

Leadership Practices Framework  
for **Yukon School Councils**

*Success for Each Learner*



Leadership Practices Framework  
for Yukon School Councils

- Ethics and Code of Conduct

- Building Partnerships

- Learner Growth and Development

- Process Skills





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# Introduction

*Confidence blossoms when people feel connected rather than isolated, when they are willing to engage and commit to one another, when they can act together to solve problems and produce results, ignoring boundaries between them.*

*– Rosabeth Moss Kanter*

# Yukon educational context

## Unique Legislation and Roles of Yukon School Councils

Education is not the sole responsibility of professional educators. Students perform more successfully with the involvement of parents and the broader community. Yukon's *Education Act*, which outlines the rights and responsibilities of School Councils, recognizes this through its emphasis on partnership and community involvement in Yukon's education system.

Yukon School Councils are elected bodies with powers to participate in the system that go beyond the powers most similar bodies have in other jurisdictions. The unique role of Yukon School Councils comes with significant responsibilities which impact on students, teachers, administrators, families and often the entire community. The *Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils* document has been developed

in order to provide guidance to School Council members who are willing to serve in this very important position of bringing community voice and perspective to student learning and the operation of Yukon schools.

## Success for Each Learner

Critical to the successful operation of a school is the partnership that evolves between the principal, the staff and the School Council as they work together. Sharing a common vision that all students can learn and be successful is imperative to ensuring continuous school improvement. A student-centered approach that recognizes the rights, needs and interests of each student must be the focus of the decision making of teachers, principals and School Councils. School Councils play a significant role in shaping the direction and learning culture of a school through their advisory and decision-making structures.

A School Council functions as a liaison, bringing community perspectives into the school. At the same time, the School Council is an advocate and champions student and school success in the community. The supportive role that a council plays in enhancing student learning and achievement

can take on many forms: encouraging school community involvement in the school growth process, advocating for those factors identified in the school growth plan, and participating in a school review. While the role of monitoring and advocating is important, ensuring good public relations for the school enhances morale, and ultimately, an overall positive learning environment. As well, understanding and supporting the success of adult learners and seeing School Council members as learners in their role, supports the vision of **Success for Each Learner**.

## Yukon First Nations

It is important for all to understand the significance of First Nations peoples in Yukon history and recognize Yukon First Nations culture as a part of Yukon society. School Councils must cultivate First Nation leadership and community engagement within the public schools. Eleven of Yukon's fourteen First Nations are self-governing, have the authority for education for First Nations students, and the capacity to start their own systems. While most Yukon First Nations see the benefits of working collaboratively with the Yukon public education system, they also want to see greater success





for First Nations learners and want greater involvement in the system and responsibility for the education of their youth. Working in partnership with Yukon First Nations groups to represent their interests within Yukon schools is critical. Collaborative leadership is required of all Yukon School Councils to build strong relationships with Yukon First Nations communities, earn their confidence in the current public education system, and ensure integration of Yukon First Nations culture and language in all Yukon Schools.

### Alignment with Yukon Department of Education Directions

Research (Hattie, 2009, Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012) suggests that where there is alignment in values and practice, student achievement increases and learning conditions for all improve. All partner groups that work toward student learning and well-being must operate from a common vision, values and mutual respect. All must participate in setting evidence-based goals based on student growth and learning. The *Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils* is a companion document, which aligns with the *Education Act* and three other Department of Education documents:

- *Educational Leadership Framework for Yukon Principals and Vice-Principals*, an aspirational document, was developed to ensure that Yukon administrators are aware of the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to lead schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to address recommendations of the Yukon Education Reform process.
- *Our Commitment to New Horizons: Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011–2016* also addresses Education Reform recommendations with significant changes that focus structures, policy decisions and practice on **Success for Each Learner** and the continuous growth and improvement of Yukon schools.
- The *Yukon Education Accountability Framework* is in development to describe the Minister’s responsibilities for student learning within the *Education Act* and those processes that move towards continuous student improvement within schools.

