

Response report - Audit 2019 recommendations Department of Education

Updated September 27, 2021



Audit 2019 response

This report provides an update on activities underway to address the recommendations from the June 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly "Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon – Department of Education".

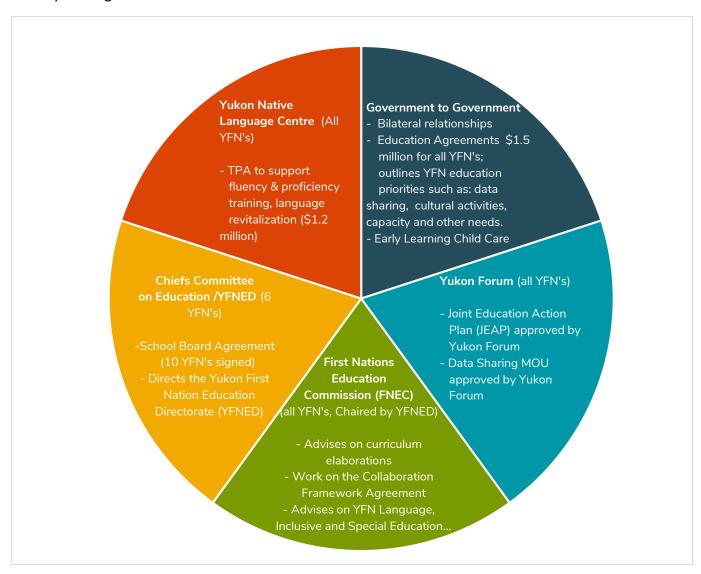
The Department of Education has accepted all of the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report.

The department remains committed to working with students, educators, families, education partners, and Yukon First Nations governments to address the issues and recommendations contained in the report, to ensure that students have the supports they need to succeed at school, and to improve educational outcomes for Yukon students.

This document provides an update from the previous report in December 2020 on the actions the department is taking to address the Auditor General's recommendations.



The department is prioritizing building collaborative relationships with Yukon First Nations, as illustrated in the graphic below, showing some of the collaborations detailed in this report, and more broadly through Yukon Forum.





Yukon First Nation School Board

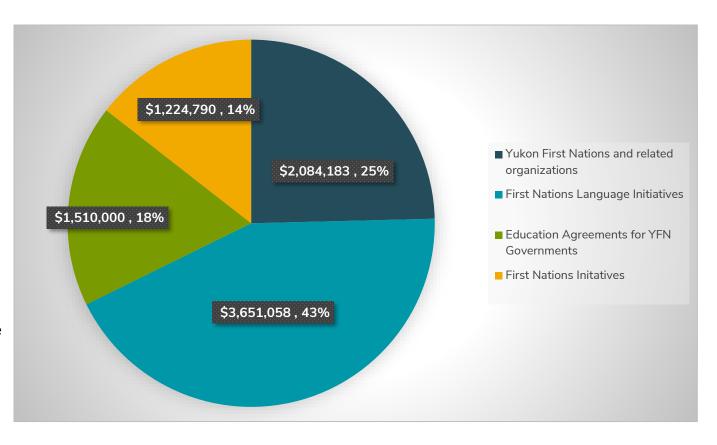
The Department of Education has been working with the Chiefs Committee on Education on options for establishing a Yukon First Nation School Board under the Education Act. The First Nation School Board Framework Agreement (Order-In-Council 2021/15) provides a path to advance reconciliation and give First Nation governments greater authority in the education of their citizens. (The graphic below illustrates funding provided in 2021-22 to advance First Nation education initiatives.)

Review of inclusive and special education

Another key milestone in 2021 was the completion of the first phase (information gathering) of the review of inclusive and special education by Dr. Nikki Yee, an educator with a doctorate in special education from the University of British Columbia. In collaboration with partners, the Department of Education is now moving forward to implement the recommendations from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education (RISE).

Pandemic Response

The COVID-19 global pandemic has generated one of the most turbulent times in education across the globe, in Canada and here in Yukon. Despite the challenges and uncertainty this has generated, which included delaying the implementation of some of the department's audit responses, we forged ahead in our work with Yukon First Nations and the Review of Inclusive and Special Education. In navigating the pandemic, as a country we





have realized that those children who are marginalized within the education system are also those who are most affected by the impacts of COVID-19 on students' learning; in Yukon this audit response informs a significant aspect of our education recovery planning.



