



FOR RELEASE
September 10, 2015

Ross River students return to school

ROSS RIVER—Minister of Education Doug Graham and Pelly-Nisutlin MLA Stacey Hassard hosted a community barbecue in Ross River today to welcome students back to class at Ross River School.

"We are very pleased students are back in school for the start of the new school year," Graham said. "I would like to thank all of the teachers and staff who worked together to help minimize the disruption to students."

The school was closed in January because of concerns with the facility's structural integrity. Students and staff continued classes in various locations throughout the community for the remainder of the school year.

Ketza Pacific performed repairs on the school including fixing the building's structural foundation, re-leveling the building and restoring interior finishes. This work was completed in August. The school has been inspected by professional engineers and is deemed safe for use by students and staff. The Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW), in collaboration with the Department of Education, will continue to monitor the school on an ongoing basis. HPW will be completing a study on the thermosyphon system at the school, which is designed to draw heat away from the building's foundation and surrounding soil to continue to address issues related to permafrost.

"The emergency closure of the school has been stressful for students, their families and the entire community," Graham added. "I thank everyone in the community for their patience and understanding during this time. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Yukon College, the Hope Centre, Chief Ladue and the Ross River Dena Council, and Principal Fran Etzel for their leadership in working with the department to make alternative plans for students and staff."

-30-

Contact:
Dan Macdonald
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
dan.macdonald@gov.yk.ca

Ronuk Modha
Communications, Education
867-332-5082
ronuk.modha@gov.yk.ca

News Release #15-269