The Leadership Advisory Committee has guided the development of both leadership framework documents—for School Councils and for principals and vice-principals. It is the hope of the Committee that these two documents will lead to supportive and successful partnerships, positive shared leadership structures, and ultimately, improved student outcomes.

# Purposes of the framework

## Develops Common Understanding of Effective Leadership Practices of School Councils

The key organizers and leadership actions within the Framework were identified based on input from four distinct areas: the roles and responsibilities of School Councils as outlined within the *Education Act*; the input of current and past Yukon School Council members; Yukon school administrators and First Nations about what effective School Councils do; and a review of the professional literature related to School Councils, School Committees and School Boards.

Embedded within the Framework are School Council leadership actions, in accordance with the Yukon *Education Act*, related to:

- school calendars
- allocation of funds and resources
- school budgets
- discipline and procedures
- student suspensions

- appeals
- attendance policy
- locally developed courses and materials
- staff evaluation and discipline
- transportation services
- field trips
- extracurricular activities

These are determined in collaboration with the school principal, the superintendent or Department of Education staff and in the best interests of all learners and their communities.

## Provides Structure for a Practical Toolbox and Calendar of Tasks

School Councils have emphasized the need for creation of resources that are linked to the leadership practices, and are practical examples of leadership in action. Providing both a practical “how-to” toolkit with strategies and examples, and a calendar agenda that summarizes anticipated tasks by month, in electronic and print format, accessible to all School Councils, will support the rapid pace of learning that members experience in their short tenure between elections. Plans are underway to develop these resources.



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## **Serves as an Aspirational Guide for Recruitment, Orientation and Professional Development**

The Framework serves as a guide for ideal leadership practices to strive towards for prospective, novice and serving School Council members. Identification of key leadership practices supports recruitment and orientation of new School Council members, particularly given the frequent change in membership of School Councils due to the short two-year period between elections. Individual School Council members can use the Framework as a self-assessment tool and as road map for identification of areas for continued learning. School Councils, as a whole, will be able to review their work as outlined in the Framework and set priorities for their collective improvement. The Framework also can serve as an organizer for coordinated professional development opportunities for learning through workshops, conferences, and online learning.

## **Outlines Processes for Shared Leadership in Action**

School Councils are essential partners in education, working together and sharing leadership with the school principal. As community leaders, School Council members serve a critical function in reflecting and supporting parent expectations, and local school community priorities and values. This strong focus on collaboration and shared leadership is highlighted in actions within the Framework, particularly in the Building Partnerships, School Growth and Process Skills sections.

## **Supports Partnerships with Yukon First Nations**

The Framework highlights School Council leadership actions that demonstrate working in partnership with Yukon First Nations parents and community

members to enhance school success for all First Nations learners and create culturally responsive schools that integrate Yukon First Nations heritage, culture and language within local school programs. Input from members of the Department of Education Yukon First Nations Education Advisory Committee in this section of the document highlights what leadership for authentic partnership with First Nations families and communities looks like.

## **Supports Cultural Awareness and Engagement of Multicultural Parents**

The School Council is instrumental in reaching out to parents and families from a growing number of diverse cultural groups, and consciously creating two-way communication and involvement to enable the success of children for whom English is often an additional language.

# Organization of the framework

The focus of the *Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils* is to support the success of each learner—the core purpose and shared vision for schools and School Councils in the Yukon—within a context of working together with the school principal, parents, First Nations, the school community and the Department of Education.

The Framework is organized into four fundamental components or sections, which represent the most important areas of leadership practice of School Council members:

- Ethics and Code of Conduct
- Building Partnerships
- Learner Growth and Development
- Process Skills

Within each section, there are categories or areas of specific leadership responsibility with corresponding leadership actions.

## Ethics and Code of Conduct

This component outlines the ethical behaviour and code of conduct that all School Councils are expected to model in their duties within school communities and in their interactions with the public. Ethical values guide the actions and decisions of School Council members.

## Building Partnerships

Fundamental to the work of the School Council in supporting learner success is building respectful and collaborative relationships with the school principal, staff, students, superintendent, Department of Education staff, and representatives of levels and departments of government. Meaningful engagement of parents, families and the community, and serving as a bridge

between home and school are integral to the role of School Councils. Of particular importance within the context of the Yukon is the development of partnerships with the schools' First Nations communities to create culturally responsive schools and enhance school success for First Nations learners.