Audit report 2019 themes and actions



Yukon First Nations education

Partnerships to support and improve First Nations student outcomes

- A protocol for collaboration with Yukon First Nations on cultural and language programming
- Guidelines for Yukon First Nations language instruction



Supporting student learning needs

- Review of inclusive and special education programs and services
- Formal Individualized Education Plan (IEP) policies and guidelines



staff learning needs

Supporting

• System-wide checkin on K-12 curriculum implementation with school staff

- Continued development of professional learning resources and curriculum materials for educators
- Enhanced professional learning networks for staff



on outcomes & quality assurance

Focus

- Yukon student outcomes improvement strategy and targets, focused on primary learning (ready to learn, literacy and numeracy)
- School Growth
 Plans, informed by
 student performance
 data
- Modernizing and tracking school staff evaluations



Action planning and implementation status

OAG Recommendation	Initial Department Response	Current Plans and Actions	Status and Timeline
42. The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to address the long- standing gaps in student performance and improve student outcomes, particularly those of Yukon First Nations and rural students. The strategy should include: • analyzing the root causes of poor student outcomes; • defining performance targets; • developing and implementing	The Department of Education has gathered and published student performance indicators for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12, including urban, rural, and Yukon First Nations students. The Department acknowledges that it has not yet implemented a comprehensive strategy for measuring and analyzing differences in student outcomes and for targeting initiatives to address those differences. The department will seek to collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments, who are in the best position to understand and respond to Yukon First Nations students' educational needs, to develop and implement an outcome management improvement strategy for the Yukon education system. This strategy, which will also include the participation of education partners, will identify programs and activities to better assist students who may need more support to improve their learning outcomes at school, and will also provide a framework of performance indicators and targets to track and	Work with Yukon First Nations and education partners to develop and implement a strategy to improve student outcomes, particularly for Yukon First Nations and rural students, including: o analyzing the root causes of poor student outcomes; o defining performance targets; o actions to reach those targets; and evaluating the effectiveness of those actions. With Yukon First Nations and the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education, refine outcome indicators and performance targets such as cohort tracking through transition periods, student satisfaction, graduation rates, and primary years' literacy and numeracy.	The department has undertaken jurisdictional research on this topic and had initial conversations with Advisory Committee for Yukon Education (ACYE) in October 2019 and First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) in February 2021. FNEC has requested the department work on a government-to-government basis with Yukon First Nations in developing the strategy. The department has an agreement with Tosh Southwick (IRP Consulting) to least the engagement with Yukon First Nations and development of the strategy. This work was delayed through 2020 due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The department worked with the ACYE and published initial performance targets for literacy and numeracy in Grades 4 and 7, as well as for high school graduation, in the Government of Yukon's Performance Plan.



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actions to reach those targets; and evaluating the effectiveness of these actions to improve student outcomes	measure student success, and to evaluate program effectiveness.	Implement new data software and processes to improve access and usability of student performance data.	The department is continuing to work to refine its student outcome indicators and performance targets, and this work will inform the department's strategy to improve student outcomes. The department created a Data and Analytics Unit in 2018, and has implemented new software and processes to manage and analyze student performance data. For example, the department redesigned its data system to enable more frequent (e.g., monthly, and by semester) reporting of its student data.
			As of December 2018 , the department reports system-wide on how many students are 'emerging or unknown' rather than 'meeting or exceeding' to focus attention on students most in need of support.
			In August 2019, the department established an internal data review and approval process.
			In September 2019, the department implemented a process for developing and distributing school data profiles to principals.



