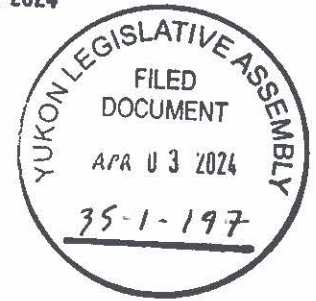




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Kate White
Leader of the Yukon NDP

March 22, 2024

Dear Ms. White,

Thank you for engaging us in your efforts to amend the *Education Act*, following BC's example to increase the allowance of locally developed courses counting towards graduation credits.

This is an important topic for us at the First Nation School Board (FNSB), as it has been one of the top priorities or concerns brought to us by our school communities since taking on responsibility for their local schools. We now operate and manage 11 schools throughout Yukon, and in each community we have heard from families, community members, and First Nations governments that they want to see the Learners at their school doing more on-the-land, with Knowledge Keepers, gaining the skills and education we know only our communities, cultures and environments can teach. Often we hear that the school and education systems needs to "value" local knowledge, traditions, protocols and teachings. Accreditation for more locally developed courses and curriculum is one option we have to formally empower communities and signify that we respect non-Western, non-colonial schools of thought, knowledge and ways of being, doing and teaching.

At FNSB we are also acutely aware of the importance belonging and identity has for all of our Learners. We operate public schools in Yukon, open to students of all backgrounds, and we know that no matter what their ethnicity *all* of our Learners will benefit from locally-developed courses. They are here, on this land, right now – that is a part of who they are and their story. Because of this, they have a responsibility and a privilege to learn the history and culture of this place. They have the ability and opportunity to learn numeracy, literacy and science from our shared land and stories. As educators in Yukon, we have the responsibility to work with community in a good way to develop locally developed courses and make sure they are implemented and engaged with, not as an extra curricular activity, but as a core element to our Learners' school careers.

Finally, we are very familiar with the concerns or criticism that locally developed material does not set our Learners up to be competitive and successful in society. To this, we simply shake our heads. There is no one way to teach any subject, but there are proven strategies to increase engagement and student success. These strategies include storytelling, land-based teaching, and student-specific structure – all elements of a Yukon First Nation pedagogy that is doctrine in our schools.



With these elements of our mandate and mission outlined, I offer this letter of support from the First Nation School Board for the Yukon NDP's proposed amendment to remove clause 43(2) of the Yukon *Education Act*.

Mahsi,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Flynn".

Melissa Flynn
Executive Director
First Nation School Board