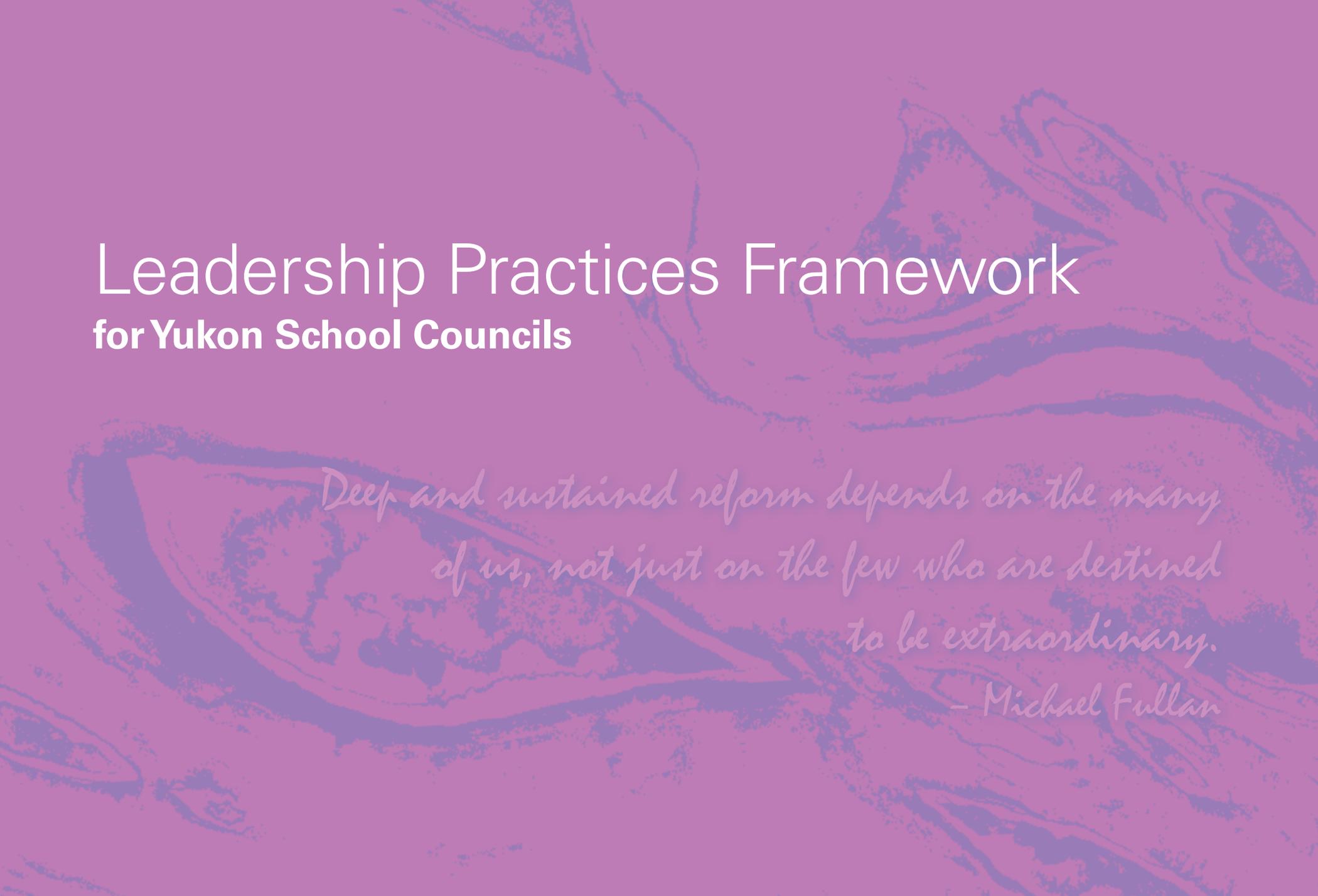
## Learner Growth and Development

The School Council is instrumental in supporting the School Growth Process and engaging parent and community input into the process. At the same time, School Councils are focused on their own continuous improvement in their roles as community leaders and learners. In particular, the role of School Council Chairperson is integral to the effective functioning of School Councils and in his or her interactions with parents, the community and Department of Education staff.