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		Improve data sharing with Yukon First Nations	The department is currently working to phase in 'data dashboards' that will enable on-demand access for authorized users.
		and analysis of First Nations student performance data.	The department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and established a Data Working Group to collaborate and share YFN student data and to engage in research and analysis relating to that data and program performance.
			The department worked with Yukon First Nations to implement a process for creating and distributing annual 'How Are We Doing' reports.
		Define 'maximum potential'.	The department will develop a definition of 'maximum potential' through implementing the recommendations of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education (see below).
47. The Department of Education should implement its required oversight mechanisms to provide summary reports	The Department of Education is currently revising its School Growth Planning Policy. The department will ensure that a process is in place to provide the Minister of Education with an	Align new School Growth Plan process with best practices in improving student learning, with a focus on student success and embedding of Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing and being in schools.	In collaboration with the ACYE, the department is revising its School Growth Planning Policy to improve the school growth planning process. This work has been delayed as a result of the effects of the



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to the Minister and complete teacher evaluations.	annual summary of the goals, data trends, and objectives from school growth plans. The Department will implement an improved process for annually monitoring the completion of teacher evaluations. The revised process will align with the new collective agreement with the Yukon Teachers' Association and will include requirements for completing and tracking teacher evaluations.	Establish a process for annual reporting to the Minister of Education with summaries of School Growth Plan goals, actions data trends and results.	COVID-19 pandemic, and is expected to be completed by the end of the 2021-22 school year. The department has implemented a process whereby school administrators provide an annual summary/update of their progress implementing their School Growth Plan to their Area Superintendent, and a summary spreadsheet has been developed and implemented for reporting purposes.
		Establish a process and system to notify school administrators when staff evaluations are due, prioritizing probationary employee evaluations. Establish a process for providing annual status summary reports to the Minister of Education on completion of teacher evaluations as an additional oversight measure.	A process for tracking required teacher evaluations is in place, and the Area Superintendents monitor the evaluations that are required. During the 2020-2021 school year priority was placed on probationary evaluations in order to manage program delivery during the global pandemic and psychological demands on frontline educators.
			The department has also developed a process for providing an annual summary report at the end of each school year.
70. The Department of Education should conduct	The Department of Education will seek to collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments to conduct an in-depth review of	The department will conduct a review of the delivery of inclusive and special education to Yukon students in the 2019-20 school year,	The first phase (information gathering) of the review of the provision of special and inclusive education programs in Yukon was



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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	its services and supports for inclusive education. This review will ensure all students have access to quality education by addressing their diverse learning needs in a supported environment that allows them to meet their maximum potential. The review will start in Fall 2019 and provide recommendations by Spring 2020, and will result in the development of appropriate strategies, to be implemented starting in the 2020-21 school year. The review will focus on inclusive education supports and services for Yukon students, including the delivery and monitoring of special education programs. We will seek to conduct the review in partnership with Yukon First	including arranging for an external consultant to lead the review, and gathering perspectives from staff, Yukon First Nations and partners about these services. This will include collaboration with Yukon First Nations and with the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education in developing the department's response to the recommendations from the review.	completed in spring 2021. In collaboration with FNEC and education partners through ACYE, the department has developed a work plan with timelines and established leads to implement the recommendations from the report. This work plan has been shared with FNEC and the ACYE to obtain their input and advice. We are currently finalizing this input, and commit to sharing the work plan when it is finalized. We also engaged with the LGBTQ2S+ community to make revisions to the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy, which is being updated as part of the overall review of inclusive education services and supports.
 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 	Nations because they are best placed to understand and respond to their citizens' educational needs and to direct targeted resources to support the success of First Nations students. The review will also consider perspectives from Yukon educators, parents, school councils, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, and the Yukon Teachers' Association, all of whom have important responsibilities in supporting students. The Department notes that the actions it takes in response to other recommendations contained		Through this school year the department will continue working with Yukon First Nations, the ACYE and Education partners and stakeholders to action recommendations contained in the final report, and assess their impacts on student learning and well-being. This work will include facilitating a Community of Inquiry to co-construct definitions and a vision of an inclusive classroom in fall 2021. The concept of the Community of Inquiry is presented in Appendix 1. This work will be carried out



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support inclusive education; • prioritize students for specialized assessments; • assess and track specialist recommendations; and • assess and track teachers' use of recommended strategies.	in this audit report will also improve its ability to provide inclusive education services and supports to all Yukon students.		using a Spiral of Inquiry (Appendix 2). Key workplan actions include: implementing consistent, competency-based Individual Education Plan templates, processes and structures; defining the role, qualifications and criteria for Learning Assistance Teachers; extending existing outdoor, experiential learning programs, cultural camps, and other hands-on activities as a way of teaching students with learning challenges; and explore collaborative professional development structures and exemplary classroom practices. Additionally, the department will review its resource allocation models to determine how resources can be more effectively allocated to align with student needs. Further activities are described in the full work plan. Partners and stakeholders for this initiative include: • Students • Parents/guardians • Yukon First Nations governments and citizens – including First Nations education department staff, Elders, students, Chiefs, Councillors,



