in the core funding for the University.
- Yukon University has two distinct O&M funding streams: core funding and strategic initiatives funding.
- Strategic initiatives are identified by both the university and the Department of Education and are based on priorities. The priorities are discussed at a Senior Oversight Committee (formerly called the Joint Agreement Management Team) and agreed upon by both parties.
- The committee works together to provide oversight and accountability around core and strategic initiative funding provided through this agreement. Members of the Senior Oversight Committee include:
  - the university Provost and Vice President Academic and Vice President, Finance and Administration from the university; and
  - the Department of Education ADM of Corporate Programs and Services, and Director of Training Programs.
  - The Department of Health and Social Services also has a standing invitation to attend meetings.
  - Representatives and advisors outside core membership from both parties participate in meetings based on agenda items.

### Collective Bargaining Agreement between Yukon University Employees Union and the University

- The collective agreement between Yukon University and Union is for the period covering July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024.
- Yukon University and the Union are currently bargaining to establish a new collective agreement.



### Science (Polaris) building

- In March 2019, the Government of Canada announced \$26 million over the next five years for Yukon University, for a new science building on the Ayamdigut campus in Whitehorse. A preliminary functional plan has been developed by the government and university.
- In its 2022-23 annual report, the university indicated that planning had continued for the new science building, which will be its first new building as a university.
- The Yukon government Five-Year Capital Plan includes \$13M over two years for the Polaris Building project to align with Yukon University construction timeline.
- The departments of HPW and Education continue to work with Yukon University to address next steps on the Science (Polaris) building, including resolving:
  - Land tenure and ownership/lease,
  - Annual operations & maintenance costs for the facility,
  - Annual operations & maintenance program costs for the facility; and
  - Parking lot considerations.
- The construction manager for the Polaris project was awarded to Ketza Construction.
  - Tenders for the sub-trades originally closed on Dec. 10, 2024, however, they came in significantly over budget. As a result, Yukon U directed Ketza and Stantec to work to bring the costs down. Feb. 10, 2025, was the deadline to identify the sub-trades.
  - Yukon U requires a Development Permit to apply for a Building Permit which is needed in order to begin construction. There has been a delay due to the inadequate fire flow up to the University which has prevented the issuance of permits. The University anticipates the City of Whitehorse will grant the Development Permit it needs the week of January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

### Degree programs

- The first graduating class of Yukon University included graduates from the first made-in-Yukon degree: the Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Governance Degree.
- Yukon University also now offers a 4-year Bachelor of Business Administration and a 1-year post-graduate certificate in Climate Change Policy.

### Accountability framework

- The Yukon University Act provides that the Minister of Education must establish accountability and performance measures for Yukon University, in consultation with each Yukon First Nation and the university.
- The department is coordinating the development of the Yukon University accountability framework.
- Recommendations on the content of the accountability have been received from Yukon University and IRP Consulting; IRP consulting was hired by the department to support Yukon First Nations consultation on the accountability framework.
- This first accountability framework is now in preparation by the department and will inform the first accountability framework for the new university, with approvals in place for 2025.

### Campus land and buildings

- The Yukon University Act provides that the government may transfer the ownership of campus lands and buildings (property) to Yukon University.
- A joint working group has been established to consider the issues and options for transferring land and building ownership to Yukon University, recognizing that this is a longer-term project.

### Yukon University Strategic Plan – Becoming, 2022-27

- On April 4, 2022, the university released its first strategic plan since transitioning from a college. Key elements of this plan include”
  - “Vision: Yukon University will become a thriving learning and research community leading Canada’s North.”
  - “Mission: We provide inclusive, quality education experiences that equip learners to seize opportunities, make change and positively impact local and global communities.”
  - “Commitments: Over the life of this plan, Yukon University will:
    - Build our identity and nurture our culture as a university.
    - Take our place in advancing reconciliation.
    - Continue to develop our northern expertise.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE06**  
**Spring 2025**

**Yukon University**

Education

- Develop bold thinkers and confident change leaders.
- Be leaders for the common good.”
- As of October 2024, Yukon University is a member of Universities Canada, an “organization providing Canadian universities with a unified voice for higher education, research and innovation.”
  - Yukon University submitted their application in September 2023.
  - Member universities meet strict criteria and adhere to principles of institutional quality assurance.
  - This membership means the university can contribute to national dialogues on post-secondary education and add a voice and perspective from the north.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-03-05**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Yukon University Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement**

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Education

### **Value:**

- Effective instructors and staff are important factors in a student's success at university.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education encourages employees of Yukon University to work with their union and the university to advance their interests.
- In the 2024-25 budget, the Government of Yukon is providing more than \$33.3 million to support core and strategic initiatives.
- The university's transfer payment agreement includes funding towards collective agreement costs.

### **Additional response:**

- In the 2023-24 budget, the Government of Yukon provided more than \$33.5 million to Yukon University to support core and strategic initiatives.
- This included \$1.089 million for collective bargaining increases.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Negotiations on a new Collective Agreement may result in additional costs.
- 

### **Background:**

- The current collective agreement, a 2-year agreement between Yukon University and the Public Service Alliance of Canada/Yukon University Employees Union covered the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024.
- In 2023-24, Yukon University employees made use of a Re-Opener-Increase clause in their collective agreement to re-open the agreement to ask for an increase in wages.

# Session Briefing Note

**Tab# AE07**  
**Spring 2025**

## **Yukon University Collective Bargaining/Collective Agreement**

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Education

- The department encourages employees of Yukon University to work with their union and the university to address any concerns.
- The collective agreement between Yukon University and the Public Service Alliance of Canada expired on June 30, 2024.
- The parties have started the collective bargaining process, and Yukon government cannot make comments which may affect the party's ability to bargain in good faith.
- As the funder of the University, the department continue to collaborate with officials to address core funding concerns.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility**

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Education

### **Value:**

- The Government of Yukon is proud of its collaboration with Yukon University to support it as Canada's first university north of 60.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education looks forward to continuing to work with Yukon University on shared priorities as it evolves and grows.
- This includes continuing to review the results of the Yukon University varsity sport feasibility study publicly released in June 2023.
- The feasibility study identified basic readiness criteria to ensure that a local varsity sports program would be set up for success.
- A university-level varsity sport program must be carefully created with partners to bring value to students and the territory.
- The university, the Department of Education and partners have been meeting and are planning a path forward using a staged approach. I look forward to sharing more details once they become available.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions may be raised about the status of the development of varsity sports at Yukon University, as reviewing the feasibility of a program is a mandate commitment.

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### **Background:**

- Reviewing the feasibility of a varsity sports program at Yukon University is a mandate letter commitment.
- The departments of Education and Economic Development worked with Yukon University to complete a feasibility study.

## **Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility**

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Education

- A steering committee for the study was struck in late December 2021 and included representatives from the university, Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle, Sport Yukon, and the departments of Education and Economic Development.
- The feasibility study was conducted by a contractor with related expertise, which examined factors such as benefits, staffing requirements, O&M costs, a process to scale up a program, and opportunities for Yukon First Nations participation or partnership.
- The contractor delivered a final report to the Steering Committee in November 2022.
- The feasibility study identifies \$1.3M is needed over three years to plan and implement a three-sport pilot project, with ongoing yearly implementation costs of \$1.8-2.5M.
- The steering committee has been investigating a staged approach to introducing sporting teams at the university. This approach allows for progression to a varsity sports program.
- This staged approach also has the financial benefit of starting smaller and investing wisely rather than committing to a large up-front investment.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2025-01-27**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

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### Recommended response:

- Access to housing remains a priority, and work continues to address key challenges, including:
  - Expanding housing with support services for those in need.
  - Increasing the supply of affordable rental units.
  - Helping Yukoners navigate housing costs.
- Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners are adapting to high construction and borrowing costs by finding innovative ways to develop and maintain housing.
- The corporation's five-year strategic plan, *Creating Home*, is driving a more client-focused and collaborative approach to affordable housing and integrating support services to improve outcomes for Yukoners.

