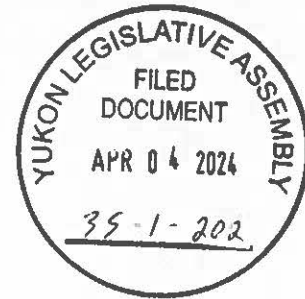

Golden Horn Elementary School Council

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February 5, 2024

Minister Jeanie McLean

Minister's office (CM-5)
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6
Jeanie.Mclean@yukon.ca

Dear Minister McLean,

We would like to update you and your department on the current Teacher on Call (ToC) status at Golden Horn Elementary School. The ToC circumstance shifted significantly in November of 2023, and it has had an overwhelming impact on the GHES school community.

GHES council requested key information and data on the TOC shortages and impacts on support positions, such as Learning Assistant Teachers (LATs) and Educational Assistants (EAs), when asked to provide internal coverage. On average, there was a ToC shortage of 2.8 per day between November 1st and December 20th, 2023, at GHES. This ToC shortage in this timeframe resulted in an average of 1 LAT per day being pulled from regular and essential duties to cover the ToC shortage.

It is unacceptable that LATs are being pulled from their essential job duties to cover for ToC shortage or other duties due to the shortage. The many children that have Student Learning Plans and Independent Education Plans did not receive proper supports during these months given the ToC shortage. The ToC shortage has a significant impact on LAT and EA staff morale and their ability to make meaningful progress with children. Even more of a consideration is the immense impact to a child's sense of consistency in their learning and ability to progress in their SLPs and IEPs.

GHES council is calling on this government to find immediate solutions to this issue. We appreciate that the Department of Education has been working to find some solutions. However, the Department's focus on 'demystifying' the low qualifications as a solution to attracting more ToCs is not a long term solution to this issue. It does not address the fundamental issue that ToCs in

the Yukon require few qualifications and are poorly compensated. We urge the Government to review the ToC qualifications, wages, and compensation as a long-term solution to this issue.

As an immediate response, school councils continue to ask the Department, including directly to the Minister at the Association of Yukon School Council, Boards and Committees' (AYSCBC) Fall Gathering on November 4, 2023, to hire some ToCs permanently. These permanent, or multi-year contract, ToCs could be floaters to help provide more consistent access to ToCs across the education system.

There needs to be forward, strategic action with resources and commitments to address the ToC shortage issue. While this may be a challenge, we expect swift action to be taken to support the teachers we want to retain and the children that need consistent and predictable schedules as committed to in their respective learning plans.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Knutson, Amber Hirsch, Christine Aikens, Shelly Peters, Shannon Fulop.

Golden Horn School Council

CC AYSCBC, Elaine Taylor, Executive Director
Scott Kent, MLA Copperbelt South
Kate White, MLA Takhini-Kopper King
Currie Dixon, MLA Cooperbelt North
John Streiker, MLA Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes