



# ASSOCIATION OF YUKON SCHOOL COUNCILS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

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## Message from the Chair



In consideration of COVID-19 implications, the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards & Committees (AYSCBC) has made the difficult but necessary decision to cancel the 2020 Yukon School Councils Spring Conference.

**An online annual general meeting, however, will be held on Saturday,**

**May 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-11:30 am to address the required business elements of an AGM including the presentation of financial statements, proposed workplan, resolutions and other annual reports. If members do not wish to participate in the online meeting, information packages comprising ballots and accompanying documents will be made available by registered mail. Please let us know if you would like to proceed with this option by Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup> to ensure that you receive the information by May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

We realize the importance of having an in person gathering for school councils and our partners from across the territory to network, learn and share from one another. Maintaining your health and your families' health, however, is of the utmost importance. The AYSCBC continues to function with a remote office. The association is monitoring the situation in Yukon and across Canada and remains available to support school councils as needed.

On behalf of the association, I would like to thank you for your continued work on behalf of students, families and our communities. Please take care of yourselves and your families, and look out for one another during this unprecedented time.

Sandra Henderson  
Chair



AYSCBC Vice-Chair & Jack Hulland School Council member Sheri Graham and Robert Service School Council member Simon Nagano, at the Yukon School Council Leaders' Summit held last October.



Ross River School Council member Dave Petersen and AYSCBC Chair Sandra Henderson talking education at the School Council Leaders' Summit



AYSCBC Chair Sandra Henderson & Yukon Teachers' Association President Sue Ross

## Staff Housing Policy

Last fall, the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) met with the Yukon Teachers' Association (YTA) to discuss the Staff Housing Policy that was implemented last year by the Yukon government.

Pursuant to the new policy, Yukon government employees living and working in the communities, are able to stay in government housing for a maximum of three years. The previous policy, which did not have any duration restrictions, grandfathered existing tenants and permits extensions in some cases. As relayed by the YTA, these changes coupled with an already challenged housing market in many Yukon communities may make it more difficult to keep schools fully staffed. The increased reliance on substitute and temporary teachers in the communities was further referenced as another consequence of not having access to affordable housing for teaching professionals.

We would appreciate hearing the perspectives of School Councils regarding the Housing Policy and whether schools in your community have been impacted by these changes.

## 2020 Yukon School Council Election Postponed

Due to the declaration of a public health emergency in Yukon, the **School Council General Election**, originally scheduled for **this spring**, has been **postponed and will be rescheduled for sometime this fall**. **AYSCBC will be working with Elections Yukon to discuss rescheduling the school council elections and what will need to be done in the months ahead.**

For more information, please contact Elections Yukon by email at [info@electionsyukon.ca](mailto:info@electionsyukon.ca) or by phone 667-8683 or 1 (866) 668-8683.



# TALKING EDUCATION

Over the past several months, the AYSCBC board of directors has been working to address a number of issues on behalf of School Councils. We would like to thank those councils who have contacted the association and have copied AYSCBC on correspondence relevant to issues of importance to their council. This helps to prioritize the work of the association in the year to come as well as in our day to day work.

## Inclusive Education Review

The association very much welcomes the review of Inclusive and Special Education that was launched on February 17<sup>th</sup> by the Yukon government. While we are encouraged to hear that school councils will be an important part of the review, we have not been apprised as to how councils will be meaningfully engaged in the review and when this will occur. As explained, it is imperative that the review be conducted in a clear, transparent manner with concrete objectives, action items, timelines and deliverables for improving learning opportunities for all Yukon students.

## Authority of Yukon School Councils

In recent months, the AYSCBC has been asked to meet with a number of school councils to discuss their concerns as they pertain to the overall engagement of school councils in decisions surrounding schools, programs and policies. Examples include the recruitment of and retention of specialized teachers, overall staffing levels, expansion of classroom numbers and programming changes in schools.

