



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

April 8, 2024

Chief Bessie Chase
White River First Nation
Box 02
Beaver Creek, Yukon
Y0B 1A0

Dear Chief Chase,

Re: Bill 307 An Act to Amend the Yukon Education Act

I am reaching out to you to discuss a private member's bill that the Yukon NDP introduced during this sitting. Bill 307 is an amendment to the *Yukon Education Act*. It is a very straightforward change that affects high school students only- it removes a single sentence from the *Act*. That sentence, Section 43 (2), says that locally developed courses cannot account for more than 20% of a student's course load in a semester or school year.

The idea for this change comes from a former Yukon teacher, who pointed out that while the Yukon follows BC curriculum and BC graduation requirements, BC has made some changes in recent years that the Yukon has not. Changing the *Yukon Education Act* will allow the Yukon to come back into line with BC.

With many Yukon schools now using a four course per semester system, it means that not all schools cannot offer locally developed courses. In BC, students are allowed to use Board Authority or First Nation Authority courses to fulfill elective graduation requirements.

It means that BC students have more flexibility and choice in their learning, and can explore topics such as traditional technologies, leadership, climate change and so on. Unfortunately, Yukon students are being deprived of this opportunity and the chance to benefit from learning more about culture, environment, and community.

I recognize that the education system as it stands is characterized by silos and segregation of knowledge. This amendment to the *Act* is a single small step to breaching those silos, nevertheless I hope that this change will provide a tool for school boards and education champions around the Yukon to pull the education system forward.

I recognize that a full review and a possible rewrite of the Act is needed, but that process could take years. This proposed change can make a small but meaningful change now.

I would very much appreciate hearing from you about this amendment. Currently, it has passed second reading and I anticipate that debate on this will continue in Committee of the Whole before we proceed to the third reading. I have included a short briefing with this email that explains in more detail what this amendment does for Yukon students.

Your thoughts on this proposed change would be welcomed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate White
Leader of the Yukon NDP
MLA for Takhini-Kopper King

CC: Charles Eikland Sr., Executive Director for White River First Nation