



Department of Education

Annual Report 2019





Notes

This report fulfills the requirement of ss. 5 (h) of the Education Act, which requires the Minister of Education to table an annual report on the state of education in Yukon.

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

This report highlights the activities of 2019 and reflects information current as of December 31, 2019. It does not reflect the impacts that may have occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the response and recovery across Yukon's education system.

More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report for the Department of Education. The Government of Yukon is committed to ensuring Yukoners lead healthy, productive lives and support vibrant, sustainable communities throughout the territory. Public education is an essential part of building a prosperous Yukon and supporting the wellbeing of Yukon people, their families and their communities.

The needs of our education system are changing, as today's world rapidly transforms our everyday lives. The school of tomorrow cannot be focused on meeting yesterday's demands. The Government of Yukon continues to modernize learning in Yukon, working with Yukon First Nations and partners to ensure students have the skills and supports they need to succeed in their lives and careers beyond school.

We have now introduced Yukon's new curriculum in all grades, so that students are learning about their communities and people where they live and developing skills to be lifelong learners and to meet their lifelong educational, personal and career goals. We are working with Yukon First Nations to improve First Nation student outcomes, and to provide opportunities for all students to learn about Yukon First Nations languages, histories, cultures and ways of knowing, doing and being.

We are responding to recommendations made earlier this year by the Auditor General of Canada, in areas where we need to improve in our education system. We accepted all of the audit's recommendations, and are using them to guide our work in ensuring our education system at all levels provides positive outcomes for students and advances Yukon's social, economic and community goals.

Our goal is for the success of learners, from early years to post-secondary and their careers, to be central to all discussions and decisions. We embrace the diversity of Yukon's education system and with Yukon First Nations and education partners we will act to ensure an inclusive education experience for all Yukon learners.

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

Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education



Message from the Deputy Minister

This year, the Auditor General of Canada published its audit of K–12 education in Yukon. This audit highlights some of the areas we need to focus on to improve the education system for all Yukoners, especially rural and First Nations students and students with special education needs.

The audit highlighted how important it is for all department staff, both in schools and in the central administration building, to check to see if we are taking the right actions so that all students can achieve their academic and personal goals with dignity and purpose. It emphasized that, at all levels, we need a deeper understanding and analysis of what is happening for all Yukon learners to inform the actions we take and the supports we provide to help students succeed. The findings and the recommendations from this audit are about the department's core work of educating Yukon learners. This means getting genuinely curious about our learners and our effectiveness in supporting their learning needs. It means reflecting on our actions and using evidence so that we can be confident that we are doing the right work and are coordinating our efforts to be more effective.

I appreciate the work of our staff, both in schools and in the central administration building, for their cooperation with the auditors, and for their ongoing commitment to support the success of Yukon students.

In the coming years, we will continue to build on our strengths and listen to the multiple perspectives of our partners to fully understand the actions we must take together with Yukon First Nations; Yukon Teachers' Association; school councils; Council of Yukon First Nations; First Nations Education Commission; Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon; Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees; Catholic Education Association of Yukon; and of course our staff and school communities. We know we have work to do to ensure Yukon's education system is inclusive and accountable. Together with our partners and dedicated staff, we will create a path forward to ensure the success of all Yukon's learners.

Nicole Morgan, Deputy Minister of Education

Audit 2019

On June 18, 2019, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada published its audit report *Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon*, available at https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/yuk_201906_e_43400.html.

This audit took place over 2018, with the auditors visiting school sites and meeting with staff in spring 2018. The auditors also met with Yukon First Nations and education partners, and sent a survey to Yukon educators. This recent audit was not a direct follow up on the 2009 audit of the department, but it did highlight some similar themes.

The 2019 audit highlights the work the Department of Education needs to do to improve the services we deliver to Kindergarten through to Grade 12 students. The auditor provided clear direction on the areas of our education system that are most in need of improvement.

This audit made seven important recommendations, which the department has accepted and will be focusing on with staff, both in the central administration building and in schools, in order to effectively fulfill our responsibilities for K–12 education and in order to improve student outcomes, especially for Yukon First Nations students, rural students, and students with special educational needs.

The audit's recommendations focused on the following themes:

- » Yukon First Nations culture and language education, and collaboration with Yukon First Nations on educational issues;
- » Supporting student learning needs through inclusive and special education;
- » Supporting staff learning needs through professional development, training and resources; and
- » Focusing on student outcomes and system quality assurance, and all department and school staff taking ownership of our roles and responsibilities in Yukon's education system.

On December 11, 2019, the Deputy Minister of Education and other department representatives joined officials from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada as witnesses before the Standing Committee on Public Accounts at a public hearing regarding the audit. We discussed how the department's central administration and school staff, are responding to the audit recommendations to improve K–12 education in Yukon.

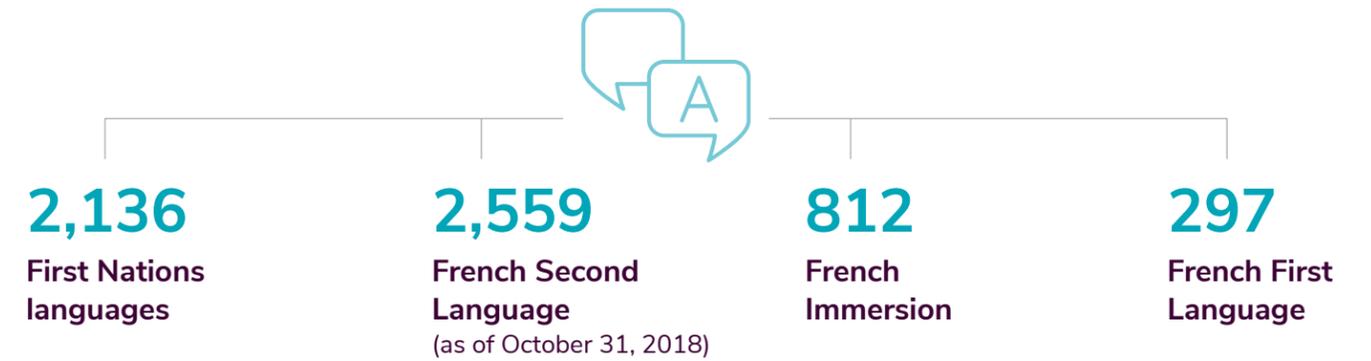
You can view the audit report, the transcript from the audit hearings, and about how the department is responding to the audit's recommendations on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts webpage: yukonassembly.ca/news/public-accounts-committee-hearings-held-december-11-2019.

The Government of Yukon's Department of Education is committed to delivering effective, efficient and accountable educational programs and services to Yukoners. Going forward, the findings and the recommendations from this audit will be used to improve the core work we will do to educate Yukon students.

It is our priority to work in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and partners to effectively address the audit recommendations and ensure Yukon students have access to quality educational programming and the supports they need to succeed at school.

At a glance

Unless noted otherwise, all data is valid as of May 31, 2019.



¹ includes Aurora Virtual School and the Individual Learning Centre.

² includes Aboriginal Language Teachers, Aboriginal language speakers, and trainees in the 2018-19 school year.

³ includes all direct operation and maintenance costs for Yukon schools, including salaries for school-based staff, materials, supplies, equipment, security, grounds keeping and utilities.

Student outcomes

Many factors contribute to a student's success at school, including skilled instruction, engaging learning, regular attendance, and support networks for students in and outside of school. We gather and report on student performance data, including for rural and First Nations students.

The 2019 audit highlighted that we need to do more to understand and address the long-standing gaps in student outcomes. While the department has collected a fair amount of student performance data since the 2009 audit, we need more analysis of this data.

The department wishes to have a deeper understanding of what is happening for Yukon learners in order to make informed decisions in addressing student success gaps. To this end, we have established a new Performance and Analytics Unit to more effectively analyze the student performance data we have, modernize our systems and processes for student data management, and collaborate with Yukon First Nations on data.

We are committed to collaborating with Yukon First Nations and our education partners to help us develop a deeper understanding at all levels of what is happening for our learners. A better understanding of what is happening with Yukon students will inform the actions we take and supports we provide to help students succeed.

Strategy to improve student outcomes

The auditor's recommendations included that the department should develop and implement a strategy to address student performance gaps and improve student performance, particularly Yukon First Nations students, rural students and students with different learning needs. We are working to develop this strategy, in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and our partners in education.

We have begun discussions with Yukon First Nations and the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education about a framework of student outcomes and performance indicators, to develop and implement a strategy to look at system data, focus on root causes affecting student performance, set targets with specific actions to support improvement, and evaluate their effectiveness. The department expects to have an initial strategy in place by August 2020.

Performance targets

The audit's recommendation to develop a strategy to address long-standing student performance gaps included that the department should define performance targets. Establishing and reporting on student performance targets is important for us in evaluating where Yukon learners are and communicating how we are doing in improving student outcomes.

During the 2018–19 school year, the department worked with the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education and published initial performance targets for literacy and numeracy for the Grades 4 and 7 Yukon Foundation Skills Assessment, as well as for high school graduation. During the 2019–20 school year, we continue to work with this committee and Yukon First Nations to further refine these indicators and targets including the graduation assessments for literacy and numeracy, which will be part of our strategy to improve student outcomes.

Key learning points for students include the transition into Kindergarten, the development of literacy and numeracy skills at the end of the primary years in Grade 4, and the transition into secondary school



at Grade 8. Successful student transitions at these critical times increases the later likelihood of graduating high school. We are focusing our attention on these key check points to have a greater impact in supporting student success and improved student outcomes with a focus on Kindergarten, Grade 4 and Grade 7 assessments, which show us where students may need different supports in areas like literacy and numeracy.

The Department of Education has sharpened its focus on learners who need additional supports to succeed, so our data and targets centre on students who are 'Emerging or Unknown' for their grade level learning outcomes. This focuses our attention on those students who are in most need of support.

Root causes affecting student outcomes

The audit's recommendation included that the department should analyze the root causes affecting student performance and outcomes.

The 2009 and the 2019 audits found that we need to do more to understand the root causes of the long-standing differences in student outcomes. Although we took action to address historical differences in student outcomes, we did not do enough to understand the root causes for these differences and to assess the data to understand if actions taken were in fact improving student outcomes.

To improve student outcomes, we need a deeper understanding of what is happening for Yukon learners to make better evidence-based decisions and address root causes and student learning needs. We are working at the system and school level to do this analysis more effectively. With our Performance and Analytics Unit, modernized systems and processes for student data management, and collaboration with Yukon First Nations the department has been able to provide enhanced student data reports which feature information such as cohort group tracking and year-over-year data trends.

Locally, the department has begun and will continue to invest in professional learning and inquiry-based training to implement a school-based approach of disciplined inquiry to identify root causes by focusing in on what is going on for learners at the classroom level, scanning to gather evidence and perspectives, developing a hunch and taking action and checking to see if actions taken have made a big enough difference.

This year, the department has taken action to provide Yukon student performance data in more detail both collectively and at the individual school level to help inform potential actions that would support improved student outcomes and the evaluation of their effectiveness.



Modernizing learning in Yukon

Early learning

High quality early learning opportunities support long-term and improved outcomes and is key for later success in school and life.

Recognizing the importance of the early years, the Government of Yukon is developing a strategic framework for early childhood development, and is working toward enhancing Early Kindergarten programming for age 4 children in all rural schools by the 2021–22 school year.

Early Kindergarten is an optional program that provides literacy rich, play-based learning opportunities to support the transition to Kindergarten and school routines. They provide children a learning environment where they can develop readiness skills together and prepare for school routines. They learn basic knowledge and skills they need to be ready to learn at school, with structured hands-on and movement-based activities that help children to develop skills like:

- » Creative and critical thinking;
- » Listening, speaking and communication; and
- » Personal and social awareness.

There are 13 schools with elementary programming in Yukon’s rural communities. As of the end of 2019, 11 of these schools had part-time Early Kindergarten programs available. Early Kindergarten programs are not currently available at Johnson Elementary School in Watson Lake or Robert Service School in Dawson City.

We are working with rural school communities and partners to determine the specific needs of each school community, and ensure consistent and structured programming and supports are in place. We are working toward offering enhanced Early Kindergarten programming for age 4 children in all rural schools by the 2021–22 school year.

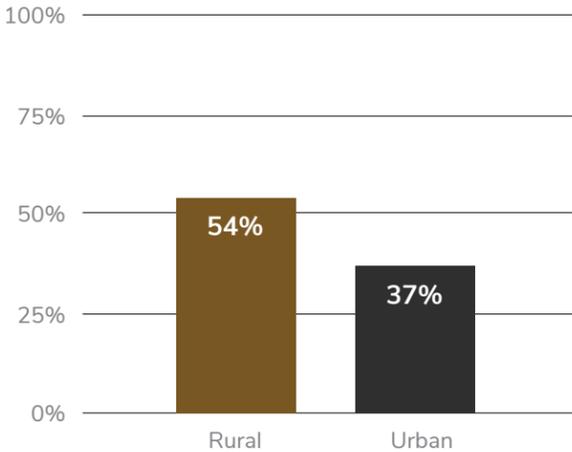
Boehm Test of Basic Concepts

The Boehm Test of Basic Concepts is a Kindergarten Assessment that assesses students on 50 basic concepts.

In Fall 2018, 54% of rural students and 48% of Yukon First Nations students were assessed as needing classroom interventions. 37% of Whitehorse students and 39% of non-First Nations students were assessed as needing classroom intervention. Classroom intervention refers to when teachers adjust their approach for a child’s learning with specific supports to help them improve in key areas of learning.

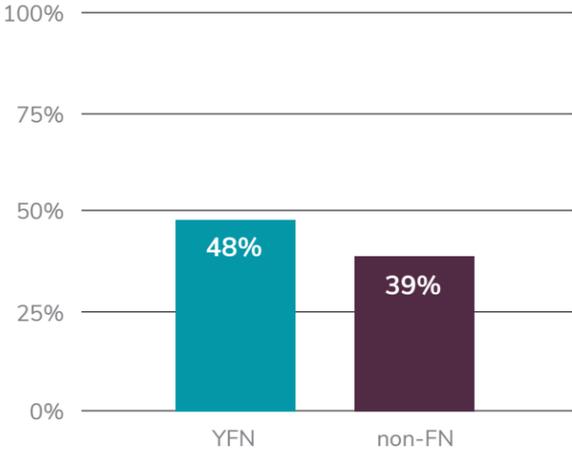
Boehm results for rural and urban students in 2018–19

Percentage of students identified as needing classroom intervention.