Section 113 of the Education Act states that “A Council shall (a) review, modify if necessary, and approve the school objectives, educational priorities and courses of study by grades, as prepared by the school administration, and other matters required for the effective functioning of the school”. Ensuring all partners are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities is essential for accountability and effective decision making. AYSCBC has recommended a working group of school council members, association and department representatives be struck to discuss the roles and responsibilities of School Councils and the Ministry as it pertains to this particular section of the Act.

## Education Audit Progress Report

In the absence of a spring conference, AYSCBC has requested a copy of the department’s action plan in response to each of the Education Audit recommendations including the following:

- A detailed list of the proposed actions to be taken as well as an overview of what actions have taken place since the audit was issued in June 2019
- Proposed timeline(s) for completing each action item
- An estimate of the resources (human, financial, in-kind) to complete each of the action items
- How, when and by whom the action plan will be monitored

## First Nation Language and Culture

As outlined in the Education Audit, there is currently no policy for Yukon First Nations language instruction. The audit goes on to recommend that the department of Education develop policies and guidelines to support First Nation language learning. As relayed by various School Councils, attracting and retaining First Nation language teachers is a significant issue for many Yukon schools. With a shortage of qualified teachers, a number of schools have requested support with developing skills and training for teachers who may demonstrate levels of fluency but do not hold a language certificate. We are pleased to hear of work being undertaken with the Yukon Native Language Centre and other partners to develop initiatives focused on fluency as well as mentorship opportunities. We have requested additional information regarding these initiatives including work to develop a policy framework in collaboration with First Nation governments, councils and others.

# School Council Leaders' Summit Conference Presentation Links

Thank you to all who attended the Yukon School Council Leaders' Summit last October and for making this inaugural event a resounding success! For those who were not able to participate, links to each of the presentations and other information related to the summit can be found on the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) website as follows:

[2019 Leaders' Summit Final Agenda](#)  
[Advisory Committee on Yukon Education Update](#)  
[Education Assessment Committee Update](#)  
[Student Assessment Survey Report-2018-2019](#)  
[First Nations Initiatives Presentation](#)  
[Teacher Evaluation Update](#)  
[Teacher Evaluation Presentation Materials](#)  
[Policy Advisory Committee Overview](#)  
[Education Audit](#)

As requested by delegates, a letter was sent to the Minister of Education, Honourable Tracy-Anne McPhee, regarding the summit outcomes. The link to the letter and the Minister's response can be found at:

[Letter to Minister McPhee- November 4, 2019](#)  
[Letter from Minister McPhee- December, 2019](#)



Del Van Gorder School Council member Ted Baker and Vanier Secondary School Council Chair Cynthia Lyslo



Above: St. Elias School Council member & AYSCBC Secretary/Treasurer Amy McKinnon & St. Elias School Council Chair Cassandra Wheeler attending the School Council Leaders' Summit last fall

Left: Yukon School Council Leaders' Summit

# In the News.

## Education Budget Highlights

### 2020-2021 Yukon Government Budget Passes - March 19, 2020

The Government of Yukon budget for 2020-2021 passed in the Yukon Legislative Assembly on March 19, 2020. The total budget for the department of Education is just over \$217 million. Budget highlights include:

- \$11.6 million for the French first language secondary school
- \$1.6 million for the Whistle Bend elementary school
- \$500 thousand for the Kluane Lake School
- \$2.4 million for education technology & modernizing learning environments
- \$1.8 million to work on joint education priorities with Yukon First Nation
- \$400 thousand to support the transition to Yukon University

For more information, please visit:

<http://yukon.ca/en/news/2020-2021-budget-passes-and-spring-sitting-yukon-legislative-assembly-concludes>

## New Tobacco & Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act

The new Tobacco & Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act, which takes effect in Yukon immediately, includes:

- Restrictions regarding the use and promotion of vaping products
- Individuals must be 19 years old to sell or use tobacco and vaping products in Yukon
- Signage must include “no vaping” in addition to “no smoking.”

For more information, visit:

<http://yukon.ca/en/news/new-tobacco-and-vaping-products-control-and-regulation-act-force>

## Student Attendance Review Underway

Student attendance is a significant issue in our school communities and one that requires a multi-faceted approach. In January, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO) announced that it is undertaking an independent review of barriers to school attendance in the territory. The review will include working with families, communities, teachers, school councils, First Nation governments and the Yukon government.