### Additional response:

- Governments and stakeholders are working together to develop new land, expand housing options, and respond to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on housing.
  - Housing projects continue to move forward to meet the needs of Yukoners.
- 

### Context:

- The combination of high rental costs, limited affordable housing options and difficulties in securing mortgages continues to be a challenge for many Yukoners.
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### Background:

#### Section 1: Yukon population

- In June 2024, the estimated Yukon population was 46,640; an increase of 1,354, or 3.0%, compared to the revised figure for June 30, 2023 (45,286).
- The Yukon's population is forecast to increase to 51,520 by 2030.
- While the population of most age groups is expected to increase over this period, the number of seniors and people between the ages of 55 and 64 is expected to grow the fastest.



## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

### Section 2: Housing statistics

#### Average Whitehorse house prices (YBS)

	<a href="#">2023 Q4</a>	<a href="#">2024 Q4</a>	% Change
Single-detached house	\$627,400	\$657,900	3.0%
Condominium	\$416,000	\$611,900	7.2%

#### Yukon rents and vacancies (YBS)

	<a href="#">October 2022</a>	<a href="#">April 2023</a>	<a href="#">October 2023</a>	<a href="#">April 2024</a>
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,325	\$1,350	\$1,420
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%

#### New residential permits issued, Yukon (YBS)

Year	<a href="#"># of new residential permits</a>
2020	657
2021	635
2022	416
2023	429

#### Residential building construction, Yukon (YBS)

	<a href="#">January-December 2023</a>	<a href="#">January-December 2024</a>
# residential permits issued*	988	839
\$ value of new permits*	\$81.1 million	\$156.2 million (92% increase)

\*In addition to new dwelling units, residential permits include renovations, garages, and additions.  
The totals do not include permits issued for plumbing or stoves.

#### City of Whitehorse, new housing completions ([CMHC](#))

Year	Homeowner	Rental	Condo	All
2018	66	100	61	227
2019	55	78	110	243
2020	80	116	152	348
2021	86	57	53	196
2022	111	194	181	486
2023	129	189	126	444
2024	73	19	151	243

### Section 3: Capital projects recently completed by YHC or partners

Since 2022:

- 10 YHC-led projects have been completed, creating a total of 77 new residential units; and
- 8 major Housing Initiatives Fund partnership projects have been completed, creating over 276 new units.

## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

### YHC projects completed 2022-2024

YHC Project	Construction Start Date	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
401 Jeckell Street, Whitehorse	May 2020	December 2022	47
RHI affordable triplex, Whitehorse	June 2021	June 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Watson Lake	June 2021	March 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Mayo	June 2021	March 2022	3
Accessible duplex, Mayo	July 2022	June 2023	2
Accessible duplex, Carmacks	August 2022	July 2023	2
RRDC staff trailer, Ross River	June 2023	December 2023	3
10-plex*, Old Crow (*Asset owned by HPW/ managed by YHC)	Summer 2021	Jan 2024	10
Accessible duplex, Faro	Summer 2023	Spring 2024	2
Affordable duplex, Dawson City	August 2022	June 2024	2
Total units completed (YHC projects):			77

### Major partnership projects completed 2022-2024

Project (Lead)	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
Bringing Citizens Home, Whitehorse (Champagne and Aishihik FN)	Summer 2022	20
Cornerstone multi-use building, Whitehorse (Opportunities Yukon)	July 2022	53
Normandy Living seniors' supportive residence, Whitehorse (KBC)	December 2022	84
Boreal Commons apartments, Whitehorse (536754 Yukon Inc)	January 2023	87
Affordable modular housing, Mayo (Na-Cho Nyäk Dun FN)	March 2023	8
Jëje Zho 12-bed men's shelter, Dawson City (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in FN)	July 2023	8
VGFN elders complex, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	January 2024	9
VGFN mobile homes, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	March 2024	7
Total units completed (major partnerships):		276

## Section 4: Underway or upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

### YHC projects underway

Project	Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Watson Lake - 10-unit supportive living residence (TAB #20)	Summer 2023	Winter 2025	10
Dawson - 34-unit housing project - Korbo lot (TAB #19)	Fall 2024	2026-27	34
Whitehorse - 45-unit Ryder replacement	Fall 2024	Spring 2026	45
Burwash Landing - 1 staff duplex (TAB #25)	Fall 2024	Summer 2026	2
Whitehorse - Purchase of 190 Olive May Way (TAB #5)	July 2024	February 2025	18
Total units underway:			109

### Major partnership projects underway or completed

Project	Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Safe at Home Society's supportive housing "The Hearth"	March 2024	Spring 2026	67

## Housing Landscape

## Yukon Housing Corporation

Safe at Home Society's supportive housing at 408 Alexander	May 2024	Completed	17
DDDC's affordable rental project "Winter Crossing"	Spring 2024	Spring 2026	105
Northern Community Land Trust Society's affordable homeownership "Project 1096"	June 2024	December 2025	32
HIF-7 funding recipients	Spring 2024	Fall 2026	78
Total units:			299

### YHC projects planned

Project	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Teslin – 6-plex with Village and Teslin Tlingit Council	Design – 2025/26	2027/28	6
Carcross – 6-plex	Lot selected, YESAB approval in progress	2027/28	6
Mayo – 10-Unit Community Housing Project	Lot selected, Design – 2027/28	2029/30	10
Ross River – duplex	2026/27	2028/29	2
Haines Junction – 6-plex	2027/28	2029/30	6
Whitehorse – Accessible Triplex at 44-13 <sup>th</sup> Ave.	Deferred due to lack of city sewer/water infrastructure, plan to upgrade in 3-5 years.		3
Total units planned:			33

### Section 5: Support for new residential land development

September 2024	As part of the Government of Yukon's ongoing commitment to increase land and housing availability and support business growth, new residential and industrial lots are being released in communities across the Yukon in partnership with municipalities and Yukon First Nations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>seven residential lots in Haines Junction, Mayo and Watson Lake; and</li> <li>three industrial lots in Teslin and Haines Junction</li> </ul> This is the sixth lot release this year and is a direct result of the Government of Yukon's historic investment in land development. Since 2021, 685 lots have been released through lotteries and tenders, with over 1,000 expected by 2026. (TABS # 37 & 38).
August 2024	As part of its efforts to work in collaboration with municipalities and Yukon First Nations governments to address housing and business space needs across the territory, the Government of Yukon has released 33 new residential lots across the Yukon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twelve lots are available in Carmacks and Faro</li> <li>21 country residential lots are available in the Lone Tree subdivision north of Teslin.</li> </ul>
June 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with the Government of Canada and the City of Dawson to develop four new residential lots in Dawson.
February 2023	120 lots, including single family, multi-family and townhouse lots in Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.

### Section 6: Tenants in Yukon Housing RGI units

#### YHC Unit Status as of April 24, 2025

Breakdown	Employee	RGI	Total
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## Housing Landscape

## Yukon Housing Corporation

Occupied	166	664	830
Under Allocation	2	13	15
Under Capital	2	9	11
Under Repair	3	25	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>884</b>

### Length of RGI tenancy as of April 24, 2025

Length of RGI tenancy in years	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
<1 Year	79	41	120
01-02 Years	96	39	135
02-03 Years	38	33	71
03-04 Years	29	15	44
04-05 Years	18	17	35
05-10 Years	78	97	175
10-15 Years	21	25	46
15-20 Years	8	13	21
20+ Years	7	9	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>663</b>
<b>Average Years</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>

\*The longest running tenancy is 29 years.