Boehm results for Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students in 2018–19

Percentage of students identified as needing classroom intervention.



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018–19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

Early Years Evaluation

The Early Years Evaluation is a Kindergarten assessment that measures a student's development in:

- » Awareness of self and environment
- » Social skills and approaches to learning
- » Cognitive skills
- » Language and communication
- » Physical development, including fine motor skills and overall body movement

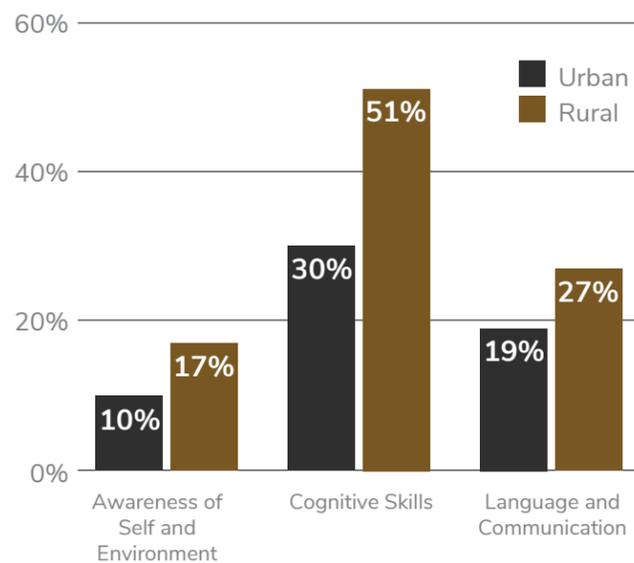
The results for Yukon's Early Years Evaluation survey are shown below.

It shows how many students were experiencing some difficulty or significant difficulty in each area, and how many students who did not complete enough tasks in the developmental area.

Yukon's Early Years Evaluation indicates that language, cognitive and social skills are common areas where young children need support, including rural and Yukon First Nations students.

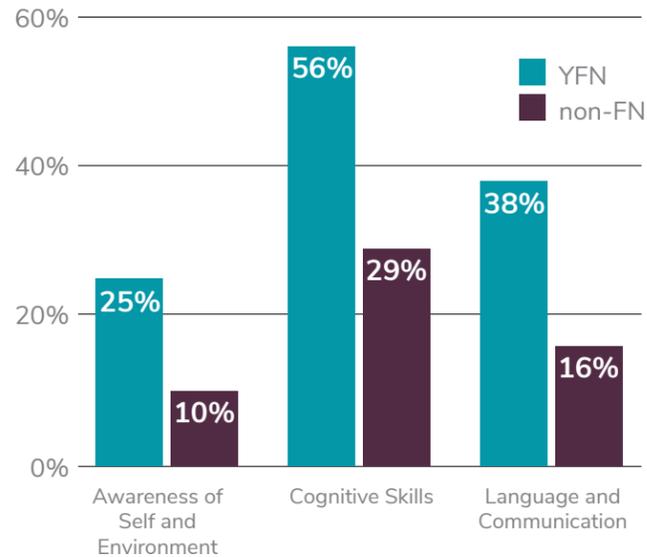
Early Years Evaluation results for urban and rural students in 2018–19

Percentage of students who were identified as experiencing some or significant difficulties.



Early Years Evaluation results for Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students in 2018–19

Percentage of students who were identified as experiencing some or significant difficulties.



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018–19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

Curriculum implementation

In the 2018–19 school year, the Department of Education continued to implement Yukon's new curriculum as part of the modernization of public education in Yukon. Yukon's curriculum is based on BC's redesigned curriculum and graduation program, focused on developing skills and adapted to include Yukon's context and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being. Through this new curriculum, Yukon students are learning more about where they live, with more trades, hands-on learning, and finance and career education.

Implementation started in the 2017–18 school year, when the department introduced curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9. In 2018–19, it was introduced for Grade 10, and for Grades 11 and 12 in 2019–20. As of this year, all grades are now learning using the new curriculum.

Personalized, flexible learning

Yukon's new curriculum gives teachers more flexibility to personalize learning with their students.

Personalized learning acknowledges that students learn at different paces and in different ways. Students have different strengths, needs, skills, interests and goals.

It includes using flexible and place-based learning environments. Different learning environments encourage student engagement and leverage student's strengths and learning styles toward the expected learning standards in the curriculum.

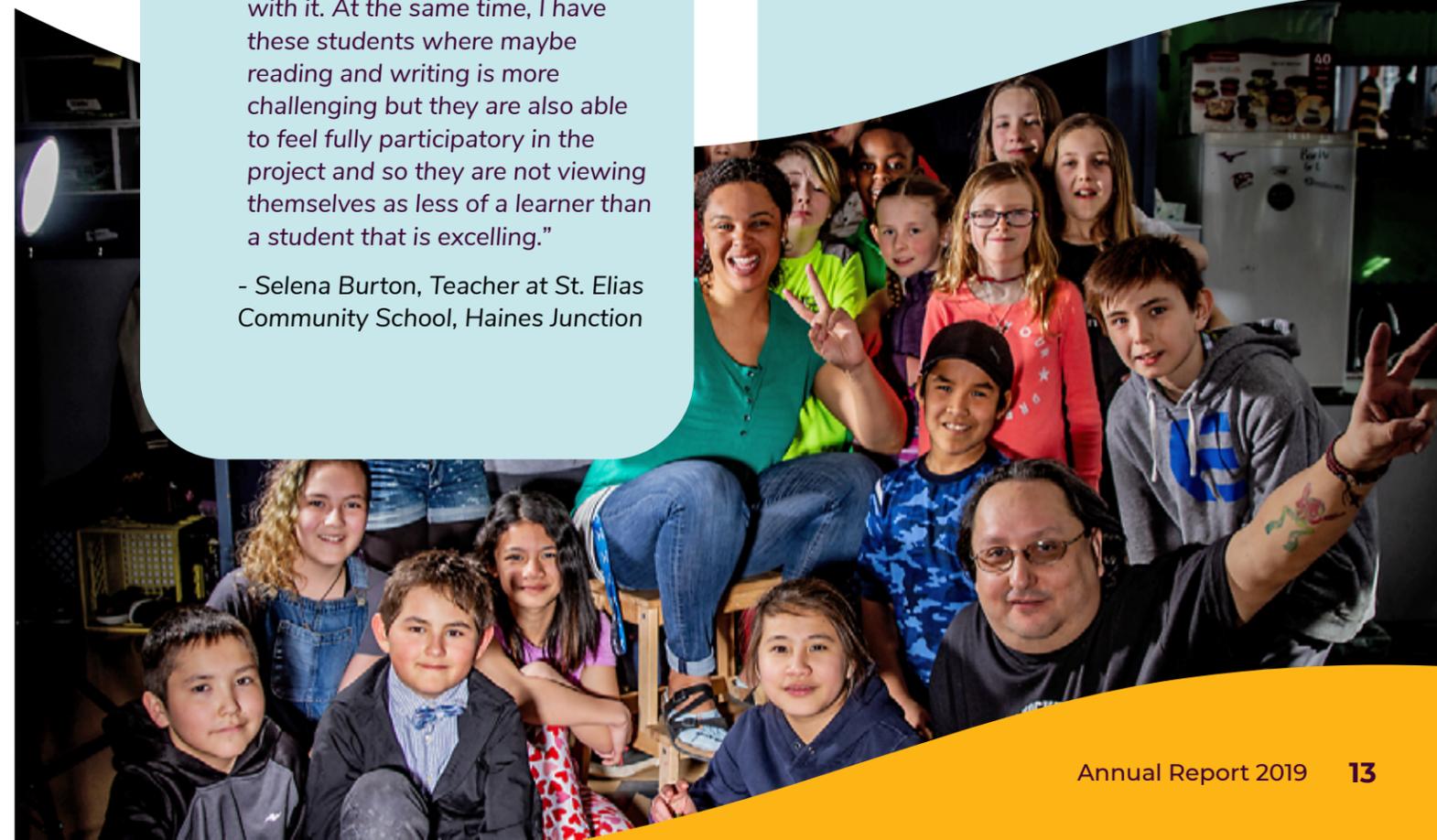
Learn more from this video on personalized, flexible learning: yukon.ca/en/school-curriculum.

"It's great because during a personalized learning opportunity [students] can totally run and fly with it. At the same time, I have these students where maybe reading and writing is more challenging but they are also able to feel fully participatory in the project and so they are not viewing themselves as less of a learner than a student that is excelling."

- Selena Burton, Teacher at St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction

Faces of Takhini Elementary: the power of self-portraits

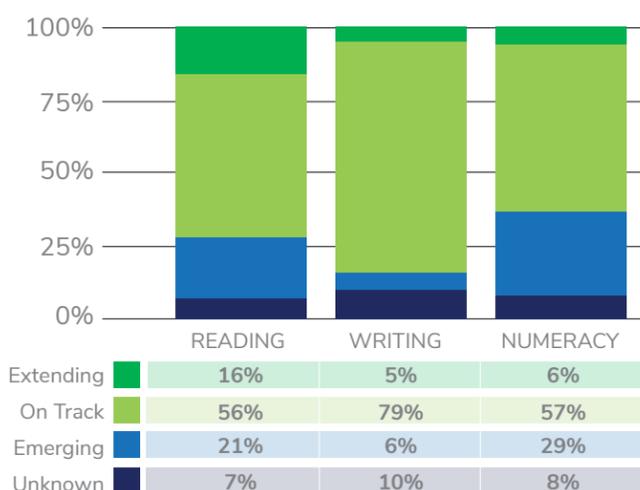
Longtime Takhini Elementary educator, Amanda Bartle, did a great job demonstrating the new curriculum area of Applied Design, Skills and Technologies (ADST) with her Grades 5 and 6 students in 2018–19. Her students created a public display of posters about themselves, called Project You! The class's posters are a great example of Yukon students' work and current best practices.



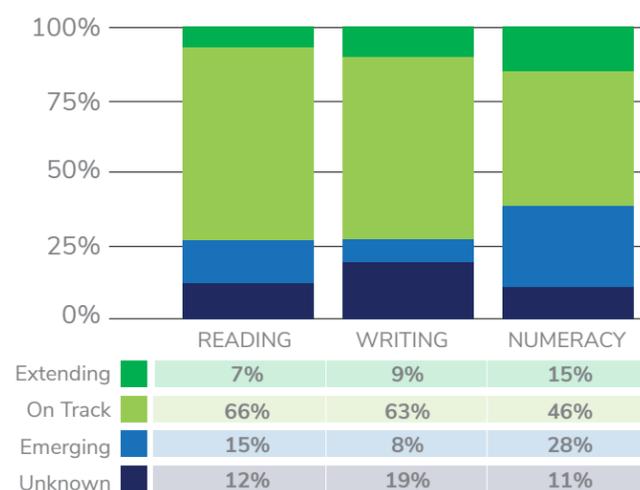
Assessment for learning

Like many schools in Canada and globally, Yukon educators are increasingly using an approach known as ‘assessment for learning’. Assessment for learning includes involving students in assessment to help them understand their learning, and measures student achievement at defined points in the school year and provides evidence of student progress toward learning goals. In class, this means teachers work with students to identify the learning goals for a project, define what success looks like, and include the students in the assessment process, from assessing their own work to assessing their peers’ work.

Yukon-wide 2018–19 Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments results



Yukon-wide 2018–19 Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessments results



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018–19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments

An example of how teachers are shifting to ongoing assessment during the school year is how they use the Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments for Grades 4 and 7 students. In the past, these assessments were written later in the school year. They are now written in the fall, so that teachers can use the information about students’ skills in reading, writing and numeracy to support improvement that school year.

The Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments assess students in reading, writing and numeracy skills at key points during their education and show if they are:

- » **Extending** – Student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.
- » **On track** – Student demonstrates a partial to complete understanding.
- » **Emerging** – Student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.
- » **Unknown** – Students did not participate or were exempt.

We started shifting to using assessment for learning in 2011, with ongoing professional learning opportunities for Yukon educators. This approach is also part of Yukon’s new curriculum. In 2017–18, the updated guidelines for student assessment were introduced to be used in Yukon schools as part of the curriculum implementation.

These guidelines, and the *Communicating Student Learning* professional learning resource, were developed based on recommendations from the Yukon Education Assessment Committee, a group of 40 Yukon educators, including representation from Yukon First Nations and school councils. The guidelines provided options for school staff to gradually shift to the new assessment and reporting requirements in 2017–18, 2018–19 and 2019–20. As of 2019–20, these guidelines are now required for all schools.

The assessment and reporting guidelines required teachers to provide three to four formal report cards and two informal reports, including at least one in-person meeting with parents. The new guidelines require one final report card and five informal reports, including a written progress report at the mid-point of the course and one in-person meeting with parents.

Other important changes included:

- » Shifting to ongoing communications with parents and students about learning progress;
- » Assessing and reporting based on student’s most recent and consistent work;
- » Providing examples of student work to show learning progress;
- » Student self-assessments of the core competencies of communication, thinking and personal-social responsibility, to be included on written progress reports and final report cards;
- » Reporting on student progress toward the new curriculum’s learning standards, using the four-point proficiency grading system;

- » Reporting on student behavior separate from reporting on their learning progress;
- » For K–9, provide an overall proficiency level on the final report card; and
- » For Grades 10–12, provide a final percentage score and/or letter grade on the final report card.

To support educators in implementing the new assessment guidelines, we produced the *Communicating Student Learning* Apple Book resource and accompanying online portal for teachers. The *Communicating Student Learning* resource is a guide about assessment and reporting for Yukon educators, with strategies and resources, samples and templates to support teachers to effectively communicate student learning to parents and students. We made the *Communicating Student Learning* resource available for the 2017–18 school year.

The assessment guidelines were updated in August 2019 for the 2019–20 school year based on feedback from educators and parents over 2017–18 and 2018–19. The updates included;

- » Adding specific requirements for the interim written reports, called written progress reports, so that expectations are clear that these reports must be provided at the half-way point of the semester or school year and must include;
 - A proficiency level for learning standards in each subject area;
 - Whether a student is demonstrating Behaviours for Success and how often;
 - Personalized comments that identify a student’s strengths, with specific examples, areas for improvement, and ways to support student learning at home;
 - A student self-assessment of the new curriculum’s core competencies; and
 - For Grade 12 students, a percentage score to ensure students can apply for early admission to post-secondary schools.

- » Continuing to work with senior high school educators and administrators to clarify how the four-point, proficiency grading system should be reported as a final percentage score and/or letter grade on the final report cards for high school students. This has included work with Ken O'Connor, an expert in the field of assessing and reporting on student learning.
- » Updating the *Communicating Student Learning Apple Book* to include more resources and samples to prepare written progress reports, final report cards and self-assessments of the core competencies.

To gather parent feedback, we surveyed parents at schools that started following the new assessment and reporting guidelines during the 2017–18 school

year. We wanted to ensure parents had one full school year with the new ways of assessing and reporting on student learning before providing their feedback. The goal of collecting feedback is to ensure educators are providing timely and valuable information to parents and students, and the feedback is shared with school staff to support them in developing their assessment and reporting plans for the next school year. We are also using feedback to learn where we can provide further support to the schools.

Parents at schools that started following the new assessment and reporting guidelines in 2018–19 will be surveyed during the 2019–20 school year. Parents at schools that started in 2019–20 will be surveyed during the 2020–21 school year. You can learn about what we heard at engageyukon.ca/en/2020/student-assessment-survey.

Student self-assessment

One of the main ways we are changing the way we assess student learning is by including students in the process through student self-assessment.

Student self-assessment is when students look at their work to check and see where they need to focus their efforts and make improvements. It often involves setting goals at the beginning of the school year and checking in with their teacher to make sure they are meeting their goals.

Student self-assessment is an important skill for students to learn at a young age. It helps students identify what their strengths are and where they need to make improvements. Self-assessment is a valuable skill that will support students in overcoming and adapting to challenges as they move into older grades, post-secondary education and their careers.

Students do self-assessment in a number of ways, like written self-assessments of the new curriculum's core competencies for their report cards and working with their teachers to show parents their school work at student-led conferences.

Watch our video about student self-assessment at: yukon.ca/en/report-card-assessments.

"I think it's good for them to have the strength to reflect and understand their own work and their skills and traits they need to work on"

- Andrea Lefebvre, parent at Christ the King Elementary School

Graduation years

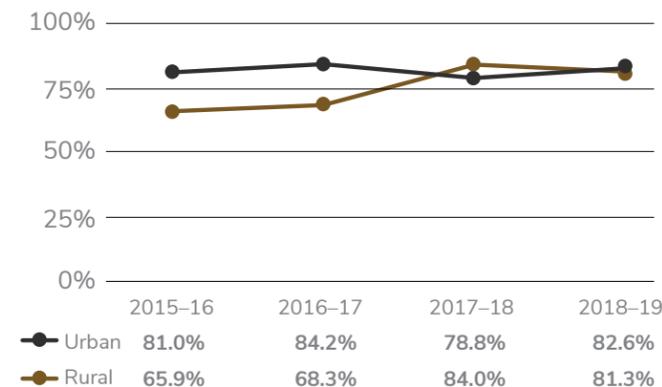
Yukon's curriculum is based on BC's curriculum, including the BC graduation program (Dogwood Diploma). Yukon high schools started transitioning from the 2004 Graduation Program to the 2018 Graduation Program during the 2017–18 school year.

In the new 2018 Graduation Program, there are no changes to the number of credits or courses that students are required to take. Students continue to take in-class exams and tests in the different subject areas.

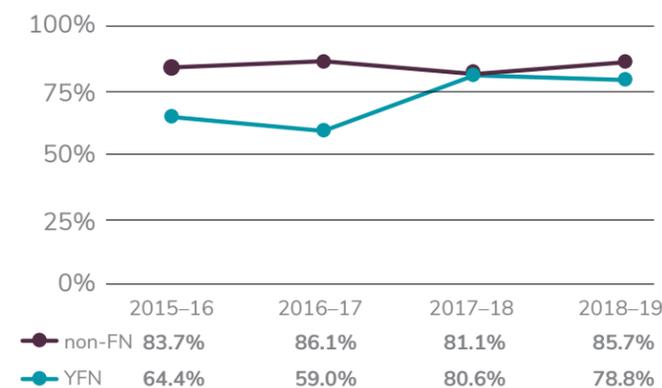
The main change in the 2018 Graduation Program is the introduction of new system-wide assessments in literacy and numeracy.

Graduation rates for urban and rural students from 2015–16 to 2018–19

Grade 12 Dogwood graduation rate over time (does not include Adult graduation rate)



Graduation rates for non-First Nations and Yukon First Nations students from 2015–16 to 2018–19



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018–19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

Graduation rates in Yukon

Grade 12 graduation rates indicate the percentage of active Grade 12 full- and half-time students who successfully graduated and achieved a Dogwood Diploma. It does not include Adult Dogwood Graduates or students on the School Completion Program (Evergreen Certificate). A Dogwood Diploma is the graduation certificate the BC Ministry of Education awards to students who successfully complete a minimum of 80 credits while meeting the provincial graduation requirements, including Yukon students.

Grade 12 graduation rates indicate that non-First Nations students are graduating at a higher rate than Yukon First Nations students, and suggest that graduation rates for Yukon First Nations and rural students are rising from previous years. Further exploration is required into what factors and supports may be contributing to that change, as we continue to modernize and enhance school programming through the new curriculum with more student-centered and relevant learning.

The 2019 audit report highlights needed improvements for supporting Yukon First Nations and rural students. Yukon First Nations are best placed to understand the needs of Yukon First Nations students, so we work together on a government-to-government level with all Yukon First Nations governments and collectively with the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Native Language Centre, the Chiefs Committee on Education, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the First Nations Education Commission.

High school numeracy and literacy assessments

As part of the new 2018 Graduation Program, students write new numeracy and literacy assessments in Grades 10–12. These assessments cover the knowledge and skills students learn across different subjects and grades. Students are required to complete these assessments and their results appear on their student transcripts. They appear as a separate score from their Grade 10–12 course marks. Universities, colleges and training institutions look at student transcripts, among other information, to consider requirements for their programs.

Students have the opportunity to take these assessments up to three times in Grades 10–12 to help identify areas where they need to improve their learning and increase their focus. Samples and more information about the Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment and the Grade 10 Literacy Assessment are available on the BC Ministry of Education website at: curriculum.gov.bc.ca under the “Assessment” tab.

Implementation schedule

As of the BC Ministry of Education’s August 21, 2020 update, the implementation schedule for the Graduation Numeracy and Literacy Assessment is as follows:

- » The new Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment was introduced in Yukon during the 2017–18 school year.
- » The Grade 10 Literacy Assessment was introduced during the 2019–20 school year.
- » The Grade 12 Literacy Assessment will be introduced in the 2021–22 school year.

Technology and learning

We continue to implement new technology to modernize learning and learning approaches in Yukon schools.

Technology empowers teachers and students to:

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

Devices and infrastructure

Our Information Technology and Support Services (ITSS) team provides support to schools through upgrading, securing and optimizing network infrastructure, increasing bandwidth in schools and increasing access to mobile devices.

During the 2018–19 school year, ITSS completed the first year of a three-year “enhanced mobile technology upgrade”. This was the largest lifecycle replacement of school computing devices in a single year, where ITSS upgraded 10 schools (approximately 2,600 students). This project is shifting schools to more mobile technology for more flexible access to digital learning tools and resources inside and outside of the classroom.

During the 2018–19 school year, ITSS also completed several capital projects to modernize learning technology in schools, including:

- » An identity and access management solution for safely and securely managing student and staff user accounts across multiple systems and services.
- » The Microsoft Office 365 productivity suite to provide modern, collaborative learning tools to educators.
- » Wi-Fi capacity upgrades in schools to support the introduction of more mobile technology and ensure students and staff have reliable connectivity in school.
- » Improvements to internet infrastructure at several schools, including the creation of a Porter Creek Secondary School campus link, increasing the internet speeds at Holy Family Elementary School and Jack Hulland Elementary School by 100% and enhancing internet connectivity on the Riverdale campus, and increasing internet speeds at St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction by 30%.

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

Some of the professional learning opportunities on technology offered this school year included:

- » Get started with Coding through TakingITGlobal and the Government of Canada in both English and French in Whitehorse, Carmacks and Watson Lake.
- » Apple Academy at F.H. Collins Secondary School, and the Apple Teacher Conference.
- » Having artists work with students on GarageBand with Diyet Van Lieshout, and Vernan Asp on traditional and contemporary northwest coast native art adaptations.
- » Participating in the Pan-Canadian K–12 Computer Science Learning Framework forum in Halifax.
- » Using laser cutting machines to create school signs and puzzles to learn about body parts in Southern Tutchone.



Yukon Robotics Challenge offers a glimpse into our future

On April 30, 2019, teams from elementary schools across Yukon gathered at Porter Creek Secondary School for the annual Robotics Challenge. Leading up to this event, Grades 4–6 students learned how to assemble and program various types of robots. Project teams then presented to judges.

Modernized labour market programs

As we continue to modernize Yukon's K–12 education system, we are also modernizing programs and services for adult learners and Yukon's labour market.

In 2018–19, we consolidated more than 20 streams of funding into three labour market funding programs:

- » **Working UP** – for individuals, to help them connect with the workforce;
- » **Staffing UP** – for employers, to recruit, hire or train new or existing staff and build HR capacity; and
- » **Building UP** – for organizations, to provide labour market services to individuals or employers.

These three funding programs provide more funding and flexibility to serve Yukon job seekers and employers designed to meet the needs of people where they are, versus expecting them to fit into a standard funding profile.

Yukon continues to experience low unemployment rates, however, the Yukon Employment Annual Review 2018 indicates as many as 8,100 Yukoners aged 15 and older were not working in 2018, and Yukon employers report difficulty finding qualified workers¹. This points to a skills shortage rather than a labour shortage.

The top reason for a person to struggle with employment in Yukon is a lack of foundational skills, including workplace essential and life skills, and relevant vocational skills. Job seekers also report that they experience systemic or cultural biases based on age, ethnicity, perceived capability and suitability to types of work offered. Youth and Yukon First Nations peoples are four times more likely to be unemployed².

Yukon's modernized labour market funding programs target those 16 years of age and older who are out

of the public school system and who need support in finding, getting and keeping a job. Through these funding programs, service providers are able to deliver training, employment counselling, professional assessments and case management. We also fund services and supports to employers to help them recruit and retain qualified workers to grow their businesses.

These funding programs are primarily funded from two new Labour Market Transfer Agreements signed with the Government of Canada in March 2018. These agreements provide \$7.6 million per year to support labour market programs in Canada.

To learn more about these new labour market funding programs:

- » **Working UP**, visit yukon.ca/working-up;
- » **Staffing UP**, visit yukon.ca/staffing-up; or
- » **Building Up**, visit yukon.ca/building-up.

Apprenticeship training programs

The Government of Yukon oversees the apprenticeship program through the *Apprenticeship Training Act* and the *Apprenticeship Training and Tradesmen's Qualifications Regulation*. There are 48 designated trades in Yukon under the Act, and 36 of these trades are eligible for the Interprovincial Red Seal endorsement.

We provide registration, monitoring, arrangement and coordination of Yukon apprentices' in-school technical training through our Training Programs Unit. This unit works closely with high school trades programs, the Post-Secondary and Labour Market Unit, Yukon University and industry to ensure that Yukon apprentices are able to access employment, training and funding support for their apprenticeship programs.

The Training Programs Unit certifies apprentices who have received on-the-job experience and in-school technical training. Approximately 80% of the training takes place on the job as they learn the skills of the trade under the supervision of a certified journeyman. Depending on the trade, it takes two to four years to become certified as a journeyman.

As of December 2019, there were 412 registered apprentices in the Yukon Apprenticeship Program, including 144 First Nations and 43 females. These apprentices are mainly employed by Yukon businesses. Once a person has found an employment situation and an employer to support their learning journey, they are eligible to begin an apprenticeship.

Yukon residents must be at least 16 years of age and meet the academic requirements for their designated trade. Depending on the trade, completion of Grade 10, 11 or 12 Math, Science and English is required; however, completion of high school is recommended. Some apprenticeships begin in high school, but most start right after high school or when they are a few years out of high school.

We are in the process of modernizing Yukon's Apprenticeship and Tradespersons Qualification Program to align with other jurisdictions across Canada, meet the needs of current and future apprentices, and assist in meeting industry needs in our growing economy. This includes harmonizing programs with the rest of Canada to improve the mobility of apprentices, support an increase in their completion rates and enable employers to access a larger pool of apprentices. The Training Programs Unit is doing this work as part of the Red Seal Harmonization Initiative that was launched in 2013 to align apprenticeship systems across Canada by making training requirements more consistent in the Red Seal trades.

We will continue to work with apprentices, employers and industry on modernization to ensure these programs meet their needs and are supporting opportunities for Yukon apprentices, Yukon First Nations and communities.

Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

We continue to work with our partners in education through the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education. This committee provides an ongoing forum to share diverse perspectives, while continuing to recognize and respect unique relationships, such as government-to-government relationships with Yukon First Nations.

The committee includes the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Ministers of the Department of Education, Yukon educators and representatives from our partners, including the First Nation Education Directorate; the First Nations Education Commission; the Yukon Teachers' Association; School Councils and the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees; the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon; the Catholic Education Association of Yukon; Yukon University; and the Association of Yukon School Administrators.

Topics for the committee's discussions in the 2018–19 school year included improvements to the external review component of the school growth planning process, identifying how to bring student voices to the committee, refining student performance indicators, and the recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. This includes continuing to work on a strategy for student performance outcomes and targets, the development and reporting of school growth plans, and the review of inclusive and special education.

We thank all of our partners for their continued collaboration with us on the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education to address challenges in Yukon's education system and identify ways we can work together to support Yukon learners.

More information on the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education can be found at yukon.ca/en/education-and-schools/plan-elementary-and-high-school/learn-about-advisory-committee-yukon-education.