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			parents/guardians, Education Support Workers, and Community Education Liaison Coordinators Classroom Teachers Aboriginal Language Teachers Educational Assistants Learning Assistance Teachers School Counsellors School Administrators Department of Education Central Administration Staff – including Student Support Services, Curriculum and Assessment, First Nations Initiatives, and Superintendents Yukon First Nations Education Commission Yukon First Nation Education Directorate Advisory Committee for Yukon Education Yukon Teachers' Association Community groups, including Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, and Autism Yukon
			Child and Youth Advocate Office



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			 Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon School Councils
89. The Department of	Collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments on education priorities is	The department will work with Yukon First Nations to establish and implement a	The department is working with an FNEC working group to develop the policy/protocol.
Education should complete	essential to make sure that Yukon	framework for collaboration on joint education	YFNED provided comments on the draft
and implement its policy to	schools meet the needs of Yukon First	priorities, both at the collective and community	policy/protocol at the FNEC meeting in May,
collaborate with Yukon	Nations students and offer all Yukon	levels.	2021. At the most recent meeting in August,
First Nations to meet the	students real opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations languages,		the collaboration framework was being reviewed by FNEC and they will provide
Education Act's	cultures, perspectives, and traditional		revisions.
requirements. It should	knowledge.		The department has entered into a
also develop a strategic action plan with specific,	The Department of Education will seek to partner with Yukon First Nations to complete and implement a policy for collaborating with		Memorandum of Understanding with the CCOE to establish a Yukon First Nation school board under the Education Act. The
measurable actions and	Yukon First Nations to meet the requirements of		goal is to establish Yukon First Nations
timelines to support its	the Education Act and to improve educational		authority and control over First Nations
work with Yukon First	outcomes for Yukon First Nations students.		education.
Nations.	The department will focus its strategic plans (e.g., its Business Plan and its curriculum implementation plan) accordingly, and ensure that they have specific, measurable actions and timelines. The department has also established the position of Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations Initiatives. This Assistant Deputy		The OIC establishing the First Nation school board was approved. Presently the department and YFNED on behalf of the CCOE is advising and updating School Councils and YFNs about the School Board option. If a school council passes a



conducting a referendum and for the election of FNSB members, anticipated to be held in the winter of 2021-22.	OAG Recommendation	Initial Department Response	Current Plans and Actions	Status and Timeline
Yukon First Nations on a government-to-government basis to explore other options for greater participation in and authority over their citizens' education. The department has Education Agreements/Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs) in place with all 14 YFNs and we are continuing our work with YFNs to address their education priorities at the local level. The department is also working with the Executive Council Office, Department of Justice, Government of Canada, and self-governing Yukon First Nations to include the		Minister will plan and organize the Department's work to engage with Yukon First Nations governments and to implement agreed to strategies at both the Yukon-wide and local	CUITEIL FIAITS AND ACCIONS	resolution, a referendum vote will need to pass to proceed to a school board. The department and YFNED are working with Elections Yukon to finalize a process for conducting a referendum and for the election of FNSB members, anticipated to be held in the winter of 2021-22. The department continues to work with Yukon First Nations on a government-to-government basis to explore other options for greater participation in and authority over their citizens' education. The department has Education Agreements/Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs) in place with all 14 YFNs and we are continuing our work with YFNs to address their education priorities at the local level. The department is also working with the Executive Council Office, Department of Justice, Government of Canada, and self-governing Yukon First Nations to include the language of s. 17.7 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëchin Self-Governing Agreement (SGA) in other