## Section 7: Waitlist

### YHC waitlists for seniors and non-seniors as of April 24, 2025 (TAB #13)

Community	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Carcross	1	0	1
Carmacks	4	0	4
Dawson City	13	9	22
Haines Junction	2	2	4
Ross River	1	0	1
Watson Lake	16	3	19
Whitehorse	180	93	273
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>324</b>

### As of April 24, 2025, 13 employees are on the waitlist (TAB #10)

Community	Employee
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# Session Briefing Note

**TAB #YG01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Dawson City	6
Faro	1
Haines Junction	3
Pelly Crossing	1
Ross River	1
Teslin	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

\*Note Beaver Creek, Destruction Bay, Old Crow and Pelly Crossing do not have Rent-Geared-to-Income units and Whitehorse does not have employee housing units.

### RGI Waitlist based on Priority Status as of April 24, 2025

Priorities	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Affordability	136	59	195
By-Name List/Homeless (Community)*	5	2	7
Priority – Medical	11	17	28
Priority – Mobility	10	31	41
Priority – Gender-based violence	56	1	57
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>328</b>

\*Note this category is used to identify homeless priority in the rural communities outside of Whitehorse. This does not represent the total number of individuals and/or households on the Community By-Name List. Individuals who are homeless may be included in the affordable category until information is shared from the Coordinated Housing Access Team.

### Time on Waitlist based on Secondary Status

Breakdown	Affordable	By-Name List	Medical	Mobility	Gender-based violence	Total
<1 Year	129	6	16	21	25	197
1-3 Years	51	0	9	13	28	101
3-5 Years	8	0	3	2	1	14
5-7 Years	7	1	1	2	0	11
7+ Years	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>Average Years</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>

\* The By-Name List category identifies homeless priority in the rural communities outside of Whitehorse.

## Section 8: Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit (TAB #9)

- The program helps low-to-moderate-income Yukoners in private market rental housing who cannot afford rent. Applicants can receive \$200, \$400, \$600 or \$800 per month, which will be paid directly to the individual.

## Housing Landscape

## Yukon Housing Corporation

- Applicants must provide proof of income to be eligible.
- Since the program's launch in November 2020, over 300 households have been supported.
- As of April 24, 2025:
  - 206 households were approved for the original benefit.
  - 18 households were approved for the gender-based violence stream.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit - Rental stream breakdown by benefit level as of April 24, 2025.

Benefit Level	# of Clients	Monthly Budget
200	77	\$15,400.00
400	38	\$15,200.00
600	47	\$28,200.00
800	44	\$35,200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>\$94,000.00</b>

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit - Rental stream recipients as of April 24, 2025.

Community	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Dawson City	5	4	9
Haines Junction	3	0	3
Watson Lake	1	1	2
Whitehorse	149	43	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>206</b>

## Section 9: Loans and Grants programs

1. **Yukoner First Home Program (TAB #6)** – Launched on April 23, 2024, the Yukoner First Home Program is a new program that provides a deferrable, low-interest loan to first-time buyers who have a pre-approved mortgage and need down payment support.
2. **Developer Build Loan (DBL) Program** – Provides loans for short-term construction financing to Yukon developers who may be unable to secure funding from traditional lenders. The program is for land and infrastructure development for residential purposes or building homes and multi-unit residential buildings. The loan is fully repayable to Yukon Housing Corporation.

### Developer Build Loan Program

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan25	Total	%
Approved	1	1	1	0	2	5	46
Declined	0	0	2	1	0	3	27
Cancelled	0	2	0	1	0	3	27
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>



## Housing Landscape

## Yukon Housing Corporation

3. **Home Ownership Loan Program** – A spring 2024 review found it was not adequately supporting the needs of Yukoners, prompting the transition to the new program. The program has been replaced by the Yukoner First Home Program.

4. **Municipal Matching Rental Construction Program (MMRCP)** – This is a one-time capital grant for projects that receive a municipal development incentive. It is meant to help increase the supply of rental housing in communities.

### MMRCP

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total	%
Approved	13	12	17	12	10	64	64.6
Declined	2	1	3	4	0	10	10.1
Cancelled	1	0	12	10	2	25	25.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

5. **Home Repair Program** – Funding to repair or upgrade primary residence. This program includes emergencies, accessibility and wildfire grants and a home repair loan. *Note: Three intakes have been completed for the fiscal year 2023-2024.*

### Grants stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	40	46	34	17	3	140
Declined	0	2	3	3	2	10
Cancelled	6	14	9	8	8	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>195</b>

### Loans stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	0	6	8	10	2	26
Declined	0	5	10	12	5	32
Cancelled	0	25	32	24	20	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>159</b>

### Accessibility stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	10	8	14	7	5	44
Declined	0	1	2	1	2	6
Cancelled	1	3	8	14	1	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>77</b>

# Session Briefing Note

**TAB #YG01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Emergency stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	10	6	6	5	3	30
Declined	0	2	6	11	6	25
Cancelled	1	1	4	36	11	53
Total	11	9	16	52	20	108



# Session Briefing Note

**TAB #YG01**  
**Spring 2025**

## Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Wildfire Grants stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	10	21
Declined	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	1	1
Cancelled	n/a	n/a	n/a	16	4	20
Total	n/a	n/a	n/a	27	15	42

6. **Housing Initiatives Fund (HIF)** – Provides capital construction grants for planning and development of new affordable home ownership or rental housing. Affordable is defined as at or below the median market rent or house price. All projects funded under HIF must remain affordable for 20 years. (TAB #26)

Approved by:

Samantha Paterson  
President, Yukon Housing Corporation

April 25, 2025  
Date Approved

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Our Clean Future Implementation**

**TAB# YG02**  
**Spring 2025**

Environment and Energy,  
Mines and Resources

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### **Recommended response:**

- Yukoners recognize that our territory, alongside jurisdictions around the world, is facing a climate emergency that is increasingly impacting our communities and way of life.
- In 2020, the Government of Yukon released Our Clean Future, the territory's first climate strategy that is guiding our response to climate change and climate adaptation.
- We continue to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future. In November 2024, we shared the 2023 Our Clean Future progress report that highlights our progress in adapting to climate change impacts and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- As of the end of 2024 we:
  - Registered 597 zero emission vehicles in the territory and all road-connected communities are equipped with fast chargers;
  - Provided over 1500 rebates for electric bikes;
  - Completed over 300 high performance residential retrofits including over 50 high performance commercial and industrial building energy retrofits;
  - Installed 219 smart heating devices in homes and buildings;
  - Installed 10 megawatts of renewable electricity through the Micro-Generation Program.
- In addition, we recently launched a new income tested heat pump rebate, which was fully subscribed within a month, providing 84 households with funding for heat pumps this year and next.

# Session Briefing Note

## Our Clean Future Implementation

**TAB# YG02**  
**Spring 2025**

Environment and Energy,  
Mines and Resources

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- By the end of 2023, the Government of Yukon has completed 68 Our Clean Future actions, 105 are in progress or ongoing and 5 have not yet been started.

### **Additional response:**

- As we continue to address climate change, it is important for us to look back on our progress and continue to assess how we can better respond to climate change and reduce our emissions.
- In 2023, we announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals, which brings the total number of climate actions to 178.
- These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- The new actions focus on reducing the Yukon's emissions, supporting accessible, reliable and affordable renewable energy, climate adaptation and transitioning to a green economy.
- By the end of 2024, we have made significant progress, including:
  - Completed flood maps for the Southern Lakes region, Teslin and Carmacks. Flood hazard maps are underway for Old Crow, the City of Dawson and the Klondike Valley, and Mayo.
  - Worked with municipalities and First Nations governments to finalize the Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Faro, Haines Junction, Teslin, the City of Dawson and Whitehorse. Plans for Beaver Creek, Mayo, Old Crow, Watson Lake, Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing are underway.

# Session Briefing Note

## Our Clean Future Implementation

**TAB# YG02**  
**Spring 2025**

Environment and Energy,  
Mines and Resources

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- Advanced climate change preparedness by initiating development of a permafrost monitoring system for key public buildings, and guidelines to address climate hazards in major infrastructure projects.
  - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
  - Completed flood risk mapping for all transportation corridors in the Yukon.
- We are committed to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we support Yukoners in the transition to cleaner transportation options and energy efficient homes and buildings.
- In 2024, we:
  - We passed legislation to set a target of a 45 per cent reduction in mining sector emissions per unit of production by 2035.
  - Began providing rebates for medium-duty electric vehicles.
  - Installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. 20 fast charging stations are now operational throughout the territory, and one new Level 2 charger in Swift River. (See EMR BN #30)
- Since 2020, we have provided rebates for 543 energy efficient new homes, exceeding our 2030 target of 500.

# Session Briefing Note

## Our Clean Future Implementation

**TAB# YG02**  
**Spring 2025**

Environment and Energy,  
Mines and Resources

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### Third response:

- Existing actions put us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. However, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- One of the major drivers of emissions is population – more people means more cars on the road and more homes to heat.
- However, as the population of the Yukon continues to grow, we aren't seeing the rate of emissions increase that we would expect.
- We are seeing lower emissions per Yukoner than we saw in 2010; this is a promising sign that the emissions intensity of everyday life for Yukoners may be starting to decrease.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in the annual reports.
- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

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### Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change and the government's progress in delivering on Our Clean Future commitments is of interest to Yukoners.

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### Background:

- Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020, and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.

# Session Briefing Note

## Our Clean Future Implementation

**TAB# YG02**  
**Spring 2025**

Environment and Energy,  
Mines and Resources

- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Four Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on November 12, 2024 (capturing 2023 data).
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows the government's commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.

### Approved by:

**Dennis Berry**

**February 5, 2025**

Deputy Minister, Environment

Date approved

**Paul Moore**

**February 5, 2025**

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****2024-25 Supplementary Overview  
(Corporate Note)**

Finance

**Embargoed until tabled**

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**Recommended response:**

- The changes outlined in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2 highlight the government's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and communities. The government is making important investments in health and social services, education, environmental protection, and in needed infrastructure across the territory.
- The Government of Yukon continues to maintain a budgetary surplus of \$57.6 million. Increased spending of \$130.1 million is partially offset by additional revenue and recoveries of \$19.5 million.
- Despite increases in O&M and capital expenditure, we continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- Many of the O&M pressures in Supplementary Estimates No. 2 related to health and education are ongoing pressures for services and will continue to be reflected in the Main Estimates.
- The ability to remain in a surplus position despite an increase in spending is largely owed to:
  - Infrastructure investments, which are mostly tangible capital assets. As they are anticipated to provide benefits over many years, their impact on the surplus/deficit position is recognized over their expected life.
  - Also, the additional \$55 million funding to the Receiver for the Victoria Gold Corp. is provided as a loan, which offsets the impact of these expenditures on the budgetary surplus.

**Session Briefing Note****2024-25 Supplementary Overview  
(Corporate Note)**

Finance

**Embargoed until tabled**

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- Even with significant financial pressures in recent years, and in particular the response to the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold mine, the Yukon remains on a strong financial footing. The government continues to make strategic investments that support economic growth, protect the environment, and enhance the quality of life for all Yukoners.

**Additional response:**

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$114.3 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$7.9 million in recoveries-mainly for the following pressures:
  - \$55 million in advances to the Receiver for environmental protection work at the Eagle Gold Mine.
  - \$20.7 million in additional health-related funding to support Insured Health pressures, Yukon Hospital Corporation operations, emergency medical services, and legislated grant programs.
  - \$13.8 million for education related pressures, including Collective Agreement increase for the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and funding the First Nation School Board.



## Session Briefing Note

### 2024-25 Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Finance

**Embargoed until tabled**

- Capital adjustments in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2 reflect an overall gross increase of \$15.8 million in spending and a \$3.8 million increase in capital recoveries. These adjustments are primarily driven by:
  - Increases of \$21.7 million for accelerated work on the Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement and to address capital pressures related to ongoing land development projects;
  - \$7.8 million in decreases due to updated cash flow forecasts and revised timelines for major school replacement projects and the Watson Lake solar project.
- Revenues are projected to increase by \$7.8 million, driven by higher personal income tax and fuel tax revenue forecasts, as well as accrued loan interest from the Victoria Gold Corp. receivership

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 is tabled in the spring session and will be the subject of debate.

#### Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

February 24, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Finance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission  
– Update on Calls to Action**

Executive Council  
Office

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**Recommended response:**

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to share our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, most recently through a progress report and Pathways magazine both released in fall 2023.
- The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

**Additional response:**

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- While there is still work to do, targeted investments are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action. The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes a commitment to working with Yukon First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments.
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**Background:**

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## Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council  
Office

- The TRC report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* was released in 2015 and contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from residential schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
  - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
  - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
  - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
  - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
  - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
  - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

### Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

2025 01 30

Date

## Session Briefing Note

### Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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Finance

#### Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon remains committed to supporting Yukoners with day-to-day affordability.
- While inflation has improved, high shelter and food costs remain the largest drivers of overall inflation. These elevated prices continue to stretch the budgets of Yukon households, with lower-income households often feeling the greatest impact.
- We are pleased to report that price pressures eased throughout 2024, with local inflation averaging 2 per cent for the year – well below 2023's rate of 4.9 per cent.
- After much improved inflation figures throughout 2024, inflation moved higher over the first two months of 2025. Inflation in Whitehorse rose to 3.5 per cent in February. This was tied with Manitoba for the highest in the country.
- Higher inflation was observed in every province and territory in February as national inflation accelerated from 1.9 per cent to 2.6 per cent.
- Shelter and food continue to be the primary contributors to inflation. Of the top five contributors to price growth in February, four fall under the shelter component: mortgage interest costs, rent, homeowner's replacement costs and electricity. Rounding out the top five was food purchased from restaurants, which was up 6 per cent on a year-over-year basis.
- Many factors can impact monthly inflation figures and recent growth may not be indicative of a return to higher inflation in 2025. The

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

department will continue to monitor inflation data to see if it aligns with previous expectations for inflation for the year.

- The Government of Yukon continues to monitor inflation and its impact on Yukoners to ensure we can take effective steps to ease financial burdens.

**Additional response:**

- Budget 2025-26 builds on existing supports for Yukoners by ensuring access to essential services at affordable prices.
- This year's budget includes investments to advance housing projects across the territory. This includes affordable housing initiatives such as the replacement of the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse and the recently completed supportive housing project in Watson Lake. It also supports ongoing residential land development projects, including Whistle Bend Phases 12 and 13 in Whitehorse, the Mountain Ridge Development in Haines Junction, and the Frances Avenue Development in Watson Lake.
- The budget provides more than \$47.3 million for early learning and child care programs, including the Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund to expand and improve child care spaces. The universal child care program continues to lower costs, reducing fees to an average of less than \$10 per day.
- Budget 2025-26 allocates \$4.8 million to the National School Food Program, helping support families and ensuring every child has access to nutritious meals at school.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

- We are also making life more affordable through the Yukon-wide dental program, which remains a national leader with \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2025-26.
- To support workers, the Temporary Paid Sick Leave Rebate has been extended again, ensuring more Yukoners can stay home when they are ill.
- The Interim Electrical Rebate is being replaced by the new Winter Electrical Affordability Program to help Yukoners manage higher electricity costs during peak winter months.
- The government continues to support the free transit program, launched last year by the Department of Community Services, which provides free bus passes to Yukoners.
- Also, the Government of Yukon is working with partners such as Connective and the Safe at Home Society to expand supportive housing options in Whitehorse.

