



FOR RELEASE
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Education minister sets options for the 2013/14 school calendar

WHITEHORSE—The government is proposing that Yukon move from 15 individual academic calendars to two common start dates, and that each student attends school for a minimum of 180 days per year, Education Minister Scott Kent announced today.

"In our consultation efforts on school calendars we heard a variety of views that covered a range of topics from cultural considerations, to lifestyle, to student achievement concerns," Kent said. "When reviewing consultation results, what was weighted most heavily was student achievement and academic opportunities.

"Better coordination of the Yukon school calendar will improve distance learning options and will ultimately lead to better experiences and results for students," Kent added.

The move to two common start dates aims to close the disparity that exists between rural and Whitehorse secondary schools related to the number of electives available to students. Currently, most Whitehorse schools can choose from approximately 40 electives and 10 or more trades courses. Most rural schools have less than 10 elective courses and significantly fewer trades courses on offer.

Moving forward, Whitehorse elementary and Whitehorse secondary schools will continue to have common school calendars. The elementary calendar will begin August 21 and end June 10; the secondary calendar will begin September 4 and end June 23. In 2014 the spring break in Whitehorse will be two weeks.

Rural school councils will have the choice to begin classes on either August 21 or September 4 and could end their school year as early as May 30 depending on the duration of their spring break and the timing of professional development days. New calendar options are designed to offer parents and their school council representatives the flexibility they need to balance local considerations with academic performance goals.

Rural councils have until March 22 to determine their calendar details.

"With an 80 per cent graduation rate in Whitehorse and 61 per cent in communities, it is clear that the status quo is not working," Kent said. "Continued investments in technology and teachers, combined with schedules that make it easier for students to access academic opportunities, we can bring Yukon achievement levels to where they need to be."

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[Download list of optional \(elective\) courses currently offered \(PDF\)](#)

[Download list of trades-related courses currently offered \(PDF\)](#)

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