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			A number of other collaboration initiatives are underway with YFNs to address the recommendations of the Audit Report, as summarized in this Response Report. The department is providing \$1.5 million to support these community-level agreements with the 14 YFNs, as well as providing YFNED with an additional \$300,000 to allocate to the implementation of collective education priorities such as those identified in the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) (Appendix 3). This is addition to the \$435,000 provided for Education Initiatives, for a total \$735,000.
			The First Nations Initiatives (FNI) Branch has responsibility for: First Nations education and cultural programming in schools, YFN language programming in Yukon schools, and developing partnerships with YFNs (e.g., Education Agreements).
93. The Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the	The Department of Education acknowledges there is room to improve and reinvigorate the work on the priorities identified in the Joint Education Action Plan, which has not yet been adequately implemented. The plan was jointly developed and endorsed by all 14 Yukon First	The department will resume meeting with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada to assess the status of the Joint Education Action Plan, including:	The JEAP Senior Officials Group, including the Deputy Minister, met on November 25, 2019, and it was agreed that the priority areas in the JEAP remain relevant and should continue to be pursued through collective



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status of the Joint Education Action Plan's initiatives and determine how and when to complete those that remain.	Nations, the Government of Yukon, and the federal government. The department will seek without delay to resume meetings with Yukon First Nations and federal government representatives on this plan. The Department will seek to continue to meet on a regular basis, subject to agreement by Yukon First Nations, for the duration of this plan (that is, to 2024). At these meetings, the department will seek to establish and prioritize agreed to initiatives to implement the plan, both on a Yukon-wide basis and at the local community level, to agree to timelines, and determine how to appropriately resource this work.	 Meeting of the Senior Officials Group to discuss next steps for the Joint Education Action Plan working group. Establishing and prioritizing agreed-to initiatives with Yukon First Nations, and when and how to complete them. 	and community level agreements and initiatives, which are underway. A copy of the JEAP Work Plan is attached as Appendix 3.
99. In partnership with Yukon First Nations, school boards, and school councils, the Department of Education should develop policies and guidelines to support First Nations language learning. While developing the	The Department of Education acknowledges the importance of meeting its obligation under subsection 52 (5) of the Education Act. Under this subsection, the department is to, in consultation with Yukon First Nations governments and school boards and school councils, establish approved policies and guidelines on the amount of instruction and timetabling for the instruction of Yukon First Nations languages.	 The department will work with Yukon First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Native Language Centre to: Determine how school-based Aboriginal language instruction programs can best support: the revitalization of Yukon First Nations languages; 	The department has had ongoing discussions with the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) and the Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC) about these programs and the transfer payment agreement for the Yukon Native Language Centre to provide related services. These discussions are ongoing, and the department is seeking to collaborate with CYFN and the YNLC to support the YNLC's focus on developing Yukon First Nations



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policies and guidelines, the Department should: • work with these partners to determine the language goals for individual schools; • consider a range of approaches – for example, exposure classes to full immersion programs – that depend on the specific language, student population density, and community interest; and • identify options to support Yukon First Nation languages both during regular school hours and outside the regular classroom.	The department supports Yukon First Nations in their commitment to restore and revitalize their languages as a critical priority. The department recognizes that revitalizing languages and restoring Yukon First Nations control over and responsibility for their languages are essential to the Government of Yukon's work toward reconciliation. The department will seek to work with Yukon First Nations as well as with school councils and the Yukon Francophone School Board to develop and implement a Yukon First Nations Language Instruction in the Schools policy to support and enhance Yukon First Nations language learning in Yukon schools, with full consideration of the specifics of this recommendation.	 the certification of teachers for these language programs in schools; and the development of and revisions to the Yukon First Nations language curriculum for use in schools. 	language fluency, and the Department of Education's focus on Yukon First Nations language learning by Yukon students, both during regular school hours and outside the regular classroom. Funding for YNLC for 2021-22 increased by \$59,000 in addition to its core funding. Funding was provided to CYFN/YNLC to hire a consultant to help them plan for meeting the YNLC strategic plan and to address the department's requirements for First Nations language instruction in the schools. We are working with CYFN/YNLC and a consultant to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding and a one-year transfer payment agreement outlining a strategy for achieving the goals of the YNLC strategic plan and the department's priorities for First Nations language instruction in the schools. The target date for completion of this policy will be determined in collaboration with the YNLC and CYFN as part of these ongoing discussions.



