



Education
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

January 12, 2026

Annette King
Child and Youth Advocate
Yukon Child and Youth
Advocate Office

Ashley Bower-Bramadat
Chair
First Nations Education
Commission

Melanie Bennett
Executive Director
First Nation Education
Directorate

Dear Annette King, Ashley Bower-Bramadat, and Melanie Bennett:

RE: Progress update on calls to action contained in the *For Our Children* report

As promised in our June 30, 2025, letter, I am providing an update on our work to fulfill your recommendations. We remain committed to addressing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism and systemic racism in Yukon's education system.

These calls to action align with priorities and initiatives already underway, including the Joint Education Action Plan, the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners, Pathways to Inclusive Education (formerly RISE), and the new legislated requirement to develop an Early Learning Framework.

As you know, systemic racism is a longstanding challenge. It requires time, collaboration, and meaningful engagement with our partners. This is why we will continue to provide annual progress updates. You will also see that some actions have advanced more quickly than others. This reflects our focus on doing this work carefully and in a good way.

Below are the highlights of our progress related to each call to action.

ACCOUNTABILITY

#1: Table the report in the Legislative Assembly in Spring 2025 and release it publicly

The report was tabled and released publicly on May 1, 2025, along with a public statement from Minister Jeanie McLean.

#2 Provide an initial response by June 30 and follow up with a public response by December 1, 2025, and annually henceforth

Minister Jeanie McLean provided the initial response in a public statement on May 1, 2025. This

letter is the first annual update, postponed in collaboration with the Child and Youth Advocate, to provide time to brief the incoming Minister.

PHILOSOPHICAL

#3: Circularize the top-down hierarchy so students, educators, and First Nations have a voice in decisions made about them and from them

As we noted in June, we can circularize operationally and selectively to inform day-to-day decision making and include youth and family perspectives in decisions.

- The Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) has been renewed for another decade from 2025 to 2035. JEAP represents shared vision of 14 YFN and YG and represents First Nations voice in 4 priority areas including Yukon First Nations Authority and Control and Responsibility. The Implementation plan including oversight options is currently being reviewed,
- Work planning for the first three years of the renewed JEAP is also underway, and the working group is looking at options to include student voice, families, and community voices in the implementation of JEAP.
- Pathways to an Inclusive Education System: 2025-2035 has been created based on the Communities of Inquiries recommendations from Yukon First Nations and educators. This pathway is awaiting consultation with the Yukon Association for Education Professionals.
- Competency-Based Individual Education Plans are being implemented in the 2025-26 school year to ensure student-centered support. These plans put the student at the centre and include input from both the students and their families or guardians.

#4: Commit to having every School Growth Plan include a section on its anti-racism policy that is aligned with EDU and contextually relevant with the local community

- School Growth Plans are being revised to include requirements for a goal specific to Truth and Reconciliation.
- The Department is committed to working with Yukon First Nations in the development, revisions and evaluation of school growth plans.

#5: Track efficacy of measures applied by schools and conduct regular and publicly available evaluations of School Growth Plans

- Resources are provided for monitoring and evaluating initiatives and outcomes.
- Through the JEAP, Department of Education will be working with Yukon First Nations through 2027 to develop an accountability framework or process for school growth planning and other related initiatives. The Department of Education envisions a cyclical process, with timelines for reviews and revision.
- The Integrated Outcome Strategy Implementation Plan for the Department of Education is in development, with anticipated completion in early 2026. School boards may develop implementation plans tailored for their respective boards as well. An Indicators Working

Group has been meeting to develop indicators. Implementation aims for the school year 2028-29.

- School Growth Planning Development is planned for the school year 2026-27, with implementation anticipated to begin in 2027-28, with combined support from School Councils and School Boards.

#6: Create procedural guidelines (3-step process) for educators to deal with incidents of racism that occur on school grounds

- We are working on developing guidelines with school leaders and teachers to address racist incidences across all three school authority schools.

#7: Establish a soft target on representation at Wood Street and meet it. Require the Wood Street team in consultation with community leaders to develop a comprehensive outreach plan that prioritizes Indigenous students and students of colour.