**Third response**

- The Government of Yukon has also remained responsive to higher inflation in recent years through its various grants and subsidies, which are indexed to inflation. These include:
  - Subsidies for medical travel
  - The Yukon Child Benefit
  - Social Assistance Payments
  - Student Financial Assistance
  - Seniors' benefits



**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

- The Pioneer Utility grant
  - The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
  - Residential rent caps
  - The Yukon's minimum wage is also responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the previous year.
  - After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage increased a further 4.9 per cent in 2024 and will again increase on April 1, 2025, to \$17.94 per hour.
  - The Yukon's minimum wage is the second highest in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.
  - These increases also contribute towards the strong earnings growth we continue to see in the territory. Average weekly earnings grew 5.3 per cent over the first eleven months of 2024, the third strongest growth in the country.
- 

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Inflation has fallen from historic highs, but Yukoners are still dealing with higher prices for goods and services following a lengthy period of elevated inflation.
  - The moderation of inflationary pressures that began to take hold late in 2023 continued throughout 2024. Growth in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index (CPI) was much lower in every month in 2024, and annual inflation of 2 per cent was much improved from 2023.
  - Inflation has ticked up in the first two months of 2025, with February inflation of 3.5 per cent tied with Manitoba for the highest in the country.
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**Background:**

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

Inflation – Recent performance and outlook

- Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, the Bank of Canada made five rate cuts in 2024, with the overnight rate dropping from 5.0 per cent to 3.25 per cent. As of March 12, 2025, there have been two additional cuts of 0.25 percentage points and further rate cuts are expected this year, given economic uncertainty around tariffs. These cuts will further reduce pressure on shelter prices as mortgage rates decline.
- Both locally and nationally, price pressures lessened in 2024, with inflation near historic norms.
- The current outlook for the Whitehorse CPI reflects expectations of a return to 'normal' levels of inflation, with the inflation forecast of 2 per cent in 2024, much improved from 4.9 per cent in 2023 and 6.8 per cent in 2022. Annual inflation is expected to average 2 per cent over the period 2025 to 2029.



**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

\*\*\* Programs that support affordability listed below \*\*\*

**HOUSING**

Capital projects supporting housing affordability

- Programs such as the Housing Initiatives Fund and investments through the Permanent Affordable Housing program support Yukon Housing Corporation's five-year strategic plan, *Creating Home*, which prioritizes innovative projects and partnerships to expand affordable housing, close gaps in the housing continuum, and increase homeownership opportunities for Yukoners. These partnerships address housing needs and support economic development.
- Eighteen new units in Whistle Bend have been purchased to support a range of housing needs along the continuum.
- Work has begun on the old Korbo lot in Dawson City, which will provide an additional 34 Rent Geared to Income units, scheduled for completion in 2026.
- Groundwork began at the old Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse in September 2024 and we are aiming for completion in spring 2026. When completed, the new complex will deliver 45 new affordable housing units.

Supportive Housing (Health and Social Services & Yukon Housing Corporation)

- \$1.5 million for Safe at Home will go towards establishing temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.
- As well, we are contributing \$900,000 in 2025-26 of a total \$12.9 million dollar commitment towards Safe at Home Society's 67-unit project (*The Hearth*), which will provide safe, supportive and permanent housing in Whitehorse.
- Construction of a 10-unit housing complex in Watson Lake was completed in January 2025 which will open its doors in spring 2025.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Rental Subsidy (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit offers a rental subsidy for low-to-moderate income renters.

## Session Briefing Note

### Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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Finance

- Funded through the National Housing Strategy, the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit rent subsidy has helped over 300 low- to moderate-income Yukoners with affordability challenges since 2020.
- In addition, the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit gender-based violence rent subsidy helps survivors access safe housing, so they are not forced to return to unsafe situations due to housing costs.

#### Winter Electrical Affordability Rebate (Yukon Development Corporation)

- As a replacement for the Interim Electrical Rebate, Yukon Development Corporation will launch the Winter Electrical Affordability Rebate to assist Yukoners with electricity costs in the winter months.

#### Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- Funding that supports reducing energy costs is available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, home and building owners, and the construction industry.
- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy Rebate Program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money by reducing their energy costs.

#### Affordable Heat Pump Program (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- The Affordable Heat Pump Program aims to help low-to-middle-income households cover the cost of purchasing and installing a heat pump, a device that has the potential to significantly reduce a homeowner's energy costs.
- Since the launch of the Affordable Heat Pump Program late last year, the response has been overwhelming, with over 90 applications.

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)**

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Finance

- The program quickly reached its funding capacity and we are working with our federal partners to seek consideration for additional funds.
- People can still apply to a waitlist and applications will be approved in the order they are received. The program website remains the best way to stay informed about the program.

#### **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

##### Dental Care program (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon's Dental Program was launched in 2023 and provides \$1,300, per year, in dental benefits to Yukoners without dental coverage. The program will cover dental treatments necessary to relieve pain and infection, prevent disease, treat cavities, and restore chewing and social function. It will also offer full coverage for preventive care, such as routine dental cleaning.

##### Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement provides a monthly income supplement for eligible Yukoner senior's receiving Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from the federal government. This amount is adjusted for inflation in October, each year.

##### Social Assistance Review (Health and Social Services)

- Health and Social Services is undertaking a review of the Yukon's Social Assistance rates to inform options to improve the delivery of the program and ensure it is meeting the needs of program clients.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

#### **FAMILIES AND EDUCATION**

##### Universal Child Care Program (Education)

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)**

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Finance

- Universal child care is available to all Yukon families using licensed child care spaces. The universal child care program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day, on average, for families across the Yukon.

#### Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund (Education)

- The Department of Education has a three-year agreement covering the years 2023-24 to 2025-26 with the Government of Canada that will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- This partnership with the Government of Canada will support a mutual vision of high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

#### Food in Schools program (Education)

- Good nutrition is vital for students' mental and physical health and increases all students' learning potential.
- On April 1, 2024, Canada announced a \$1 billion investment over five years to create a National School Food Program.
- The new National School Food Policy outlines principles and objectives to support the vision of every child having access to nutritious food in school
- Budget 2025-26 includes \$4.8 million for the National School Food Program.

#### Fertility Tax Credit (Finance)

- We are committed to improving access to fertility and surrogacy treatments for Yukoners.
- The value of the refundable credit will be 40% of eligible expenses to a maximum of \$10,000 per year per taxpayer with unlimited lifetime availability.
- This generous support is in addition to the new medical travel coverage for fertility treatment and enhances existing support in the tax system, such as the Medical Expense Tax Credit and Northern Residents Deduction.

## Session Briefing Note

### Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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Finance

- Alongside the recently announced medical travel coverage for fertility treatments, the tax credit in this bill will help relieve financial pressures for Yukon families who are accessing these treatments.

#### Yukon Child Benefit (Health and Social Services and Finance)

- The Yukon Child Benefit provides monthly payments to modest and low-income households who have children under 18. The maximum benefit, per child, is now tied to inflation, effective for the 2023–24 benefit year.

#### Out of Home Childcare Increases (Health and Social Services)

- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, Health and Social Services provided an ongoing 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care in 2023–24, on top of the annual indexed increase. Combined, this amounted to a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers.
- Rates are indexed annually to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index, most recently increased by 2.4 % in October 2024.

## BUSINESSES and COMMUNITIES

#### Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate program is now extended until March 31, 2026.
- On April 1, 2023, the Department of Economic Development launched the Paid Sick Leave Rebate as a temporary program offering up to 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees and self-employed Yukoners that earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94/hour.
- The program includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program). The program is available to employees regardless of whether their employer offers paid sick leave, though employees must use all paid sick leave available to them through their employer before they are eligible for the Paid Sick Leave Rebate.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Inflation and Affordability**  
**(Corporate Note)**

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Finance

Yukon Trade Resilience Program (Economic Development)

- In preparation for the potential of tariffs on Canadian goods being considered by the United States or other negative impacts on trade, the Department of Economic Development is creating a program to support Yukon businesses.
- The US remains the territory's most important international partner. We are working closely with our federal, provincial, and territorial partners to ensure that we have programming available to mitigate the impact on the Yukon by ensuring support is available if needed.
- The program is still in early stages and will evolve in response to outside factors.