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		Establish a Yukon First Nations language position within the Department of Education to coordinate the department's work.	The department established a position in its First Nations Initiatives Branch in April 2020 that is focused on Yukon First Nations language education.
109. The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages.	The provision of training, professional development, support, and materials is critical for successfully implementing the curriculum. The department will continue to develop and distribute modernized guidelines and materials to educators each year. This will include seeking as a priority to continue to work with Yukon First Nations to embed Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing in the new Kindergarten through Grade 9 curriculum and resources. The department will improve educators' access to supports and materials. It will also provide collaborative professional development and training opportunities by: • setting common professional development and non-instructional dates in Whitehorse for collaborative learning; • having principals submit professional learning plans for their schools based on	The department will continue to enhance support for the ongoing implementation of the new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Yukon schools, including: • With Yukon First Nations, development of planning tools, training, resources and materials that embed Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing and being into learning at school. • Increased collaborative professional learning and training opportunities for staff: o Principals developing annual school professional development plans with their teams based on learning needs relating to the curriculum, starting in the 2019-20 school year; o Common dates for professional development and non-instructional	The department has a number of ongoing initiatives to continue to provide educator resources and training to support the delivery of the curriculum, including resources and training relating to Yukon First Nations cultures and languages developed with Yukon First Nations. Yukon schools are working with cultural inclusion standards developed by FNEC to integrate Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being into school programs. All grades in Yukon schools are now using Yukon's modernized school curriculum and the new graduation program, with Yukon and Yukon First Nations content and resources. The department's Policy and Partnerships and First Nations Initiatives Branch work with Yukon First Nations to develop curriculum materials and to deliver training and support to Yukon educators relating to



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	their staff's learning needs about the new curriculum; and • dedicating one professional development day in each school year for learning about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing, with orientations from Yukon First Nations and reviews of Cultural Inclusion Standards for schools and school growth plans. In the 2020–21 school year, the Department will gather feedback from educators on the implementation of the new curriculum. This feedback will determine what further training and supports are needed to ensure educators have the skills and knowledge they need to effectively deliver the modernized curriculum.	days for Whitehorse schools each school year, starting in 2019-20; A minimum of one day each year dedicated to professional learning about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing and being and cultural inclusion standards for staff; and Increase communication and access to curriculum materials and supports in the 2019-20 school year. The Department will gather feedback from educators on the implementation of the new curriculum.	 how students learn about Yukon First Nations cultures, languages, and histories such as: Updating external credit process (e.g., courses delivered by Elders). Developing reporting standards and proficiency indicators for aboriginal language instruction. Localizing the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada Resource. Providing Social Studies 10 Indian Residential Schools training. Provided professional development session on Modern Treaties and developing classroom pilot for 'Modern Treaty Simulation'. Provision of 'Understanding Sites of Indigenous Displacement and Resistance in Whitehorse' professional development. Delivered professional development on Sustaining Indigenous Land Knowledge in the Whitehorse Area. Developed and distributed curriculum materials for Yukon First Nations 12 course.



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			 Yukon First Nations Pedagogy/Place Based Learning Network. Together with YFNED, established an Indigenous Academy at FH Collins ("school within a school").
			 Projects under development include: Developing Social Studies Grade 9 Indian Residential School Policy Unit and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being curriculum development. Piloting portions of the Yukon First Nations curriculum via the established Yukon Education Learning Networks Working with Robert Service School and Trondek Hwech'in on land-based curriculum.
			Central administration staff have delegated the planning for annual professional learning for educators to principals, with the requirement that the plans are collaboratively developed with staff and based on student and staff learning needs. The department has established common dates for professional development and non-



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			instructional days for Whitehorse schools to support collaborative professional learning.
			Yukon First Nations orientation training is being provided to new staff, and existing staff are taking the Yukon First Nations 101 course, with the intention for all staff to complete this course or an equivalent.
			The department has increased the frequency of the Educator Update newsletter to twice per month during the school year.
			Additional resources and curriculum support materials are being added on a continual basis to the Educators' Place, the online resource portal for Yukon teachers.



Acronyms

ACYE: Advisory Committee for Yukon Education

CCOE: Chiefs Committee on Education

CYFN: Council of Yukon First Nations

FNEC: First Nation Education Commission

JEAP: Joint Education Action Plan

SGA: Self-Governing Agreement

YFN: Yukon First Nations

YFNED: Yukon First Nation Education Directorate

YNLC: Yukon Native Language Centre

YTA: Yukon Teachers' Association



Appendix 1. Our Community of Inquiry



Appendix 2. Spiral of Inquiry



Appendix 3. Joint Education Action Plan