¹ From "Yukon Employment Annual Review". Yukon Bureau of Statistics. p. 5 - yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/ybs/fin-yukon-employment-annual-review-2018.pdf.

² From "2019 Yukon Employment Annual Review". Yukon Bureau of Statistics. p. 10 - yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/ybs/employment_2019.pdf.



Collaboration with Yukon First Nations

The Government of Yukon is committed to working with students, educators, families, education partners and Yukon First Nations governments to ensure students have the supports they need to succeed at school. We want to ensure that schools meet the needs of First Nations students and offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations histories, cultures, languages and ways of knowing, doing and being.

The 2019 audit found that the Department of Education did not fully meet its Yukon First Nations culture and language responsibilities, including in how we collaborate with Yukon First Nations. Collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments on education priorities is essential to make sure that Yukon schools meet the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offer all Yukon students real opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations languages, cultures, perspectives, and traditional knowledge.

We acknowledge there is work to be done to improve on areas of our education system, including how we work with Yukon First Nations governments to support the needs of their citizens and students on their traditional territories. We work with Yukon First Nations:

- » Collectively, at the Yukon-wide level with all Yukon First Nations governments, the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nations Education Commission; and
- » Government-to-government, at the community level about education for their Citizens and on their Traditional Territory, often through an Education Agreement.

Collective joint priorities

We work with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada on joint priorities through the Joint Education Action Plan 2014–2024 (JEAP), which focuses on improving outcomes for First Nations students in Yukon.

The four pillars of the JEAP are:

1. K–12 culture and language;
2. Authority, control and responsibility;
3. First Nations students supports and success; and
4. Closing the academic achievement gap.

Recent examples of work relating to the JEAP includes:

- » Integrating cultural inclusion standards that were developed by the First Nations Education Commission into School Growth Planning;
- » Providing mandatory Yukon First Nations cultural orientation for all department and school staff through Yukon First Nations 101 from Yukon University, or a suitable alternative; and
- » Working with the Chiefs Committee on Education on a data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and establishing a joint working group on data for sharing of system-wide data about Yukon First Nations students, and cooperation on identifying root causes that negatively impact student outcomes and initiatives to improve student outcomes.

The auditor’s recommendations included that the Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the status of the JEAP’s initiatives and determine how and when to complete those that remain. With the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Chiefs Committee on Education, and the federal government, we are reviewing the status of the JEAP and working to revitalize its implementation, including timelines and joint resourcing.

On May 30, 2019, the Deputy Minister of Education met with the First Nations and federal representatives of the JEAP Senior Officials Group to discuss next steps to resume regular meetings of the JEAP Oversight Group in order to move forward with the implementation of the JEAP priorities. The parties agreed to continue their focus on the four pillars identified in the JEAP, through collaboration both across Yukon and at the local community level.

The JEAP Senior Officials Working Group consists of representatives from:

- » Chiefs Committee on Education;
- » Government of Canada; and
- » Government of Yukon, Department of Education.

The group most recently met on November 25, 2019 to discuss next steps, including for the JEAP implementation working group. We are planning for the next meeting of this group in April 2020.

Going forward, we will continue to work with Yukon First Nations to improve how we collaborate to support the needs of their Citizens and all students in Yukon, including work towards formalizing how we approach ongoing collaboration between the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations to address education priorities.

Our collaboration with Yukon First Nations will also be enhanced by additional funding for this work in 2019. We identified a total of \$1.8 million starting in 2019–20 to support community level and collective joint priorities with Yukon First Nations, including \$300,000 to support implementation of activities relating to the JEAP and collective joint priorities.

New Education Agreement with Kwanlin Dün First Nation

July 9, 2019 was a historic day for Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN), as Chief Doris Bill and Minister of Education, Tracy-Anne McPhee, signed the first Education Agreement between the two governments. This three-year agreement supports KDFN learners and all learners on KDFN Traditional Territory.

The agreement includes a full time Cultural Educator position that will bring more First Nations culture and knowledge to students at Elijah Smith Elementary, Porter Creek Secondary, F.H. Collins Secondary and the Individual Learning Centre. By working with the local community, there will be enhanced learning about Southern Tutchone language and cultural programming in Whitehorse schools.

Community joint priorities

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

As of December 2019, there are education agreements with:

- » Kluane First Nation
- » Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- » Selkirk First Nation
- » Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

The additional \$1.8 million introduced in 2019 for collaboration with Yukon First Nations included \$1.5 million to support community-level joint education priorities with the 14 Yukon First Nations and implementation of education agreements. This funding will help to increase capacity and to support community-level work with Yukon First Nations governments.

New ADM of First Nations Initiatives

In 2019, we made changes to the structure of our department and resources to better support services for learners and collaboration with Yukon First Nations in education, including establishing a new First Nations Initiatives branch and Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of First Nations Initiatives.

This new branch works in partnership with Yukon First Nations on their collective and community level joint priorities, and helps to implement initiatives that support the success of First Nations learners, as well as providing cultural advice and support services to other department branches and Yukon schools.

This new ADM position responds to Call to Action #62 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which calls upon governments to establish positions at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Indigenous content in education. We worked with the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish and hire for this new position, and will work with them again to evaluate the duties and responsibilities of this position through a joint review after a two-year period, including consideration of Yukon First Nations' priorities in education, the department's responsibilities under the Education Act, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action for this position to support Indigenous content in education.

Yukon First Nations language programs

We continue to provide the Council of Yukon First Nations with more than \$1.1 million annually to operate the Yukon Native Language Centre. The Yukon Native Language Centre supports community-based language initiatives, trains and certifies new language teachers, develops curriculum and resources, and preserves and documents Yukon First Nations languages.

First Nations language programs in Yukon schools

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

In 2018–19, we offered Yukon First Nations language programs in the following schools:

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

In the 2018–19 school year, 2,136 students took a Yukon First Nations language class, which is 39% of all Yukon students. These programs are well established and well attended in elementary and middle school, with approximately 53% of these students taking a First Nations language course. However, enrolment and retention remain lower at the high school level, with approximately 14% of these students taking a First Nations language course.

Aboriginal Language Teachers

There are challenges with finding fluent and proficient certified teachers for First Nations languages in Yukon. In 2018–19, there were vacancies in St. Elias Community School, Del Van Gorder School and Khàtinaxh Community School.

Aboriginal Language Teachers in Yukon schools are required to be certified for their role, including being fluent and proficient in a First Nations language as per the *Education Act* and regulations. These positions are required to have a Language Certificate from the Council of Yukon First Nations' Yukon Native Language Centre or other post-secondary institution recognized by Yukon First Nations to be eligible to teach a Yukon First Nations language.

We are working in collaboration with the Yukon Native Language Centre to increase the number of fluent and proficient certified teachers in Yukon schools.

Audit recommendations on First Nations language programs

The need to support Yukon First Nations language learning was highlighted in the 2019 audit. The audit's recommendations included that the department should develop policies and guidelines to support First Nations language learning.

We continue to work closely with the Yukon Native Language Centre and Council of Yukon First Nations on First Nations language learning, and their mandate to revitalize Yukon First Nation Language and increase fluency and proficiency.

We have been meeting with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Native Language Centre to discuss language programming and our transfer payment agreement to the centre to train and certify language teachers. These discussions are focused on seeking collaboration to develop a policy that supports both the Yukon Native Language Centre's

current work to develop more fluent community speakers and the department's obligations to provide Yukon First Nations language learning to Yukon students. We will determine a timeline for completing this policy in collaboration with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Native Language Centre as part of these discussions.

The department will also be meeting with Yukon First Nations, and school councils to determine the language goals for individual schools. For language instruction to be effective, we must consider a number of teaching approaches, and we will work with each school to ensure we are supporting their approach to First Nations language learning.

Yukon schools find innovative ways to integrate First Nations languages

Schools across Yukon are finding innovative ways to integrate Yukon First Nations languages into their schools and curriculum. In January 2019, Kluane Lake School used a laser cutter to design, cut and assemble puzzles to learn about body parts in Southern Tutchone.

Many other schools are also learning to use laser cutters, and using this opportunity to create unique learning resources and school signage in the local First Nations language. At Nelnah Bessie John School, students learn animal names in Upper Tanana thanks to laser-cut animals. At JV Clark School, students made signs in Northern Tutchone, and at Robert Service School, they're making signs in Hän.



Yukon First Nations curriculum resources and training

The 2019 audit highlighted that the department needs to ensure educators have training and support materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and language.

We are collaborating with Yukon First Nations to develop and distribute modernized guidelines and materials to educators each year, including resources for teachers to support student learning about Yukon First Nations.

For example, in the 2018–19 school year we collaborated and:

- » Drafted Yukon and Yukon First Nation K–9 localized curriculum, and are currently working on the Grades 10–12 localized curriculum;
- » Developed sample K–10 integrated units with Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being with Yukon First Nations;
- » Delivered a Yukon First Nations orientation for new teachers at Brooks Brook in August 2019; and
- » Purchased and distributed Indigenous atlases for each school to help integrate Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being in the classroom.

We are also working on:

- » Additional curriculum materials, for example, field testing a new Grade 5 unit about the history of the Indian Residential Schools system in the 2019–20 school year in eight schools, and updating existing Grade 10 curriculum materials on the subject.
- » Dedicating one professional development day in the 2019–20 school year for learning about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being, with orientations from Yukon First Nations and reviews of Cultural Inclusion Standards for schools and school growth plans.



French language education

With a growing population of people who speak French, Yukon follows Québec and New Brunswick with the third-highest percentage of bilingual speakers in Canada.

We collaborate with the community and partners to develop French language programs and initiatives, including the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon (CSFY), the French Second Language Advisory Committee, and Canadian Parents for French.

In 2019, the Government of Yukon held a leadership role as Chair of a Council of Ministers of Education Canada's committee for French Second Language and French First Language education.

French First Language

In Yukon, the CSFY is a school board and is responsible for the administration and management of French First Language programs. We support the CSFY and provide them with an annual operations budget to manage for programming costs.

In 2018–19, 297 students were enrolled in French First Language education programs in École Émilie-Tremblay school (Kindergarten to Grade 6), Académie

Parhémie (Grades 7 to 12), and École Nomade (home-schooling for Grades 1 to 12).

In 2019, we continued working with CSFY on planning a French First Language Secondary School, which will include community spaces. This new school will be part of the campus model for Riverdale, where groups, communities and cultures can gather, learn and play in a variety of facilities. Construction started in the spring of 2019 and we expect the school to open its doors in the winter of 2020–21.

For more information on this project, see the French First Language Secondary School section under capital planning and facilities on page 57.

For more information about French First Language school programs, please see the CSFY's annual report: commissionscolaire.csfy.ca/publications.

Secondaire en Spectacle

Yukon French First language high school students put on an incredible display of talent and entertainment at the Yukon Arts Centre on April 29, 2019, at the 7th Annual Secondaire en Spectacle. This French-language talent show celebrates French in Yukon and is a highly anticipated cultural event for our secondary school communities.

French Second Language

The Department of Education is responsible for providing French Second Language educational programs. French Second Language programs are for students whose first language is not French.

French Immersion

French Immersion is a popular French Second Language program. According to Statistics Canada³, French immersion enrolment in Yukon increased by 89% from 2004 to 2018. French Immersion gives students the opportunity to become fluent in English and French. These students are expected to be able to study and work in both languages.

Yukon students can enter Early French Immersion in Kindergarten and Grade 1. This program is offered at École Whitehorse Elementary School (Kindergarten to Grade 7) and at Selkirk Elementary School (Kindergarten to Grade 4). They also have the option of entering Late French Immersion in Grade 6 at École Whitehorse Elementary. F.H. Collins Secondary School offers French Immersion for students from Grades 8 to 12.

In October 2018, 812 students were enrolled in French Immersion programs in Yukon.

³From "Yukon: Beautiful, Complex, and Changing". Statistics Canada - <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2018006-eng.htm>.

Intensive French

The Intensive French program leads to effective and meaningful communication in French. At the end of Grade 12, after the Intensive and Post-Intensive French program, students usually have a clear understanding on common topics, can describe experiences and events, give explanations for opinions and plans, and produce simple writing on common topics of personal interest or that are familiar to the student. This program begins in Grade 5 or 6 and students receive 80% of instruction in French for half of the year, and 20% for the other half. Post-Intensive French continues through Grade 12 as an optional program.

Intensive French is currently offered in the following schools:

- » Christ the King Elementary;
- » Holy Family Elementary;
- » Selkirk Elementary School;
- » Robert Service School; and
- » Vanier Catholic Secondary.

Core French

Core French provides students with basic French conversation skills. At the end of Grade 12, after regular Core French courses from Grade 5 to graduation, students can usually understand relevant sentences and frequently used expressions, communicate simple tasks on common and routine matters.

Students receive up to 120 minutes of French instruction weekly. In schools where Core French is the only second language offered, Core French is mandatory for all students from Grades 5 to 8. Core French is offered as an elective course in Grades 9 to 12. Grades 10, 11 and 12 Core French courses are credited toward the Dogwood Graduation Certificate.

We also offer the program Option Plus French, which is offered at Vanier Catholic Secondary School. This is a Social Studies 10 class in French.

Sharing best practices in language learning

Through a range of projects, professional learning opportunities and in-class support, French Second Language teachers from different schools and programs collaborated on best practices for second language teaching and assessment in 2018–19.

In March 2019, Core French and Intensive French rural teachers met with teachers from the First Nations language programs in Carmacks to explore language teaching together, and identify ways to strengthen students' learning paths across schools and grades.

New Intensive and Post-Intensive French teachers received their Intensive French (Neurolinguistic Approach) certification, and two teachers travelled to Ottawa to become Neurolinguistic Approach trainers. We also provided training to current and former educators on delivering and correcting the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), Writing Proficiency Assessments (WPA) and Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELFL), growing capacity in assessment within Yukon.

French cultural enrichment

Language and culture are intertwined. Students appreciate and retain French language when they can use it in real life cultural contexts and can gain a deeper understanding of the language. Twelve French language assistants ("French monitors") from the Odyssey program worked in Yukon schools in 2018–19 to lead games, plays, songs and other French activities for students. Students also share their own cultures with the French monitors and their classmates.