The association has asked for a written update regarding the work being undertaken by the Yukon government (department of Education, Health & Social Services, Youth Directorate) to address this systemic issue. AYSCBC will also be following up with the YCAO as well as the *Every Student, Every Day Initiative* to learn more about their work and to find ways in which we all can work collaboratively to address this important issue.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.ycao.ca/post/children-have-a-right-to-go-to-school>

# COVID-19 UPDATES

Effective March 18<sup>th</sup>, in classroom instruction was suspended across the territory until April 15<sup>th</sup>. As referenced in the links below, school representatives are working to assess potential impacts to school programs and to plan for measures needed to ensure continued learning for students.

Below is a summary of updates provided thus far.

## **Education Update While Classes are Suspended - April 3, 2020**

School staff are working to plan different scenarios for delivering lessons to students, should classes be further suspended beyond April 15<sup>th</sup>. Principals and teachers have started connecting with students and families. See Letter to School Councils from Deputy Minister Nicole Morgan:

[Letter to School Councils - COVID-19 Update](#)

## **School Council General Elections Postponed - March 30, 2020**

Due to the public health emergency in Yukon, the School Council general elections, originally scheduled for this spring, have been postponed and will be rescheduled for sometime this fall. AYSCBC will be working with Elections Yukon to discuss rescheduling the school council elections and what will need to be done in the months ahead. See Letter to School Councils from Education Minister, Honourable Tracy Anne-McPhee:

[Letter to School Councils-Postponement of General Elections.pdf](#)

## **Classes in Yukon Suspended until April 15th - March 18, 2020**

At the recommendation of Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health Brendan Hanley, classes in Yukon will be suspended until April 15<sup>th</sup>. As referenced in the link below, superintendents and principals will be working to assess potential impacts to school programs and to plan for measures needed to ensure continued learning for students. See letter to School Councils from Minister of Education, Honourable Tracy Anne-McPhee:

[Suspension of Classes in Yukon - COVID-19](#)

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Yukon Schools: COVID-19 – March 20, 2020**

[COVID-19 Q&A's](#)

## **Daily updates regarding the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Yukon & Canada**

<http://yukon.ca/en/information-about-novel-coronavirus-yukoners>

## **COVID-19 Counselling and Crisis Support**

<https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/covid-19/find-covid-19-counselling-and-crisis-support>

**Questions regarding COVID-19 can be directed to:** [publicschools@gov.yk.ca](mailto:publicschools@gov.yk.ca)

**AYSCBC promotes School Council, Board and Committee service as a meaningful way to make long term contributions to your local community and society.**

## ☆ AYSCBC MEMBERS ☆

Nelnah Bessie John

Chief Zzeh Gittlit

Del Van Gorder

Robert Service

Eliza Van Bibber

Selkirk Elementary

Takhini Elementary

Jack Hulland Elementary

Ghùch Tlà

St. Elias

Ross River

Tantalus

J. V. Clark

Khàtinash School

Kluane Lake

Elijah Smith Elementary

Grey Mountain Primary

Watson Lake

Porter Creek Secondary

F.H. Collins Secondary

Hidden Valley Elementary

Golden Horn Elementary

École Whitehorse Elementary

### **2019-2022 AYSCBC Executive**

**Chair Sandra Henderson (Whitehorse)**

**Vice-Chair Sheri Graham (Whitehorse)**

**Treasurer Amy McKinnon (Haines Junction)**

**Heather Milford (Whitehorse)**

**Simon Nagano (Dawson City)**

**Ruby Simons (Carcross)**

**Robin Smarch (Teslin)**

**Elaine Taylor (Executive Director)**

***We'd like to acknowledge and thank Yukon School Councils for their continuing support of AYSCBC and Yukon Education for their financial support on behalf of our members.***

***This support enables us to do the work we do with, and for, our colleagues in supporting students and school community involvement in education.***