



FOR RELEASE
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Yukon First Nations social studies units to be required in schools

WHITEHORSE—Yukon First Nations social studies materials will become part of the required curriculum for all Grade 5 classes beginning in the 2013/14 school year.

"Incorporating Yukon-based materials into curriculum is essential to ensuring that all students learn about local First Nations' history, language and cultural traditions," Education Minister Scott Kent said. "These locally developed materials meet British Columbia Grade 5 social studies curriculum requirements and will allow teachers to use Yukon-based resources to meet prescribed learning outcomes."

The units and supporting resources, which include student booklets and instructors' guides, teach about Yukon First Nations in a pre-contact setting, specifically focusing on languages, clans, citizenship and traditional governance.

Before implementing the units in the upcoming school year, Yukon Education will offer Grade 5 teachers professional development training this August. The department's curriculum consultants and First Nations Programs and Partnerships staff will be available to support teachers in delivering these resources throughout the year.

The Yukon First Nations 5 units have been available in schools since August 2008. Until now, teachers had the option of incorporating and delivering this locally-based curriculum in place of the preexisting British Columbia social studies curriculum. Now all schools will incorporate the Yukon-based materials.

"Making these units a required part of the curriculum will ensure all students gain an awareness of the importance of First Nations in Yukon," Kent added. "Studying local history and culture is an essential step in teaching students to become thoughtful and engaged members of our community."

Yukon's Education Act supports the incorporation of up to 20 per cent locally developed courses and also includes a section that states every school shall include activities relevant to the culture, heritage, traditions and practices of Yukon First Nations in its programming.

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Contact:

Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

Paige Parsons
Communications, Education
867-456-6789
paige.parsons@gov.yk.ca

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