During the 2018–19 school year, French Second Language learners from different grades, programs, schools and communities came together for various events. In the fall, they discovered the world of percussion and music through Malicounda, and in the spring, they experienced traditional French music and dance with Quebec musician André Thériault. Nine Whitehorse elementary schools sang together in Chante-là ta chanson at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre and Whitehorse high school students performed in French with colleagues from Haines Junction, Faro, Watson Lake and Dawson City for *Secondaire en spectacle*. Fééli Tout author Cindy Roy gave workshops to Intensive French and Immersion students and a new quiz and lip-sync activity, *Folie furieuse*, was piloted with 170 Grade 7 students from five Whitehorse schools.

DELFL Scolaire exams

To recognize students' French learning achievements and proficiency, the Department of Education became a Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELFL) Examination Centre in 2018. The DELFL is the official French-language diploma awarded by France's Ministry of National Education. The DELFL is an official certificate of French second language proficiency. It is recognized in 165 countries and is valid for life.

Yukon students who have completed their final French course have an opportunity to earn an internationally recognized language certificate. In April 2019, 24 Grade 12 students took and passed the DELFL exam at the A2, B1 and B2 levels.

Connecting communities

Language learning connects communities. This past year brought opportunities to connect with rural communities, bring French Second Language and First Nations language educators together, and connect local and national French communities.

Three French Monitors were living and travelling to rural communities, while a one-year Complementary Fund project helped develop French Second Language programming for rural communities. Two French Monitors based in Dawson and Haines Junction brought French Second Language programming to five rural communities. A third French Monitor travelled regularly to Carcross, Carmacks, Pelly Crossing, Old Crow, Ross River and Destruction Bay.

Three online gatherings in the form of Zoom sessions between rural schools were piloted during the 2018–19 school year. Sessions took place between Haines Junction and Watson Lake, Haines Junction and Faro and between Dawson and Mayo. In addition, a French Second Language workshop was held for the first time at the Junior Rural Experiential Model (REM) in Faro. The French Programs Unit tested an on-the-land experiential unit (*Le feu*), which is now available for the Post-Intensive French program.



Distance learning and home education

Families in Yukon have the option of educating their children at home, and the Government of Yukon supports those who choose to use distance education by providing resources for the education of their children. Through our distance education and home education programs, the Department of Education offers students choice and flexibility beyond the regular classroom schedule.

Students are either registered full-time at Aurora Virtual School or at another Yukon school but also may use distance learning courses offered through Aurora Virtual School. A home-education program can be 100% home-based, or it can be cross-enrolled with a local public school for certain courses.

Aurora Virtual School

Aurora Virtual School is Yukon's Distributed Learning school for distance and homeschooling in English. It offers personalized learning opportunities to help independent learners achieve their educational goals through online eLearning services that are teacher-directed, using technology and community partnerships. In the 2018–19 school year, 162 students were enrolled at Aurora Virtual School.

44 of these students were registered for homeschooling courses where the parent/guardian is the primary educator and not a teacher.

This school also provides tailored instructional packages to Yukon schools to assist students that may need an alternate delivery method for particular programs. For example, so that schools can offer additional courses, blended learning classes, etc.

Since August 2019, Yukon elementary students may take classes through an Aurora Virtual School distributed learning program or through a traditional home education program. We worked with members of the Yukon Home Education Society to develop a made-in-Yukon K–7 distributed learning program at Aurora Virtual School where students learn with support from a certified Yukon teacher.

School governance and planning for effective schools

We regularly work with school staff to plan for how they will meet the needs of their students. We also work with school councils to ensure the voice of Yukon school communities is represented in the learning that takes place in schools every day.

School growth planning

We work together with each school community on school growth planning to focus on what is happening for their students, so that each learner can successfully reach their learning goals with dignity and purpose.

School growth plans are the road maps to improvement for Yukon schools. Under the Education Act, each school administration must prepare a school growth plan that identifies one to three years of educational priorities and goals for the school. These must include school activities relevant to the culture, heritage, traditions, and practices of the local Yukon First Nation(s).

School growth planning is a process by which school growth planning staff teams work together to develop a plan to make improvements at their school over a period of time using evidence-based decision making.

School growth planning teams are made up of:

- » staff;
- » school councils or trustees;
- » parents;
- » students; and
- » Yukon First Nations.

School growth plans are developed based on observations, student achievement data, etc. The plans contain the school's context, educational goals, priorities and evaluation procedures for the current school year. School growth plans chart one to three years of goals depending on the scope of the plan. Schools use these plans as a road map for how to improve learning and supports for students. School councils review, modify if necessary, and approve the school growth plan. Schools publish school growth plans publicly on their websites.

Signs of successful school growth planning

During the 2018–19 school year, many Yukon schools implemented strategies to accomplish their annual goals. Some schools were continuing their three-year school growth plans from 2016–17.

Watson Lake Secondary School

The 2018–19 School Growth Plan for Watson Lake Secondary School (WLSS) supported the school's 98 students in grades 8–12, 73% of whom are First Nation.

The School Growth Plan for 2018–19 recognized that through committed, consistent administration and reduced turnover in staff over the previous five years, more students are becoming self-advocating and seeing a future for themselves.

In the 2018–19 school year, the school growth plan focused on developing a stronger Kaska language and cultural base. The school mission statement is displayed at the front entrance in Kaska. The school increased the First Nation content in all subject areas by inviting local First Nations resource people into classrooms. More Elders and Kaska speakers were invited into the school to share cultural identity through crafts and teachings.

The Liard Aboriginal Women's Society worked with youth and adult members of the community to teach cultural values and inclusion through the process of creating Regalia for all Grade 7 and 12 students.

Through the Artist in the School program, carvers helped students create individual pieces. Eventually, students will create a larger Kaska carving for the front entrance of the school.

The Kaska and Outdoor Pursuits classes went camping and incorporated science curricula with the Kaska ways of knowing, doing and being. All students had opportunities to participate in "on the land" experiences.

The 2018–19 School Growth Plan embraced community partnerships and sharing school activities with the broader community. The Liard First Nation, DayluDena Council, Food for Learning, Yukon University and the Town of Watson Lake collectively funded the school to provide free nutritional breakfasts and lunches for all students throughout the 2018–19 school year.

In 2018–19, the school experienced a very large cultural shift in learning style, with the adoption of a blended learning model focused on collaboration between teachers, students and central administration support staff, to help each student find their own unique expression of academic and social success.

The vision of the school's 2018–19 Growth Plan was to create a healthy, safe, loving and supportive environment for all learners, to develop productive citizens and lifelong, self-advocating learners, who are respectful of personal and cultural differences and are grounded in Kaska language and cultural traditions.

Vanier Catholic Secondary School

The 2018–19 School Growth Plan for Vanier Catholic Secondary School supported the school's mixed demographic of students in Grades 8 through 12. The school serves approximately 360 students, one-third of which are English Language Learners, most of whom speak Tagalog or come from the Philippines. The school also has Chinese and Arabic-speaking students. Approximately 40 students in the 2018–19 school year self-identified as a Yukon First Nation (11%).

During the 2018–19 school year, the school growth plan focused on cultural inclusion and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being. All staff took First Nations 101 and new teachers received First Nations Orientation training prior to the start of school. Cultural activities were embedded into courses. For example, the Grade 9 and 11 retreats had a First Nations focus and students participating

in Heritage Fairs and Science Fairs were encouraged to create ancestral technology projects.

In 2018–19 the school sent an invitation and a welcome to the First Nations Community Education Liaison Coordinators and the Education Support Workers who support First Nations students at school, and identified a space for these workers to make their work more welcoming and visible in the school.

During Heritage Week, school activities are opened to the larger community. Vanier staff are trained in the use of restorative processes with students when appropriate. The school has requested signage in Southern Tutchone for the main rooms and plan to use a Southern Tutchone blessing in prayers and assembly times. The school obtained recordings of "O Canada" in Southern Tutchone, French, and Tagalog and rotates playing these versions on a weekly basis.

Overall, the school will continue to explore ways for teachers to work more collaboratively to meet student learning needs, and focus on flexible grouping and structures that allow for more responsive teaching and engagement with a focus on competency-based learning. The goal is to see an increase in students who fully meet and exceed performance levels while being more engaged and connected with the school's learning community.

Individual Learning Centre

The Individual Learning Centre serves older learners aged 17–21 who have been out of school for some time, and have varying learning rates and styles. This program offers self-paced, continuous courses in a respectful environment. It helps students graduate, and supports lifelong learning and good citizenship.

The Individual Learning Centre's 2018–19 School Growth Plan emphasizes cultural inclusion and First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being. All staff

took First Nations 101 in April 2018. In October 2018, all staff took the Grade 10 Social Studies Indian Residential School in-service training. In May 2019, Individual Learning Centre staff participated in a two-day Grief for Frontline Workers training.

They committed to a dozen regular actions that support First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

For example, holding a hunting trip every school year, providing First Nations foods in school meals, and ensuring teachers are regularly drawing on First Nations resource people and materials to integrate First Nations culture and history into the curriculum.

They conducted several mini-spirals of inquiry to respond to the questions posed in the growth plan. For example, they learned more about the ages of their students and how age impacts learning; about trauma in teenagers and how to better support them; and various actions they could take with scheduling students and establishing different routines to improve learning.

Using the baseline, target and results, and the tool of spiral of inquiry, the Individual Learning Centre is on track to achieve the goals of their school growth plan through to June 2020, while improving student outcomes for the group of disenfranchised students that this school model serves.

Auditor General's recommendations on school growth planning

The 2009 Auditor General of Canada's report recommended that the department create a policy for individual school plans, including a process for planning, updating, evaluating and reporting on school growth plans. The department has implemented an improved process that involved greater community input and an appreciative inquiry approach.

The 2019 Auditor General of Canada findings highlighted further work in this area, including reporting on school growth plans. During the 2018–19 school year, the superintendents worked with school administrators on the school growth planning process as one of four identified priority areas. This included reviewing the process and collaborating with administrators to refine plans for the process, providing training on the school growth planning process, and reviewing and getting feedback on school growth plans. This work with school administrators will continue in the 2019–20 school year.

In the 2019–20 school year, we are piloting a new external review process in collaboration with the Advisory Committee for Yukon education.

We are also revising the *School Growth Planning Policy* to include a more detailed process for meeting the annual reporting requirement in the policy, which we will complete by June 2020.

Our objective is to finalize the new *School Growth Planning Policy* and implement the modernized process based on this policy for school growth plans starting in August 2020 for the 2020–21 school year. This will include preparing a summary report for the Minister of Education on school growth plans in May each year.

Revising the school growth planning process is one of the ways the department is taking an evidence-based approach to understand root causes and address student achievement gaps. This process focuses on student success and ensures educational programs in Yukon schools reflect Yukon First Nations cultures, languages, traditions and practices.

You can learn more about the school growth planning process at yukon.ca/en/school-growth-process.

School councils

School councils are important partners in education and play a key role in the governance of Yukon school communities. Their responsibilities include being involved in hiring new principals, working with their school communities to resolve disputes, following up on parent concerns and bringing life to great ideas to support students. They set the direction and atmosphere for Yukon schools and offer a forum for families and the wider community to get involved in the education system.

School councils have an important role in school growth planning. Members may sit on the school growth planning teams. All members of a school council approve their school's final school growth plan, which guides the school for one to three years. The school council also works with the administration on the implementation of the approved plan.

Every two years, 26 school attendance areas in Yukon hold elections for school councils. In addition, there are 41 Guaranteed Representative seats for First Nations school council members in 18 schools across the territory. These positions are recommended for appointment directly by the First Nation government whose Traditional Territory the school is on. The Guaranteed Representatives have the same roles and responsibilities as other school council members.



Supporting Yukon students

Student Support Services

Yukon schools are modeled on inclusive education, which is based on the belief that all students can learn together in different ways. Staff at the department work together with schools and families to provide multi-disciplinary supports to students who have been identified to have unique or complex learning needs.

Response to Intervention

We currently use the Response to Intervention model to support schools in identifying student needs that may require support staff from Student Support Services. Each school collaborates with Student Support Services to determine how the school can meet the needs of their students through recommendations made through consultation and/or specialized assessments.

The Response to Intervention model is designed to identify students who need additional supports early in their schooling and to ensure that adjustments are made and evaluated to ensure continued learning progress throughout their school years. The Response to Intervention model includes five steps:

1. Identification and assessment;
2. Planning;
3. Program support/implementation;
4. Evaluation; and
5. Recording and reporting.

In this process, the teacher and school-based teams work with families to identify students who may need support for their learning. Staff from the Student Support Services Unit at the Department of Education may also recommend specialized assessments and additional supports. As plan and supports are implemented and evaluated, the student's learning progress is recorded and reported back to families. This process is meant to ensure each child receives an educational experience suitable for their unique needs.

Inclusive and special education review

In response to audit 2019, the Government of Yukon committed to working with Yukon First Nations governments and our partners in education to respond to the recommendations set in the report.

One of the key recommendations in the audit is recommendation 70, which states:

“The Department of Education should conduct a full review of the services and supports for inclusive education. It should exercise a leadership role by, for example, engaging with teachers, parents, and specialists to determine how the Department can help teachers maximize student success. The review should include examining how best to:

- » evaluate whether its approach to inclusive education is working;
- » determine whether services and supports are having the desired effect;
- » 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.”

The audit highlighted the challenges in our current approach and delivery model for inclusive and special education programming.

Inclusive education refers to the idea that students with diverse learning needs and individual interests should have equal access to learning, achievement and pursuit of excellence in all aspects of education. When we talk about inclusive education, especially in the context of our new, student-centred curriculum, this means creating personalized, flexible learning opportunities to meet the learning needs of all students in Yukon. Inclusive education also encompasses students with special education needs.

In 2019, we worked with Yukon First Nations and identified a suitable consultant to lead this independent review from January–June 2020.

This review will be designed to gather information, perspectives and experiences from educators, students, families and Yukon First Nations to better understand barriers and opportunities. We also want to learn from what other jurisdictions are doing and what research is identifying as effective practices in this area of education.

We will use the initial recommendations and feedback gathered from this review to develop next steps with Yukon First Nations and our education partners to provide effective student supports and improve delivery and monitoring of service to students with special education needs in Yukon schools at the system, school and student levels.