Curbside Recycling (Community Services)

- The Yukon government is supporting the City of Whitehorse with up to \$2.4 million over two years, through 2024 and 2025, for a curbside collection program. The City's program is now in place and the Yukon government's support reduces the cost for Whitehorse households by roughly 50 per cent.

**Approved by:**

Jessica Schultz

March 18, 2025

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 Deputy Minister, Finance

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 Date Approved



## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring 2025**

### **Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)**

Environment & Finance

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#### **Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon has supported carbon pricing to help reduce emissions and reach our climate targets. We remain committed to taking action on reducing emissions across the territory and to meeting our commitments outlined in *Our Clean Future*.
- However, we anticipate that the consumer carbon price in Canada will likely end in the near future.
- As Minister of Finance, I have asked Canada to provide certainty with respect to how and when carbon pricing will end and also what actions will be taken to contribute to emission reductions in lieu of carbon pricing.
- We will continue to monitor federal actions on carbon pricing diligently and are committed to keeping Yukoners informed about any changes that may affect them. This includes recent comments by Prime Minister-designate Carney to end the consumer carbon tax “immediately”.

#### **Additional response (federal government changes in policy):**

- The Government of Yukon will continue to work with our federal counterparts to ensure we remain compliant to any evolving regulations or changes to carbon pricing programs at the federal level.
- All federal Liberal party candidates, along with the federal leaders of the other parties, have signaled that they will end or significantly change the consumer carbon pricing program. The end of the federal carbon price means that the Yukon would no longer receive revenues to sustain the carbon rebate program.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring 2025**

### **Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)**

Environment & Finance

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- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral, and on average, Yukoners receive more than they pay in carbon pricing levies.
- We have written to the federal government, requesting collaboration on a systematic wind down of the Yukon carbon rebate program. We have also urged the cancellation of the carbon levy increase planned for April 1, 2025.
- Carbon pricing is just one tool to address climate change. Our plans outlined in Our Clean Future extend beyond any federal programming. Our government will continue to aspire to meet our greenhouse gas emissions target by 2030.

#### **Third response:**

- The departments of Environment and Finance continue to work with federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing on large industrial emitters that are subject to the Output Based Pricing System in the territory and ensure the needs of the Yukon are recognized in national policy.
- The Output Based Pricing System is separate from the consumer carbon price. Canada is currently conducting a review of that system.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On February 25, Yukon's Minister of Finance issued a statement confirming that he had written to the federal government, requesting collaboration on a systematic wind-down of the Yukon carbon rebate program and urging the cancellation of the planned carbon levy increase set for April 1, 2025.
- Carbon pricing remains a sensitive topic across the country with many provinces and territories voicing their own perspective on how they would like to see this pricing mechanism handled moving forward.



## Session Briefing Note

**Spring 2025**

### Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)

Environment & Finance

- The federal carbon pricing system is expected to be a central talking point as part of any forthcoming federal election.

#### Background:

- Most provinces and territories, including British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, have publicly opposed the federal carbon pricing system.
- Recently, federal liberal leaders have committed to ending the federal carbon tax in Canada.
- On April 1, 2025, the carbon levy will increase from \$80 to \$95 per tonne.
- [The new Liberal leader and other federal party leaders have expressed their commitment to end or change the consumer carbon levy.](#)
- [The new federal Liberal leader has indicated the consumer carbon levy would be eliminated “immediately”. No specific dates or timelines have been provided yet.](#)
- Given that the end of the federal carbon price means that the Yukon will no longer receive revenues to sustain the carbon rebate program, on February 24, 2024, Minister of Finance Sandy Silver wrote to federal Ministers Guilbeault and LeBlanc asking for collaboration in winding down the Yukon’s carbon rebate program, including a request to cancel the scheduled April 1, 2025, increase to the carbon levy.
- On February 25, 2024, Minister Silver issued a statement outlining the Yukon’s request to federal Ministers.

#### Approved by:

**Dennis Berry**

Deputy Minister of Environment

**March 10, 2025**

Date approved

**Jessica Schultz**

Deputy Minister of Finance

**March 10, 2025**

Date approved

# Session Briefing Note

## Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

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**TAB# YG07**  
**Spring 2025**  
EMR-ECO-FIN

### Recommended response:

- We recognize the seriousness of the heap leach failure and continue to treat our response to the situation with the appropriate urgency.
- Our priorities are to ensure the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and to protect the environment.
- We are committed to working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to develop remediation strategies for the failure. A joint team of technical experts hired by the Government of Yukon and the First Nation meet on a regular basis to inform our actions.
- We have full confidence in the court process governing all aspects of the Receivership proceedings, including the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the Receiver.
- As the Eagle Gold situation continues to unfold, we will continue to assess and improve our understanding of the impacts on Yukoners and the local economy.
- For the most up-to-date information on the situation at Eagle Gold Mine and actions that we are taking, you can visit [Yukon.ca](http://Yukon.ca).

### Additional responses:

- An Independent Review Board has been established to investigate the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine.
- The Board has developed its own work plan and timeline to

# Session Briefing Note

## Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

**TAB# YG07**  
**Spring 2025**  
EMR-ECO-FIN

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conduct its review, and we respect the Board's autonomy in this regard. (See EMR BN #1)

- Impacts on human health and on the environment are being monitored by technical experts from the Government of Yukon, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the Government of Canada.
- Our government continues to monitor labour market data, such as the number of unemployed and the number of Employment Insurance claimants, for potential impacts of the mine closure.

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### Context — this may be an issue because:

- The June 24, 2024, heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine affects the environmental and socio-economic wellbeing of Yukoners – from an environmental and business perspective.

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### Background:

- The Yukon.ca website is updated with information bulletins to inform the public on the Victoria Gold heap leach failures current situation.
- See 'historic overview' section for an overview of key dates.

### Economic and labour market

- The Eagle Gold Mine heap leach failure has changed the outlook for mineral production in the Yukon and resulted in a notable downward revision in the medium-term outlook for the Yukon's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- The effect of closure on the labour market has been minimal, as displaced workers were reabsorbed into the Yukon's tight labour market. At 4.3 per cent in 2024, Yukon's unemployment rate was the lowest in the country. The economy continued to add jobs with employment up by 5 per cent annually.

# Session Briefing Note

## Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

**TAB# YG07**  
**Spring 2025**  
EMR-ECO-FIN

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- At the close of 2023, Victoria Gold had 471 direct hires and another 134 on contract.
  - Of the more than 600 employed, the company reported that about 34 per cent were local, amounting to approximately 200 local workers. This represents about 0.8 per cent of territorial employment in 2024.
  - As of January 16, 2025, there are 30 liens against Victoria Gold worth over \$60.2 million.

### Finances

- PwC manages project finances and procurement for the site in its capacity as the court-appointed Receiver and as an officer of the court must ensure funds are being spent responsibly.
- As approved by the Court, the Government of Yukon has advanced \$105 million to the Receiver for urgent works on site in 2024-25.
- Financial security for the Eagle Gold Mine totaled \$104 million. In 2024–25 the Government of Yukon accessed \$55 million of these bonds. The remaining \$48.7 million balance of the Surety Bonds has been accessed and will offset the costs for the loans to the Receiver in 2025–26.
- Additionally, the Receiver had access to \$29.2 million in cash assets of Victoria Gold Corporation to fund receivership activities in 2024-25. The Receiver utilized all of these assets in the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- \$118 million is included, as part of Energy, Mines and Resources' budget 2025-26, to continue to respond to the heap leach failure.
- Funding advanced to the receiver has a net zero impact on the government's surplus and net financial debt, as the Government of Yukon has priority to recover these advances from the assets of the company.
- Interest applies to all loans advanced to the Receiver at a rate of nine per cent. An estimated \$3 million of interest will be accrued in 2024-25 and \$9.5 million is forecast to be accrued in 2025-26.