- The draft JEAP includes objectives that align with this call to action. In collaboration with community and Yukon First Nations, a percentage target of Indigenous students and students of colour will be determined for enrolment at Wood Street, and we will follow up with annual data. The timeline will depend on the finalization of the JEAP.
- The Wood Street team has worked to address this important issue in its School Growth Plan.
- Work under Pathways to Inclusive Education (formerly RISE) supports these efforts not only at Wood Street, but it aims to promote land-based programming in schools across the territory.

#8: Make local, culturally relevant, and experiential education mandatory across all grade levels, with a focus on trades, hands-on technology, and ADST skill-building. Establish clear learning milestones from K-12 and align outcomes with local workforce needs.

- As noted, the Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners includes student outcomes that align with this recommendation. The implementation plan is in development, anticipated to be completed in 2026. An Indicators Working Group has been meeting to develop indicators to track and monitor each learner outcome.
- We are working to re-ignite the Yukon elaborations for the BC curriculum with YFN Elders and Knowledge Keepers – this work was completed for K-9 curriculum and has not yet rolled out.
- We are currently evaluating programming for the Rural Education Model (REM) and expect to be organizing another REM in the 2026/27 School year.
- We are continuing to support the YFN accreditation policy.
- The Pathways to Inclusive Education plan and the draft JEAP implementation plan include elements that address this action. Elements may involve developing alternate programming options and expanding specialized programming in the trades, arts and information technology.

#9: Conduct a review of Early Childhood Education to better understand the gap between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students entering school.

We did not agree to this action, as the Department of Education has completed several reviews and is actively working to address gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students entering school. Three public engagements on early learning and childcare informed the introduction of universal childcare and the development of the modernized Early Learning and Child Care Act.

- The new Early Learning and Child Care Act includes the requirement for an Early Learning Framework, to include Yukon First Nations' knowledge, worldviews, cultural and traditional practices and educational priorities. The Department of Education believes that developing an Early Learning Framework in collaboration with Yukon First Nations will be an important step towards addressing gaps between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students entering school.
- The Early Learning and Child Care branch presented to the First Nations Education commission in August 2025 regarding the Early Learning Framework.
- The Department will continue to collaborate directly with Yukon First Nations to develop and Early Learning Framework that reflects Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and being.

#10: Conduct a jurisdictional scan of other school districts that have effectively adopted a restorative justice approach to discipline.

- A jurisdictional scan is included and attached.

#11: Create a Curriculum Assessment Committee to explore how Indigenous values, culture and knowledge can be mandatory and integrated into the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). This should be done in collaboration with the expertise of FNEC, YFNED, FNSB and Yukon First Nations.

- Department resources are used to support the weaving of Indigenous values, culture and knowledge and can be mandatory and integrated into the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), in collaboration with Indigenous knowledge keepers and partners.
- Re-ignite the curriculum working group consisting of representatives from all YFN to roll out the elaboration work completed. This work involved elaborating on the BC curriculum to support educators to teach the curriculum reflects local ways of knowing, doing, and being

#12: Support pathways to teacher accreditation for Yukon First Nations Citizens and expand definition of teacher — keeping local teachers local and empowering knowledge keepers and language speakers to become teachers

- YG and YFNs signed a declaration reaffirming their shared commitment to improving education for Indigenous learners through the JEAP objectives.
- The Teacher Certification Board decided to strike a sub-committee to begin work on how Yukon will certify Yukon-based Bachelor of Education programs. Yukon University is

beginning the work by doing a scan of other jurisdictions. The timeline is not yet determined. This work will support pathways to teacher accreditation for Yukon First Nation citizens.

- The Accreditation of Yukon First Nations Traditional Knowledge, Cultural and Language Learning policy introduced in the fall of 2024 recognizes Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge keepers as teachers and allows an avenue for YFN to deliver accredited programming.

#13: Honour Section 166 of Education Act and recognize First Nations Language Teachers as equals with other teachers. Remove the explicit exclusion of First Nation Language Teachers from the definitions of "teacher" in territorial education legislation

- YG and YFNs signed a declaration reaffirming their shared commitment to improving education for Indigenous learners through the JEAP objectives.
- The Department is conducting an internal review of the s. 166 of the Education Act and the Teacher Certification Regulations to understand the issues of parity/non-parity to prepare for possible amendment if needed at a future date.

#14: Review the use of standardized assessments and create an alternative assessment model, with viable post-secondary pathways, that students and families can opt into

- The Draft JEAP Implementation Plan includes a provision that would address this action.