Educational Assistant allocation

We established an Educational Assistant (EA) Allocation Advisory Committee in fall 2015 to review the current allocation model for paraprofessionals in the territory and evaluate its merits and challenges. In 2016, this committee recommended an improved paraprofessional allocation process that allows schools to make requests for paraprofessionals based on student needs. This process was adopted and implemented during the spring of 2016 and has been used for 2017–2019.

School	2016-2017 EA Allocation Final	2017-2018 EA Allocation Final	2018-2019 EA Allocation Final
Chief Zzeh Gittlit (Old Crow)	3	4	4.5
Christ the King	15	14	14.75
Del Van Gorder (Faro)	3	3.75	4
Elijah Smith	17	16.7	14.5
Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly)	5	6	5.5
Emilie-Tremblay	9	9.5	8
F.H. Collins	13.5	15.75	15.4
Ghuch Tla (Carcross)	4.5	3.5	3.75
Golden Horn	4	3	5
Grey Mountain	5	5	5
Hidden Valley	4.5	6.37	9.84
Holy Family	10	9	7
Individual Learning Centre (ILC)	2	1.5	1.5
Jack Hulland	18	21.75	17.5
Johnson Elementary (Watson Lake)	7	6.5	7.75
JV Clark (Mayo)	4	3.5	4
Kluane Lake (Destruction Bay/Burwash)	1	1	1
Nelnah Bessie John (Beaver Creek)	1	1	0.5
Porter Creek	12.75	15.5	14.375
Robert Service (Dawson)	11	12	10.5
Ross River	5	6	5.75
Selkirk	12	14	14.5
St. Elias Community (Haines Junction)	7.5	11	11.5
Takhini	11	14.25	11.5
Tantalus (Carmacks)	7	9.5	8.5
Khàtinas.àh Community School (Teslin)	4	5	4
Teen Parent Centre (TPC)	2	1	1
Vanier	14	12	14.5
Watson Lake Secondary	4.5	3.75	4
Whitehorse Elementary	10	10	9.8
Student Support Services	4.91	4.91	6.377
Total	232.16	250.73	245.792

Individual Education Plans

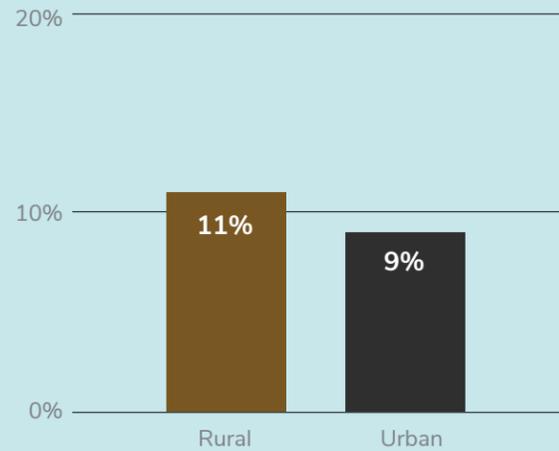
One of the ways we support and track students with exceptional needs in Yukon is through Individual Education Plans.

Individual Education Plans are put in place for students who because of intellectual, communicative, behavioural, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are unable to meet the learning goals in the prescribed learning standards in the curriculum. Other students may have other types of learning plans, depending on what supports they need.

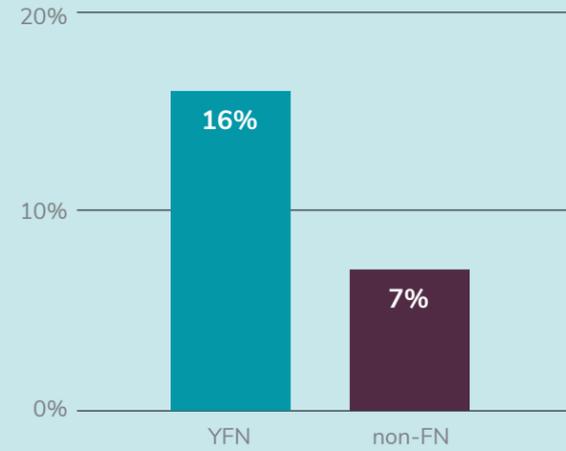
An Individual Education Plan identifies special education programming and supports that help students to meet modified learning goals based on their strengths and needs.

During the 2018–19 school year, there were 538 students with an Individual Education Plan.

Rural and urban students on Individual Education Plans 2018–19



Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students on Individual Education Plans 2018–19



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018-19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

Premier's Award of Excellence nomination

In 2019, a team from Selkirk Elementary received a nomination for the Premier's Award of Excellence. Krista Strand, Leslie Doran, Martin Farrow, Tamara Boiteau, Terry Anne Wasson, and Trine Dennis worked as a team to implement programming that promotes self-awareness, self-regulation, compassion and empathy for all students, through trauma-informed learning. They were nominated for their outstanding efforts that improve young lives over the long term.

Rural programs and supports

Rural school communities have unique contexts and needs, which are considered in the programming and supports developed to support their students, such as:

- » sharing resources and staff between communities;
- » bringing together students from multiple communities;
- » offering specialized courses;
- » having flexible options to engage with their learning; and
- » having dedicated support to rural educators.

Rural Experiential Models

The Rural Experiential Model (REM), supports rural students and offers expanded opportunities for programming where they can work together in larger groups across communities; share resources and staff; and study more arts, trades, and other specialized courses.

The REM was designed to address issues including how rural students, many of whom are First Nations Citizens, do not have access to the same variety of opportunities available to urban students. REM provides students from small communities the opportunity to make friends and learn from students outside their communities, and have access to a wider variety of programming.

During the Senior REM, 98 students in Grades 10–12 and 20 educators from rural schools came together for a week of hands-on learning in Haines Junction on September 10–14, 2018. Students chose from a variety of daytime courses to earn two Fine Art or Applied Skill Credits. In the evenings, they participated in fun, educational activities to explore their personal learning interests. At the REM Finale, students showcased what they learned and accomplished through the week.

Students learn on the land at Muskrat Camp

In March 2019, Kluane Lake School students spent four nights at Muskrat Camp at Pickhandle Lake, hosted by Kluane First Nation and the Family Literacy Centre. Kluane Lake School Council was also very involved in planning and working at the camp. The students learned how to trap muskrats and beavers from Elders, local trappers and members of Kluane First Nation. Each evening they enjoyed a feast of muskrat, beaver tails and ling cod that they caught themselves. Students from Nelna Bessie John School in Beaver Creek also had their own Muskrat Camp at the same location in March.

These students learn not just about trapping, but about ethics, backcountry safety, environmental stewardship, and respecting the land.



Deep Dives into the trades in Yukon communities

In 2018–19, the “Trades Deep Dives” program had a second successful year in Yukon schools. This innovative program was designed to inspire interest in the trades through deeper learning opportunities. It was also designed to build capacity for rural teachers to effectively and safely teach trades. The instructors are highly skilled professionals who travel out to the communities to do the training.

Through the “Deep Dives,” students have the opportunity to spend a full school week with a professional instructor and a small group of up to 10 students, studying one of two trades. For the first two years of the program, the trades offered were Hairstyling and Welding.

To date, over 100 students in Old Crow, Ross River, Faro, Watson Lake, Dawson, Pelly Crossing, Carcross and Whitehorse have participated.

After the first year of the “Deep Dives” trainings, at least one student began studying to become a welder at Yukon College, and several are studying hairstyling. Both of these trades are certified through apprenticeship and schooling.

The fourth Junior REM was hosted in Tse Zul-Faro, the traditional Kaska Dena territory of the Ross River Dena Council on May 13–16, 2019. 80 Grades 7–8 students and 25 educators from Carcross, Carmacks, Dawson City, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Teslin and Watson Lake gathered for the event. REM was facilitated by 80 Yukon experts, including Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge/Wisdom Keepers. The Junior REM is a unique, experiential approach that offers students a two-day holistic program of integrated traditional and modern teaching and learning. The program is designed to connect students with Yukon’s heritage and traditions and strengthen their cultural, emotional, mental, and physical well-being.

Rural trades and apprenticeship programming

We are also working to increase the resources and facilities for trades education in rural schools.

This school year, we focused on welding and hairstyling programs for rural secondary students. We offered welding in Old Crow, Faro, Watson Lake and Dawson City. We offered hairstyling in Carcross, Pelly, Watson Lake and Dawson City. These programs offer students a hands-on approach to learning trades and safe practices for these trades.

There is also currently a shortage of both welders and hairdressers, especially in Yukon communities, so these programs help students develop skills that can be useful for potential careers in their communities.

A snowboard press was installed at Watson Lake Secondary in 2018–19, so students can learn new woodworking skills while using the press to make snowboards.

In fall 2018, we offered professional learning opportunities for all Yukon woodworking teachers at Yukonstruct’s new workspace to help them support woodworking projects in rural schools. The goal of this learning was to certify woodworking teachers through the Woodwork Career Alliance of North America to operate equipment safely. This program was provided with support from Skills Canada’s National Technical Committee for Cabinetmaking. We also offered a second session of this training in Dawson City for rural educators north of Carmacks to also obtain their sawblade certification.

Mental health supports in schools

Yukon school counsellors are trained and certified teaching professionals who support students in achieving their personal and academic potential. Their role is to provide advice, guidance and resources to help address students’ social-emotional development and to help them plan for life after high school, including post-secondary and career planning.

If students require supports beyond what the school counsellor can provide, the school counsellor can refer them to appropriate healthcare professionals. We work with partners to ensure mental health supports and resources are available for young people at school and in the community.

Mental Wellness and Substance Use Counsellors and Child and Youth Counsellors are available to all Yukon students. Within Whitehorse, these services are provided by the Child/Youth Family Team from Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services. In the communities, these services are provided through the Mental Wellness Hubs that serve the communities, and school staff can request specific services when needed.

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 and well-being and success for all children and youth. We work on a range of initiatives and policies that are focused on positive well-being, prevention and support for the mental wellness of our children and youth.

For example, we implemented self-regulation techniques in Yukon schools, and mental wellbeing is a key competency in Yukon’s Physical and Health Education curriculum. Yukon students also have peer support initiatives including peer leadership courses, Challenge Day, and Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA).

Professional learning opportunities for educators and students were available in suicide prevention and intervention, mental health, and restorative approaches to build healthy school communities, repair harm and restore relationships. In February and September 2019, some high school educators trained in the “Mental Health Literacy Curriculum Guide,” a resource for teaching mental health to high school students for students in Grades 9–12.

Yukon schools also use peer support initiatives including peer leadership courses, Challenge Day, and Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA).

LGBTQ2S+ supports in schools

All students and staff should feel safe and welcome in school. To support students who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer and questioning), the Government of Yukon implemented a *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy* for all schools in 2012. This policy recognizes that homophobic and gender-based comments, discrimination, and bullying are demeaning and are not permitted in Yukon schools. It requires all schools to develop school-based policies and strategies to ensure that LGBTQ2S+ students are treated with respect and dignity.

The Department of Education has also put supports in place for LGBTQ2S+ youth through policy, teacher training, and curriculum resources to promote inclusive and safe environments in our schools, such as working to ensure there are universal, stand-alone and gender-neutral washrooms in schools.

The Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA) at Yukon schools are active advocates in their school communities. In January 2019, the first dedicated Rainbow Room in a Yukon school was established at Porter Creek Secondary School. Volunteer teachers and students are present in this classroom before and after school and during all breaks to ensure there is always a safe space for any students to spend time or do their homework, knowing they are safe from bullying. The Porter Creek Secondary GSA also hosted their first three-day retreat with the F.H. Collins Secondary GSA in May 2019, and invited other Yukon GSAs to attend.

The Porter Creek Secondary GSA credits the very supportive administration and staff at their school for making a big difference to their efforts and initiatives to improve the school community for all students. All school GSAs will be invited to provide feedback over

the next year as we update the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.

Student engagement and attendance

Students who attend school on a regular basis tend to develop their academic and social-emotional skills, establish better work habits and get better grades. When students miss school on a regular basis, they may fall behind on important learning opportunities.

Student attendance over time

The data below shows students have been absent for 20 or more days during the school year. We define absent days as school days missed by students enrolled at Yukon schools for that school year. This includes all excused and unexcused absences.

Partial days missed are part of the count. Absent days do not include programs such as the Individual Learning Centre, Learning Together, K4 or home education.

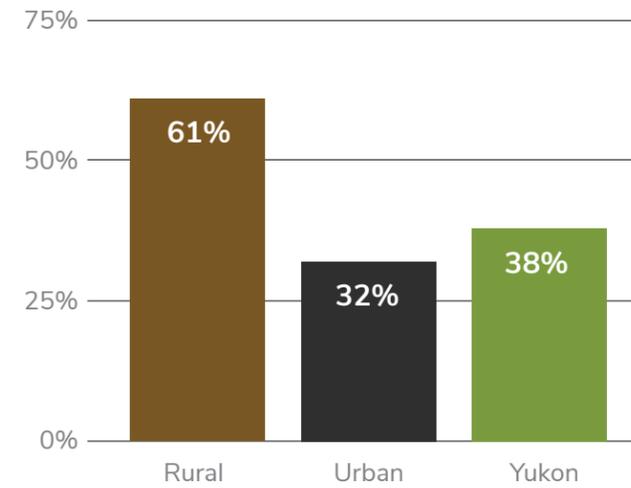
Student attendance continues to be a challenge for some students. In the 2018/2019 school year, 37% of Yukon students were absent for 20 or more days during the school year.

International Day of Pink 2019

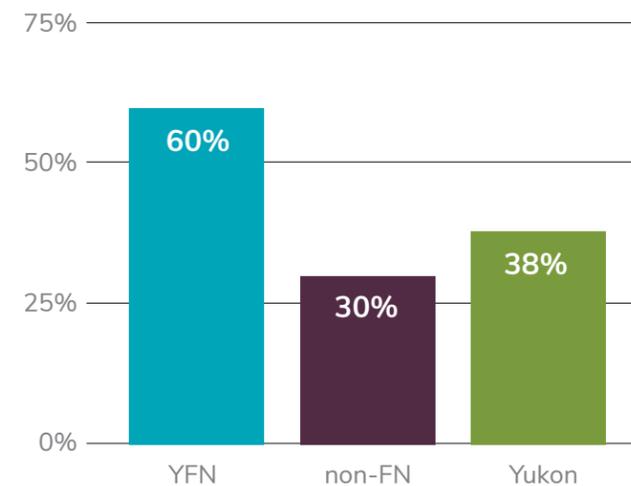
The Social Justice Clubs and GSAs often collaborate at Yukon high schools. For example, for International Day of Pink on April 10, 2019, the Porter Creek Secondary School Social Justice Club put a giant poster in the cafeteria with anti-bullying messages on it. Students were encouraged to put pink handprints on the poster and sign their names. A group photo was taken of everyone wearing pink alongside the completed poster. The Porter Creek Secondary GSA supported this event.