## **Session Briefing Note**

### **Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts**

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#### **Local procurement**

- As part of the agreements established under the receivership order, the Government of Yukon requires that the receiver take steps to maximize local benefits and report to the Government of Yukon on those metrics.
- To date, \$20.8 million has been provided to local contractors under the receivership.
- The Receiver has contracted nine local contractors and in the past month, 72 per cent of the contracted work force were local Yukon contractors.

#### **Independent Review Board**

- An Independent Review Board was launched under the Government of Yukon's Guidelines for Mine Waste Management Facilities.
- The Independent Review Board will provide a thorough and expert review of the heap leach failure. It will operate with full autonomy, with contracts managed by the court-appointed receiver, ensuring impartiality in the process.
- The Terms of Reference can be found in the Second Report of the Receiver on the Receiver's website at [pwc.com](http://pwc.com).
- In accordance with the terms of reference, the IRB will provide its report to the Receiver, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources by June 15, 2025. The Receiver will make public the report on its website by July 15, 2025.
- Highly qualified experts are on the Independent Review Board. The Independent Review Board Members are:
  - Dr. Jean-Marie Konrad, M.Sc., Ph.D., FCAE, FEIC
  - Mark E. Smith, P.E., P.Eng.
- More information about the Board Members can be found on [Yukon.ca](http://Yukon.ca).
- There has been no decision as to whether an inquiry will also be established under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

# Session Briefing Note

## Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

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**TAB# YG07**  
**Spring 2025**  
EMR-ECO-FIN

- If the Office of the Auditor General decides to conduct an audit, we will support its requests for participation and information.

### Historic overview

- On June 24, 2024, a failure occurred at the heap leach facility of the Eagle Gold Mine operated by Victoria Gold Corporation.
- On July 30, 2024, the Premier provided remarks to the Council of Yukon First Nations' General Assembly on a variety of topics including mining and the incident at Eagle Gold Mine
- On August 5, 2024, the Premier provided a statement on mining activity in the Traditional Territory of First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 12, 2024, the Government of Yukon submitted an application for receivership of Eagle Gold Mine, which was supported by the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 14, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was appointed by the court as Receiver of the assets and property of Victoria Gold Corp. The Receiver is responsible for overseeing remediation of the heap leach failure and its environmental impacts, including compliance with territorial and federal orders.
- On October 1, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers released a report that shared receiver's communications with former Victoria Gold Corp's employees, advising they may be eligible to make a claim for outstanding wages up to \$8,500.00, vacation and/or severance pay under the *Wage Earner Protection Program Act*.
- On December 20, 2024, the Yukon Water Board approved the Receiver's application for an emergency amendment to the site's water licence to allow for the discharge of partially treated water. The amended discharge criteria expired on March 31, 2025 and is no longer in effect.

# Session Briefing Note

## Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

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**TAB# YG07**  
**Spring 2025**  
EMR-ECO-FIN

- On December 28, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers issued a notification to the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun regarding a potential leak in a newly constructed containment pond.
- As of February 18, 2025, the Government of Yukon has done 11 technical briefings to continue to keep Yukoners informed with up-to-date information.

### Approved By:

Sierra van der Meer	April 29, 2025
Deputy Minister Energy, Mines and Resources	Date Approved
Justin Ferbey	2025 04 22
Deputy Minister Executive Council Office	Date Approved
Jessica Schultz	April 25, 2025
Deputy Minister Department of Finance	Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is committed to supporting Yukoners and communities while considering how to most effectively allocate financial resources.
- Budget 2025–26 plans for gross O&M spending of \$1.88 billion, addressing significant O&M pressures in health and education, as well as the response to the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold mine.
- Overall, Budget 2025-26 forecasts a surplus of \$82 million, thanks in part to our continued capital investments in strategic infrastructure that will provide lasting benefits for Yukoners.
- Despite increases in expenditure, we continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- The Yukon remains on a strong financial footing. Budget 2025-26 prioritizes strategic investments that support economic growth, protect the environment, and enhance the quality of life for all Yukoners. It fulfills our commitment to making life affordable for Yukoners while investing in the programs and infrastructure the territory needs to thrive.

**Additional response**

- **Affordability for all:** Budget 2025-26 reflects our commitment to keeping life affordable for Yukoners with over \$47.3 million in funding for early learning and child care programs, including the universal child care program; \$3.8 million for the new Winter Electrical Affordability



**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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Rebate; \$4.8 million for the National School Food Program; and increases in Legislated Grants such as Social Assistance, post-secondary grants and the homeowners grant.

- Budget 2025-26 also includes a record-setting \$57.6 million capital investment in the Yukon Housing Corporation for the construction of new affordable housing units, continued tenancy support and programs responding to the housing needs of Yukoners.
- **Territory-wide growth:** The budget reflects investments in infrastructure across the territory, including major projects such as \$75.5 million for runway and infrastructure upgrades at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, over \$50 million for bridge infrastructure, and \$31 million for repairs and upgrades to the North Klondike Highway.
- **Building prosperity through reconciliation:** The Government of Yukon maintains its commitment to reconciliation with First Nations, as demonstrated through a number of partnerships in 2025-26, intended to build economic prosperity. This includes working with Kluane First Nation on the \$15.7 million investment in the Kêts'ádañ Kù School construction in Burwash Landing and partnering with Kwanlin Dun First Nation on the Range Point subdivision with an investment of \$5 million.
- **Safe and healthy families and communities:** Health care continues to be a significant source of financial pressure across Canada. Budget 2025-26 provides an additional \$47 million to address ongoing pressures on Insured Health Services and an additional \$24.5 million in Operations and Maintenance and \$4.2 million in capital to support

**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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the Yukon Hospital Corporation. These funds will support orthopedic surgeries, new acute care beds, breast cancer screening, medical travel, physician fees, pharmacare, and medical treatments both in and out of the territory.

- **Protecting our environment:** Budget 2025-26 will grow our green economy with \$59 million in investments for *Our Clean Future* initiatives such renewable energy infrastructure and building retrofits. We are making further efforts to protect the environment with an additional \$118 million in additional funding to support environmental protection efforts at the Eagle Gold Mine site, and \$21.5 million for reclamation at the Minto Mine.
- **Supporting Yukon businesses and industry:** The Government of Yukon will continue to provide support for Yukon businesses and industry with over \$11 million for diverse and responsive initiatives that provide sustainable economic benefits to Yukon communities. A few examples include the Innovation Strategy, the Economic Development Fund, the Community Destination Development Fund, the Creative and Cultural Industries Strategy, and the development of a Yukon Trade Resilience Program to support Yukon businesses impacted by possible U.S. tariff decisions.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The 2025-26 Main Estimates will be debated during the March 2025 legislative session.

# Session Briefing Note

## Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

### Background:

- Gross O&M expenditures are forecast to increase by \$282.6 million, or 17.7 per cent, from the 2024-25 Main Estimates.
- The O&M recovery forecast has also significantly increased over the 2024-25 Main Estimates, by about \$10.5 million. Net O&M expenditures are forecast to increase by \$272.1 million, or 19.3 per cent, compared to the 2024-25 Main Estimates.
- Gross capital expenditures are forecast to be about \$477.3 million for 2025-26, which is a \$6.7 million decrease from the 2024-25 Main Estimates. Capital recoveries are forecast to decrease by \$10 million.
- The \$75 million contingency is not included in departmental budgets and would still need to be presented to the legislative assembly for approval, but is included in our fiscal plan so that, if required, it will not affect Yukon's forecast fiscal position.
- On a consolidated basis, when all government reporting agencies, such as Yukon University and public corporations are included, the 2025-26 Main Estimates forecast an annual surplus of \$132.7 million and net debt of \$402.2 million.
- There are 5,561.5 FTEs in the 2025-26 budget, which is an increase of 76.6 FTEs from 2024-25. Growth is primarily for long-term care and home care, Emergency Medical Services, and education personnel, including operational positions for Whistle Bend School and teachers and clerical based on enrollment.

### Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

February 25, 2025

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date Approved

## Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

### Recommended response:

- Canada and the United States (U.S.) have one of the strongest and mutually beneficial relationships of any two countries in the world.
- The U.S. is Canada's largest trading partner, and I hope to see more Yukon companies benefiting from that relationship.
- The Premier has been meeting regularly with Premiers and the Prime Minister to inform a united Team Canada approach to U.S. relations.
- Our government is doing its part to ensure the relationship between our countries remains secure and prosperous.
- The Yukon has had a lot of success over the last four years with the U.S. government, including a trade mission, solving border issues, and funding the Alaska Highway.
- Our interests in Arctic security, a healthy environment, critical minerals, robust transportation infrastructure and access to tidewater serve both our jurisdictions as investment and geopolitical focus remain on the North.
- We are working together to advance shared priorities that will improve the prosperity, stability and wellbeing of both jurisdictions.
- We continue to engage regularly with Governor Dunleavy, Alaskan congressional officials, and the U.S. Consul General in Vancouver.

### Response to Tariffs

- On April 2, 2025, the U.S. Administration decided to push forward with unjustified and short-sighted global tariffs.

## Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

- While we are relieved that the “Reciprocal Tariffs” Executive Order does not result in new tariffs for Canada, we remain concerned about the considerable tariffs which remain.
- The tariffs imposed by the U.S. administration challenge the U.S.’s reliability as a trading partner.
- As the U.S. Administration continues to be impulsive in their decisions relating to tariffs on Canadian goods, we will hold steady on our response until all threat of tariffs have been removed.
- U.S. tariffs on Canadian imports are deeply concerning and will harm workers and businesses on both sides of the border.
- These tariffs are unjustified, harmful to economic stability, and run counter to the spirit of free and fair trade that has defined our relationship for decades.
- While we value our relationship with the United States, we will not accept unfair trade practices that threaten Canadian jobs and prosperity.
- The Government of Yukon has developed a path forward to support a strong Team Canada response to see these tariffs lifted and to limit the impact on Yukoners.
- As part of our initial response, our government will:
  - Reduce purchasing products of American origin, such as liquor;
  - Limit U.S. business access to government procurement;
  - Mitigate impacts on Yukon businesses through the development of an assistance program;

## Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

- Support the development of buy local campaigns; and
- Work to break down interprovincial and trade barriers.
- Additionally, in response to U.S. tariffs on automobiles and auto parts, we are reducing our reliance on U.S. companies by:
  - Suspending our EV rebate program for Tesla vehicles.
  - Suspending all Yukon government X accounts; and
  - Cancelling YG Starlink contracts except for those essential for emergency services and business continuity
- We are also working closely with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to push back against U.S. tariffs.
- The only acceptable solution is the removal of all tariffs for Canada and Canadian products and businesses.

### Economic and Trade Impact of Tariffs

- The imposition of U.S. tariffs on key Canadian exports creates uncertainty for Canadian businesses, discouraging investment, slowing growth, and straining cross-border economic relationships.
- We saw the damaging impact of past tariffs in 2018, and we will not hesitate to take strong action to protect Yukon jobs and industries.
- Retaliatory measures are never our first choice, but we will defend our economic interests, as necessary.
- CUSMA was signed to ensure fair and open trade between our countries. The United States should uphold its commitments under this agreement.

### First Ministers' Meetings

### Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

- The Premiers, the Prime Minister and key federal ministers have held regular discussions, both virtually and in person, since U.S. tariffs were first threatened in November 2024.
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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Canada-US relations and threats from the Trump administration have seized all leaders in Canada.
  - First Ministers have met regularly to discuss Canada-U.S. relations, which has been well covered by local and national media.
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#### Background:

##### Canada-US relations

- Summary of U.S. tariffs imposed on Canada to date:

Type	Rate	Date of entry into effect
Fentanyl/Migration tariffs – non-CUSMA compliant goods	10% for potash & energy 25% for all other goods	March 4
Fentanyl/Migration tariffs – CUSMA compliant goods	0%	March 7
Steel and aluminum	25%	March 12
Autos	25% on all autos that do not meet the CUSMA rules of origin  25% on the value of non-U.S. content, for autos that qualify for CUSMA preferential treatment, but only once the Commerce Secretary certifies the determination of U.S. content on a model-by-model basis	April 3

## Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

Auto Parts	0% for auto parts that qualify for CUSMA preferential treatment	To be announced in Federal Register, but May 3 at the latest
Reciprocal Tariffs	10% baseline <b>does not</b> apply to Canada (and Mexico) due to the current Fentanyl/Migration Tariffs	April 5

- On April 3, the U.S. Administration announced they will impose expansive country-specific tariffs ranging from 10 to 49 per cent on global trading partners, but did not levy any additional tariffs against Canada and Mexico. The U.S. stipulated that exemptions will continue for goods from Canada and Mexico that are compliant under the Canada-United States-Mexico (CUSMA) free trade agreement.
- The Prime Minister of Canada announced new countermeasures on April 3 to protect Canadian workers and businesses and defend Canada's economy. These countermeasures include:
  - Twenty-five per cent tariffs on non-[CUSMA](#) compliant fully assembled vehicles imported into Canada from the United States.
  - Twenty-five per cent tariffs on non-Canadian and non-Mexican content of CUSMA compliant fully assembled vehicles imported into Canada from the United States.
  - Canada's intention to develop a framework for auto producers that incentivizes production and investment in Canada.
  - Every dollar raised from these tariffs will go directly to support our auto workers.
- The evolving tariff situation has prompted diplomatic efforts and political discourse. Canadian officials are engaging in negotiations to seek clarity and potential exemptions, while U.S. policymakers deliberate on the broader implications of the proposed tariffs.



## Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

- The Yukon-U.S. two-way merchandise trade in 2023 stood at \$150.1 million, down from \$240.5 million in 2022. Roughly 85 to 95 per cent of this annual trade is with Alaska.

### Yukon government's April 3, 2025 response

- In response to U.S. auto tariffs, YG will: Immediately suspend our EV rebate program for Tesla vehicles, suspend all Yukon government X accounts (formerly known as Twitter) and cancel YG Starlink contracts except for those essential for emergency services and business continuity.

### Yukon government's March 4, 2025 response

- Reduce purchasing of products of American origin: Direct the Yukon Liquor Corporation to stop placing orders of U.S.-made alcohol and to remove U.S.-made products from all Government of Yukon liquor stores. Because we do not want to hurt local businesses, licensees may continue to sell American-made products they already have in stock, but no new orders for U.S.-made alcohol will be placed.
- Limit U.S. business' access to government procurement: Direct the Department of Highways and Public Works to update territorial government procurement policies to encourage the purchase of more goods and services from local businesses and non-U.S. companies and minimize the purchase of U.S. goods and services.
- Mitigate impacts on Yukon businesses: Our government is allocating \$1 million to develop an assistance program, complementary to federal support programs, to help Yukon businesses adapt to the uncertain economic environment created by these tariffs. The goal of this funding is to keep support as flexible as possible, to be tailored to the specific needs of affected businesses. This program is funded through Budget 2025-26 and subject to legislative approval. Contingency funds in Budget 2025-26, also subject to legislative approval, will also be available to support Yukon businesses.

### Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

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Executive Council Office

- Support "Buy Yukon" campaigns: Support the development of buy local campaigns organized by local chambers of commerce.
- Break down interprovincial and international trade barriers: Through the Department of Economic Development, work with Yukon chambers of commerce and provincial and territorial partners to reduce barriers to internal trade and promote access to non-U.S. markets.

**Approved by:**

Justin Ferbey

2024 04 07

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Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

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Date Approved