#15: Develop an EDU-wide outdoor experiential education program and hire the requisite EDU-based team to offer these programs to schools who may not have the in-house staffing

- An experiential outdoor program has been developed and staff have been hired.
- An education consultant dedicated to supporting experiential education – canoe programming – new pilot has been executed in the past two years that allows for classes to join a certified instructor.
- Professional development for educators to safely execute experiential on-the-land activities for students is ongoing.
- Professional development for educators on delivering experiential programming

RELATIONAL

#16 : Develop annual, mandatory anti-racism training specific to education and hire and or contract the requisite facilitator

We have agreed to continue to support the expansion of, and participation in, anti-racism training specific to education.

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations signed a declaration reaffirming their shared commitment to improving education for Indigenous learners through the JEAP.

#17: Commit to making cultural safety training mandatory and ongoing for all educators working in Yukon schools

We have agreed to continue to support both the expansion of offerings and increased participation among educators.

- Yukon First Nations 101 is mandatory for all employees.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations signed a declaration reaffirming their shared commitment to improving education for Indigenous learners through the JEAP.

#18: Commit to developing a departmental YFN 101 course for educators and hiring the requisite facilitator to deliver the course and enforce the mandatory requirement that all educators working in Yukon schools take YFN 101, or a local First Nation 101 course if available in the community

- The draft JEAP Implementation Plan includes objectives that align with this call to action.
- YFN 101 is already a mandatory requirement. In addition, many YFN communities are already delivering their own local programs.

#19: Update procedures to ensure annual and mandatory evaluations of school administrators

- Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners contains provisions that align with this call to action.
- The draft JEAP Implementation Plan includes objectives that align with this call to action.

OPERATIONAL

#20: Compensate anyone in a teaching role (ex. Elders and Knowledge Keepers) on a fee schedule consistent with educators with Western certifications.

We had agreed to bring this forward as a discussion item at the next round of collective bargaining with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals.

#21: Expand the localizing curriculum team and support existing team with local First Nation education department and knowledge keepers.

We have agreed to reconvene the Curriculum Working Group to re-discuss the roll out of the elaborations developed for K-9 curriculum - these elaborations demonstrate ways to teach the curriculum embedded with YFN culture and perspectives.

#22: Apply commitments in YG's Breaking Trail: An inclusive Yukon Public Service

Article 49 of the Collective Agreement (Teacher Priority Hiring) was updated in the most recent collective bargaining cycle to align with the language from Breaking Trail Together. The Department follows Article 49 and adheres to the Government of Yukon's hiring preference policy, which gives top priority to Yukon First Nation applicants, followed by applicants of other Canadian Indigenous ancestry. Other recent changes to the Collective Agreement have increased pay for Yukon First Nations Language Teachers, allowing for increased recruitment and retention for local language teachers.

**#23: Apply a local hiring quota for community school positions.
new educators and administrators.**

As we noted in our original response, we had not agreed to this action, as a local hiring quota is not feasible under the current collective agreement and may limit school authorities' ability to recruit the required staff. We do fully support the Public Service Commission's Review and

Enhance Engagement and Communication Project under the People Plan Operational Plan 2024-2027. This project aims to improve recruitment and retention strategies in Yukon communities.

#24: Develop and apply a Departmental Anti-Racism Strategy.

Our department is committed to advancing equity, cultural safety, and anti-racism within education. We are advancing this work by reviewing current corporate and department practices and assessing how to integrate approaches to anti-racism into Education's operations, including reviewing the development of a strategy, policy or guidance to support school-based cultural safety and anti-racism practices. This aligns with our commitments under reconciliation and to create inclusive learning environments for all students.

#25: Commit to and implement a full-scale review of data management and practices as recommended by the AG Report.

We had agreed to this in principle. Strengthening this area is a key priority in the Integrated Outcome Strategy, Pathways to Inclusive Education and JEAP.

- We are currently reviewing our data management practices, and we maintain our commitment to continuous improvement.
- The Department is continuing its work as a member of the Data Working Group with Yukon First Nation governments, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, to support improved learning outcomes for Indigenous students in the Yukon.

As always, we will continue to work with you to address outstanding advocacy issues.

Sincerely,



Mary Cameron
Deputy Minister