Students who missed 20 or more days for rural, urban and Yukon-wide in 2018-19



Students who missed 20 or more days for Yukon First Nations, non-First Nations and Yukon-wide in 2018-19



Data taken from the Yukon Wide Student Data Report for 2018-19. More student and school performance indicators and data are available online at yukon.ca/student-data.

We are modernizing learning through the new curriculum to improve how we engage students, such as through greater opportunities for hands-on, flexible and personal learning. Some students are away for valid reasons, such as illness, family circumstances, or participation in cultural activities outside of school; these students benefit from a learning environment that is more flexible. Some students miss school because they are disengaging

from their learning; these students will benefit from a learning environment that is personalized.

Through recent work on reporting student learning, we have highlighted attendance as a behaviour for success. Schools report to parents on attendance through their ongoing student achievement conversations. School-based teams and individual teachers also work collaboratively with parents to address attendance issues.

We empower schools to identify ways to improve student attendance and design their own unique initiatives. We also encourage school councils to develop attendance policies that reflect their school's needs.

Every Student, Every Day attendance initiative

We continue to work with the Victoria Gold Yukon Student Encouragement Society to promote and help administer the Every Student, Every Day (ESED) attendance initiative to fund school-based projects that encourage student engagement and attendance.

Teachers, schools, school councils and community organizations can apply every year to fund school-based projects that improve attendance and support the overall success of Yukon students.

For the 2018-19 school year, ESED awarded \$67,500 to 19 projects. In the spring of 2019, the initiative was able to award \$100,000 for 2019-20 projects.

Throughout the year, volunteers from Every Student, Every Day engage with Yukon's private sector to raise funds. The Government of Yukon has contributed \$25,000 annually to this initiative since 2012. We have committed to raising our annual contribution to \$30,000 starting in 2019-20. The Department of Education also contributes in-kind support to administer the funding program in partnership with society staff.

More information on the Victoria Gold Student Encouragement Society attendance initiative can be found at www.everystudenteveryday.ca.



Supporting Yukon educators

Effective educators are an important factor in students' success at school. We work to hire caring and qualified teachers for Yukon students and to help them develop their skills in supporting the learning of students in all Yukon schools.

Teacher evaluations

Teacher evaluations help guide the ongoing performance of staff, promoting quality instruction and continuous improvement of professional practice. The 2019 audit highlighted that the department has not implemented its required oversight mechanisms to complete teacher evaluations.

Just as we encourage young people to be lifelong learners, we encourage staff to have growth mindsets and work continuously on their professional learning throughout their careers.

Over the past few years, we have worked with educators and partners to develop a new teacher evaluation model. The new model reflects modern professional development and evaluation practices in education.

In the 2018–19 school year, we introduced this “Yukon Framework for Teacher Growth” and a new teacher evaluation process. This new tool and

process is aligned with promising practices in teacher professional development and adult learning and provides a structured approach for school staff to align their professional learning and growth in the context of the learning needs of their students in order to improve outcomes.

The Framework helps to guide the ongoing performance of staff, promoting quality instruction and continuous improvement of professional practice. It reflects modern assessment and performance evaluation that clarifies expectations and empowers users to be able to know where they are, where they are going in their professional growth and how they will get there. This is especially important for new teachers who can build on their strengths while developing in other areas. Just like with our new curriculum, teachers become partners in their evaluation and work to set personal goals and provide evidence of their abilities and growth. This approach will result in more effective procedures and meaningful professional learning.

As a result of the new Yukon Teachers' Association collective agreement and changes to probationary and temporary teacher procedures, we have also implemented a new process to proactively communicate with principals on those teachers who are due to be evaluated. We are working with principals to provide check points to help them develop their teacher evaluation plans and understand their responsibilities. This information was provided to principals in fall 2019.

We are developing a format for annually reporting on teacher evaluations to the Minister of Education, which we expect will be completed by February 2020, with the first summary report being submitted by July 1, 2020.

New collective agreement

The Yukon Teachers' Association is an important partner in education and represents approximately 900 principals, vice-principals, teachers, educational assistants, remedial tutors and Aboriginal Language Teachers throughout Yukon.

The Yukon Teachers' Association ratified the current three-year collective agreement with the Government of Yukon on January 14, 2019. This collective agreement is in place until June 30, 2021. The negotiations began in May 2018 to replace the previous collective agreement, which expired in June 2018.

The aim of the new collective agreement is to support teachers and school staff in their work with Yukon students. The key changes to the new collective agreement include:

- » Salary increases totaling 6.7% over three years.
- » Moving to a bi-weekly pay system so that Yukon Teachers' Association employees will be paid throughout the calendar year, rather than just during the school year.
- » Giving more hiring priority for Yukon First Nation teachers.
- » Enabling substitute staff to be included in the Yukon Teachers' Association collective agreement.

- » Adding 'gender identity or gender expression' as a prohibited ground of discrimination.
- » Extending supplementary benefits to employees on maternity and paternity leave to throughout the calendar year, not just the school year.
- » An additional increase of 3.2% to the pay grid for qualified Educational Assistants.
- » An increase to community allowances by 5% for employees working in the communities.
- » Ending further resignation and retirement severance pay accruals as of June 30, 2018. Those accruing resignation and retirement severance pay prior to June 30, 2018 are unaffected.
- » Defining the criteria for temporary employees to convert to indeterminate status.
- » Defining a new standard of probation for teachers and Educational Assistants.

Professional learning and development for educators

Throughout the 2018–19 school year, there were six days dedicated to collaborative professional learning. Principals with their school teams developed and led their professional learning plans and activities for these six days, relating to the following topics:

- » Curriculum implementation and support
- » Student assessment and reporting
- » Integrating experiential education in the new curriculum
- » Blended learning
- » School growth planning
- » Blanket exercise
- » New teacher First Nation orientation
- » Laser cutting
- » Rural Experiential Model Planning
- » Integration of arts using the know, do, understand model
- » Trauma Informed Practices

- » Coding in the classroom for elementary classes
- » Observation Survey Training
- » Health Canada Cannabis Education
- » Forest School Canada Training
- » Pre/Post/Intensive French training
- » Aspen Student Information System training
- » Balanced Literacy
- » Connecting New Curriculum Resources to Professional Learning

During the school year, Yukon educators also worked collaboratively in professional learning networks to seek ways to improve their students' learning. The Curriculum and Assessment Unit and the First Nations Programs and Partnerships Unit coordinate these learning networks during the school year to bring teachers together to improve their practice and implement new teaching methods that align with the new curriculum and assessment practices.

This includes learning networks on the following topics:

- » Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies (ADST);
- » Place-based learning;
- » Standards-based learning and grading; and
- » Building a Literacy and Numeracy Mindset.

Through these learning networks, educators deepen their understandings of the new curriculum. They help educators build their capacity to assess by learning standards; engage others in a spiral-based professional learning group at the school level; integrate Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being; build capacity to support the student self-assessment of core competencies; and make learning personalized and flexible for students.

The budget for professional development and training for Yukon educators in the 2018–19 fiscal year was approximately \$1.63 million, and was \$1.67 million in the 2019–20 fiscal year.

Included in both of these amounts is the Government of Yukon's significant contribution of \$475,000 to the Yukon Teacher's Association Professional Development Fund. The Professional Development Fund is established under the collective agreement for opportunities for professional growth toward modern instructional practice and other priorities.

Changes to professional development in the 2019–20 school year

Each year, we provide ongoing professional learning opportunities relating to the new curriculum.

For the 2019–20 school year, at the request of principals we delegated the responsibility to principals to plan the six professional development and non-instructional days, with input from their staff and school councils. Principals planned their School Professional Development Plans from a list of themes relating to the modernization of curriculum and instructional practice, working with their staff and school councils to plan professional learning activities to support their staff's learning needs for modern instructional practice. These professional development days include a requirement to have one day dedicated to Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

We also made improvements to increase communication and access to curriculum materials and supports starting in the 2019–20 school year. For example, issuing the Educator Update newsletter, which we use to share curriculum resources with teachers, twice per month. This also includes adding additional local resources and curriculum support materials on a continual basis to the Educators' Place, an online curriculum resource portal for Yukon teachers.

We will continue to work with Yukon First Nations and education partners, including the Yukon Teachers' Association, to identify effective teacher professional learning approaches and resources to support Yukon educators in ensuring the success of students and support the implementation of the modernized curriculum.

Yukon educators shine at Innovation and Indigenous Education Symposium

In May 2019, eight Yukon educators showcased leading practices in Indigenous education at a global conference in Richmond, BC as hosts of two breakout sessions at the Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE) 2019 Symposium. Both Yukon presentations had packed audiences and were enthusiastically received.

The Yukon sessions presented recent inquiry projects on primary place-based learning and adaptive teaching and assessment strategies for rural students from the 2018–19 Yukon Learning Networks. This symposium attracted keen educators from across Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and Spain.

Yukon educator presenters for the NOIIE 2019 Symposium included:

- » **Mindy Anderson** (Elijah Smith Elementary School, Whitehorse)
- » **James Mitchell** (Hidden Valley Elementary School, Whitehorse)
- » **Denise McDiarmid** (Hidden Valley Elementary School, Whitehorse)
- » **Cyndi O'Rourke** (St. Elias Community School, Haines Junction)
- » **Alethea Wallace** (JV Clark School, Mayo)
- » **Ryan West** (Chief Zzeh Gittlit School, Old Crow)
- » **Betty Burns** (Education Consultant)
- » **Chris Stacey** (Education Consultant)



Health and safety

Safety is a responsibility shared among all central administration and school staff, educators, students and clients. Staff who see a hazard or unsafe condition in the workplace, including schools, have a responsibility to address and report it.

We encourage staff, students and community members to report any and all health and safety concerns to their supervisor or school.

Cannabis, fentanyl and vaping education

The Department of Education works with the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice to provide information that is up-to-date and relevant to school staff, students and families about the risks of substance use, including tobacco, vaping, cannabis, drugs and alcohol.

The curriculum has grade-appropriate learning outcomes from Kindergarten to Grade 12 related to the consumption of harmful substances such as poisons, prescription medications, tobacco, vaping, alcohol and cannabis, as well as fentanyl and other illicit drugs. Education on psychoactive substances, such as cannabis, and illegal drugs including fentanyl, starts in Grade 5. When issues and topics such as cannabis, fentanyl and vaping are topical and relevant to the local community, teachers are encouraged to integrate new information into their lesson plans in physical and health education as well as in other subjects.

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

Cannabis

Cannabis became legal in Canada on October 17, 2018. The use of cannabis continues to be prohibited on school grounds.

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

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

Fentanyl

Throughout the 2018–19 school year, we shared information through the schools about how to talk to youth about fentanyl and its risks. The Department of Health and Social Services distributed information sheets, posters and business cards in silicone card holders to students in Grades 10–12 to help students make safe choices. The bilingual cards offered tips for celebrating safely as well as the signs and symptoms of drug-related overdoses, and could be stuck to phones and wallets.

Schools also hosted specific presentations on fentanyl for parents and students during the 2018–19 school year. Presentations were held at F.H. Collins Secondary School for students and parents, and at Porter Creek Secondary School for students.

Naloxone kits can save a life if someone has overdosed on fentanyl. Naloxone training is available on an ongoing basis for staff and students.

We ensure there are naloxone kits and trained staff at all schools in the event of an overdose at school.

More information on the Government of Yukon's Opioid Action Plan can be found at yukon.ca/en/yukons-opioid-action-plan.

Vaping

The Department of Education amended the Tobacco and Vapour Free Schools Policy on August 8, 2019. Both tobacco and vapour products are now included in the definition of smoking. It is prohibited to smoke in any school or use tobacco or vapour products on the grounds of a school or during school-related activities. The exception is the traditional use of tobacco in a First Nation ceremony or educational setting.

Talking to students about the risks of using tobacco and vaping products and about making healthy lifestyle choices is part of the curriculum and should be an ongoing conversation happening at school and at home.

Yukon government's Health Promotion Unit offers curriculum-based workshops that deliver tobacco and vaping information to classrooms at all grade levels in Whitehorse and communities.

Consider the Consequences Vaping Tour

In May 2019, a federally-funded national vaping awareness initiative, "Consider the Consequences," visited four Yukon schools. The facilitated, interactive multi-media presentation offered students an opportunity to test their knowledge around tobacco, nicotine and vaping and learn about the health risks of vaping. The Yukon tour reached all students and grades at Vanier Catholic Secondary, F.H. Collins Secondary, Porter Creek Secondary, and St. Elias Community School. Lesson plans and support materials were also available to any Yukon school.

Reporting incidents of threat and violence in Yukon schools

Yukon schools use Nonviolent Crisis Intervention and Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS) approaches to support positive behavior and be responsive to student behavior needs.

Any out-of-the ordinary occurrence involving students and staff is called an "incident of concern". These incidences include, but are not limited to, physical and/or verbal behaviours that may result in injury, property loss or damage. If an incident of concern occurs, school staff fill out an internal Workplace Risk Assessment. This determines the level of concern about the student's behaviour, and provides an opportunity to collaboratively plan for an approach for intervention to address the behaviour and the needs of any affected student(s) and/or staff.

The incident may trigger the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol, which sets out a series of questions to identify the level of concern and guide investigation to determine how to mitigate risks and supports and interventions we can offer. We partner with the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice, as well as the RCMP and Yukon University, to respond to any incidents that require this protocol to be enacted. The protocol includes considerations for a comprehensive intervention plan to help ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in the school and community.



Student Support Services staff also provide support through debriefing, planning, training and restorative approaches to address harm. School staff can also access counselling and assistance through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

In 2018–19 there were 161 reported incidents, with 133 Workplace Risk Assessments and 28 Violence Threat Risk Assessments, compared with 241 reported incidents in 2017–18 (218 WRA and 23 Violence Threat Risk Assessments).

Our *Safe and Caring Schools Policy* is a commitment for each school community to plan, strategize and create a respectful, safe and nurturing educational environment for everyone. Student Support Services developed the *Safe and Caring Schools Policy Support Plan 2018/2019* to support Yukon schools to implement this policy. The plan outlines specific services and training available to school counsellors, educators and students to address student behaviour needs. This includes Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS) and Violence Threat Risk Assessment training.

You can download this document at yukon.ca/en/safe-and-caring-schools-policy.

School emergencies and safety procedures

The health and safety of students and staff is always our first priority. When there is an emergency situation or safety issue in a school, we work closely with the RCMP and emergency agencies to ensure the safety of students and staff at the school.

School staff are professionals who are trained and prepared to care for students in the event of an emergency. Schools also practice emergency drills (e.g. fire drills, earthquake drills, lockdown procedures) on a regular basis to ensure students and staff are prepared to respond to emergency situations.

Each school has its own Emergency Response Plan, with detailed procedures for emergencies and other unforeseen events. Schools send information home in the fall of each school year about school emergencies to ensure parents are aware of school emergency planning.

To improve the timeliness of communications from schools and the department to parents, including for emergency situations, we are piloting a unified communication platform called SchoolMessenger in the 2019–20 school year. The service can contact parents about emergencies and other school concerns, such as attendance and school updates, through automated texts, emails and phone calls.

The following 15 schools are piloting different features of this tool in 2019–20:

1. Porter Creek Secondary
2. Robert Service School (Dawson)
3. F.H. Collins Secondary
4. Khàtinas.àxh Community School (Teslin)
5. Vanier Catholic Secondary School
6. Elijah Smith Elementary School
7. Wood St. Centre
8. Selkirk Elementary School
9. Golden Horn Elementary School
10. École Émilie-Tremblay
11. Holy Family Elementary
12. Hidden Valley Elementary
13. Christ the King Elementary
14. Academie Parhelie
15. Ghùch Tlà Community School

Water testing

Lead was commonly used in plumbing materials (including drinking fountains and sink taps) before 1988, when national building standards changed to reduce the use of lead. As a result, schools built before and around 1990 may have water fixtures and plumbing materials that contain lead. Lead from the water fixtures and plumbing materials can leach into the water when it sits in the water system for longer periods.

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

We are mitigating any water fixtures showing lead levels above the national standards. Mitigation work includes decommissioning any water fountains that tested above the recommended levels for lead; placing signs at other water fixtures, such as bathroom and classroom sinks, to identify them as safe for washing but not for drinking; and replacing all water fixtures that tested high with new water fixtures that meet Health Canada's guidelines for lead. It also includes retesting the fixtures to confirm the new fixtures and repairs resolved the issues.

By October 2019, we completed replacements and repairs at all Phase One schools.

In summer 2019, we tested schools built after 1990 as part of Phase Two and to ensure water fixtures at all schools have been tested. All remaining schools were tested, with the exception of Chief Zzeh Gittlit School in Old Crow, which is scheduled to be tested in January 2020.

Phase Two – summer 2019

- » Del Van Gorder School (Faro)
- » École Émilie Tremblay
- » Elijah Smith Elementary School
- » F.H. Collins Secondary School
- » Gadzoosdaa Residence
- » Hidden Valley Elementary School
- » Holy Family Elementary School
- » J.V. Clark School
- » Ross River School
- » Tantalus School
- » Teen Parent Centre
- » Watson Lake Secondary School

The results of the tests showed that Del Van Gorder School, École Émilie Tremblay, Elijah Smith Elementary School, Hidden Valley Elementary School, Holy Family Elementary School, J.V. Clark School and Watson Lake Secondary School had water fixtures that tested above the recommended levels for lead. All water fixtures at the remaining schools, including F.H. Collins Secondary School, Gadzoosdaa Residence, Ross River School, Tantalus School and Teen Parent Centre were confirmed to be safe to continue using for drinking, cooking and washing.

Mitigation work started in September 2019 at the schools that required fixture replacements or other plumbing repairs. We will continue this mitigation work into 2020.

You can view the full test results and status of mitigation work at yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/health-concerns-diseases-and-conditions/learn-about-water-testing-yukon-schools.

Radon testing in Yukon schools

Radon is a colourless, odorless, naturally occurring gas in Yukon. It can enter buildings through cracks and unsealed openings in basements and foundations from the soil. Radon does not pose an immediate danger to health and is only a concern if there is prolonged exposure to high concentrations over many years.

Testing of radon levels in Yukon schools was last completed in spring 2018. Testing involved installing equipment for a minimum of three months in every single room on the lowest level of a school being used for more than four hours a day.

The test results for Christ the King Elementary, Eliza Van Bibber and Holy Family Elementary were slightly above Health Canada's recommended levels for radon.

For Christ the King Elementary and Eliza Van Bibber School, we are planning remediation work within the two-year timeframe recommended by Health Canada. Once we have completed remediation work, we will re-test both schools to ensure radon levels are now below recommended levels.

For the Teen Parent Centre and Holy Family Elementary, remediation work has been completed at both schools, and we will re-test radon levels during the 2019–20 heating season to ensure radon levels are now below recommended levels.

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

- » there is work done on a school exterior, foundation or basement;
- » seismic activity affects the school building;
- » the ground or basement floors are renovated; or
- » radon remediation work has been done on a school.

To see results for all schools and to learn more about radon testing in Yukon schools, visit yukon.ca/en/learn-about-radon-testing-yukon-schools.

Student transportation

Every day, many Yukon families rely on school buses to get their children safely to and from their schools. In 2018–19, over 2,000 students in Yukon rode the school bus to travel to and from school and home each school day.

Throughout the school year, we consider feedback and adjust busing services as appropriate. We work with our school bus service provider, school councils and communities and the RCMP to ensure we are providing safe and effective bus services to Yukon students.

Bus safety and emergency procedures

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

The first priority in any emergency situation, including for busing, is to ensure the safety of students and staff. We share information with families as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Student Transportation Unit at the Department of Education and Standard Busing have a list of emergency telephone numbers to share current information with parents as it becomes available. In any of these events, bus driver, support staff and emergency agencies are prepared to coordinate and respond immediately to ensure student safety.

In February 2019, we conducted a school bus safety campaign through social media, radio ads, and by sending out a household mailer. We are also piloting the use of dashboard cameras over the 2018–19 and 2019–20 school years on certain bus routes to record driving behaviours around school buses, including on the highways. We will assess this pilot project at the end of the 2019–20 school year to assess the effectiveness of the cameras.

The Government of Canada sets physical safety requirements on school buses, including school bus seating. In Yukon, students are only bused to school on a bus that is safe and in line with Canada's national standards. The Government of Yukon is part of a national steering committee on school bus safety, which identifies and assesses measures to further improve school bus safety in Canada.

Additional student transportation options

We provide supports for families to transport students to and from school by offering school bus services, transportation subsidies and city transit passes. For students who live more than 3.2 kilometres from the nearest school bus stop, we offer an allowance to offset the cost of driving students to a school bus pick-up location. In 2018–19, we provided over \$72,000 to 45 families for the student transportation allowance.

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



Capital planning and facilities

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

We have a number of projects underway to ensure Yukon schools offer modern learning spaces, including by building and renovating schools to ensure they remain safe and available for years to come. We continue to work with school communities through school councils to talk about ongoing maintenance, upgrades and capital projects in the short, medium and long-term for their schools.

All approved capital projects from the Department of Education are prioritized and managed through the Government of Yukon's Five-Year Capital Plan, available here: yukon.ca/en/2020-21-five-year-capital-plan.

Whistle Bend elementary school

In spring 2019, as part of the Government of Yukon's 2019–20 Five-Year Capital Plan, the Government of Yukon announced that it would build a new elementary school in Whistle Bend. The elementary school is the first planned in Whitehorse in more than 20 years and will accommodate up to 425 Kindergarten to Grade 7 students from Whistle Bend and the surrounding areas.

To inform our decisions as we plan for the school, we are currently working with partners on this projects through a Project Advisory Committee. The committee is made up of representatives from the Whistle Bend Community Association, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and the City of Whitehorse. We will be working with the Project Advisory Committee on the school's community and cultural needs until an attendance area has been established and a school council has been formed.

We are also working with an Owner's Advisor team, a group of consultants who will provide technical expertise to the government throughout the life of the project. The Owner's Advisor is responsible for finalizing the school's functional program, business case, and preparing the requirement to tender the design and construction of the school. During construction, this team will ensure quality of work and good value for money, and advise on technical matters.

Planning for the new Whistle Bend elementary school is part of our work to modernize learning spaces in Yukon schools to support flexible and hands-on learning. The new school will provide us with flexibility and capacity to begin renovating or replacing aging Whitehorse schools.

We plan to begin the design of the new school in 2020, construction of the project in 2021, and completion of the school in winter 2023–24.

Attendance area review

Attendance areas support the governance and operation of schools, inform the school council election process, assist with developing bus routes and help to effectively allocate resources that are determined by enrolment.

As part of the Whistle Bend elementary school project, we are reviewing existing Whitehorse attendance areas. As part of this review, we will meet with Whitehorse school communities, at their school council meetings, in 2020 to discuss attendance areas and hear from them before any decisions are made.

This review is to help us plan for future enrolment and future student needs. It will not immediately affect current students enrolled in Whitehorse schools.

French First Language secondary school

The Government of Yukon is working with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon to build a French First Language Secondary School with community spaces.

In spring 2019, construction started on this school and we expect the new school to be completed in the 2020–21 school year. We are making significant progress on this project and we will continue to work with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and the Francophone community to support the success of French First Language students.

The school and its community spaces will accommodate up to 150 students from Grades 7 to 12, and will provide modern, flexible learning spaces for students and community groups. This new school is part of the campus model for Riverdale, along with F.H. Collins Secondary and Selkirk Elementary, where groups, communities and cultures can gather, learn and play in a variety of facilities.

To learn more about the French First Language School construction, visit yukon.ca/french-school-updates.

Robert Service School

The Government of Yukon discovered and confirmed mold in two modular classrooms at Robert Service School in June-July 2019. The modular classrooms were closed and decommissioned to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.

We notified the school staff, school council, school community and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation about the issue. We worked together to make short-term adjustments to the existing learning spaces in the school to accommodate the classes that were previously run out of the modular classrooms.

To explore medium and long-term spacing options that could meet the needs of the school community, we established a working group with school staff,

the school council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, the City of Dawson, the Dawson City Library Board and officials from the departments of Community Services and Highways and Public Works. The working group is meeting over the 2019–20 school year to discuss options.

School modular classrooms

As part of the Five-Year Capital Plan, the Department of Education is acquiring modular classrooms to address short and medium-term school needs.

These projects include building two modular classrooms at Golden Horn Elementary in 2018–19 and 2019–20, and one at Selkirk Elementary in fall 2020. This modular classroom will help provide capacity for the school's programs and enrolment.

F.H. Collins site development

We continue to work to complete the additional features by F.H. Collins Secondary School. This additional work includes a community basketball court, an outdoor learning space for experiential learning activities and 32 new parking spots.

After some delays due to contractor availability, the updated timeline is to complete work on the Outdoor Learning Classroom in spring 2020, and the remaining projects in time for the start of the 2020–21 school year. We look forward to continuing to work with the F.H. Collins Secondary school community, and all school communities on the Riverdale campus, to complete work around the school.

Ross River

We continue to have engineering teams assess and monitor this school four times per year to ensure the current school building remains safe and available for students and staff.

The most recent assessments in the 2019–20 school year have found the school remains safe for students and staff and noted some levelling differences on the school's main floor due to seasonal foundation movements and issues with some doors getting jammed.

We immediately acted to ensure all doors in the school are now functioning properly. We are also planning some structural upgrade work, and will update the school community once more details are available on this work.

We are committed to ensuring Ross River has a learning environment that is safe and meets the needs of the school community and all Ross River residents. The Government of Yukon is committed to working with the Ross River Dene Council and the Ross River school community to plan for a new school. As we plan for a new school, we will continue to keep the community informed and work with the school community to ensure we address any concerns with the current school building.

Kluane Lake School

As part of our commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for Yukon schools, we are working in partnership with Kluane Lake First Nation to relocate Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing.

The current school was originally built in 1961 in Destruction Bay. As of October 2019, the school had 8 students, 7 of which normally reside in Burwash Landing.

The Government of Yukon budgeted and spent \$50,000 on planning for this project in 2018–19 and budgeted an additional \$50,000 for 2019–20 for continued planning work with Kluane First Nation. Discussions will continue into 2020 to explore options and determine the plan for this school in Burwash Landing.

Future planning

The Government of Yukon is ensuring Yukon schools meet the current and future needs of school programs with more than \$30 million in capital funding for school projects in 2019–20. As projects are approved, they are identified in the 5 Year Capital Plan.

There is work across all Yukon schools, including ensuring learning spaces reflect Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being; modernizing technology; replacing playground equipment; and continuing to work with all school communities on regular maintenance through the capital repair and maintenance process.

We will continue to work with each school community to identify and plan the short, medium and long term options on their facility needs to ensure all Yukon schools remain safe and available.

Student financial aid

The Student Financial Assistance Unit administers several programs to assist students in pursuing post-secondary education, including the Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance, Yukon Excellence Awards, Canada Student Loans and Grants and a variety of scholarships.

In the 2018–19 academic year, over \$6.6 million was awarded through student financial assistance programs.

Yukon Grant

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

In 2018–19, the total Yukon Grant expenditure was \$4,054,873. Eligible students received \$138 per week of study. In addition, eligible students who studied outside Yukon received a travel amount of \$1,500 to help them travel between home and school.

Student Training Allowance

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

In 2018–19, eligible students received \$107 per week. The allowance increases with the number of dependents, with a maximum of \$225 per week. Students who must travel from a rural Yukon community are eligible for a travel allowance. If they are required to maintain a second residence while studying, they are also eligible to receive an additional \$85 per week.

Yukon Excellence Awards

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

In the 2018–19 academic year, we distributed \$280,656 to 205 students for Yukon Excellence Awards earned through secondary school courses.



Yukon