## Process Skills

School Council members require specific facilitation skills to run meetings effectively, communicate with the school principal, parents and community members, problem solve and make decisions, and manage conflict. Becoming knowledgeable about school policies, their development and review, as well as the protocols and policies that are involved in hiring a school principal and engaging in staff performance review, are critical process skills that School Councils require in their leadership role.



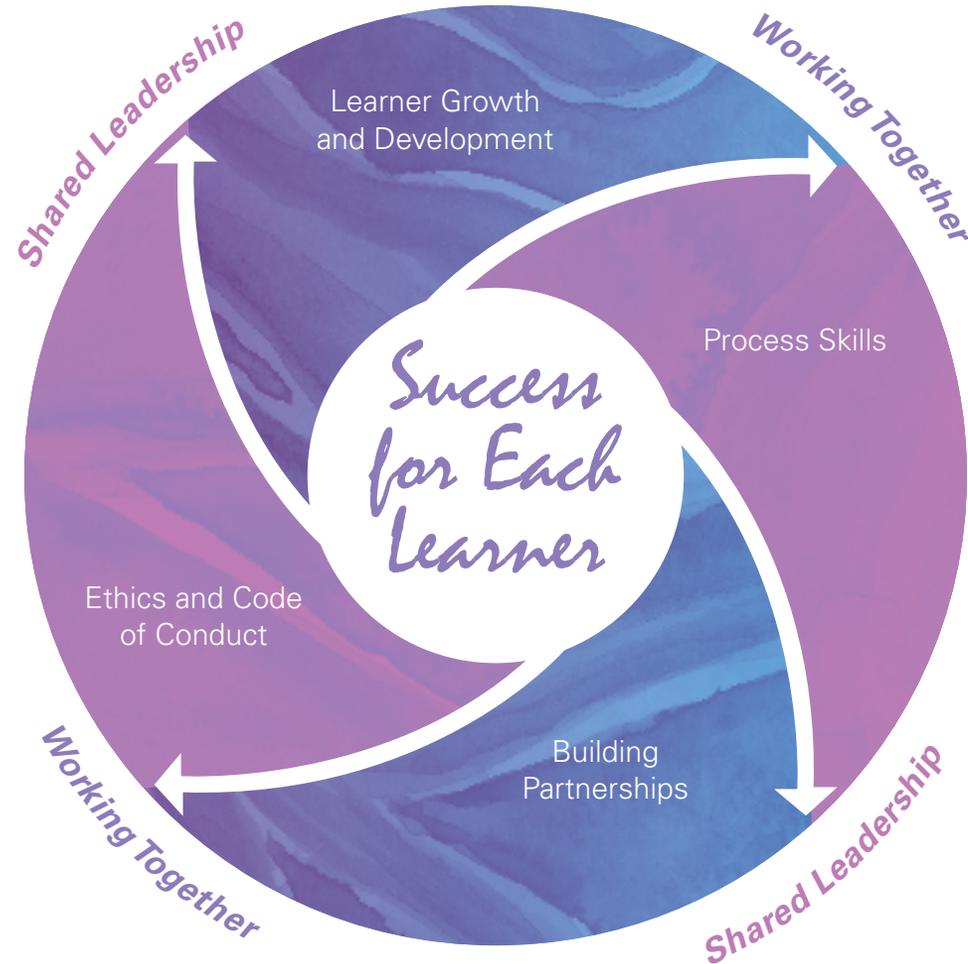


# Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils

*Deep and sustained reform depends on the many  
of us, not just on the few who are destined  
to be extraordinary.*

*— Michael Fullan*

# Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils at a Glance



# Shared vision: success for each learner

The shared vision of the School Council  
is to support **Success for Each Learner**  
within the school community.



*Enhancing student learning  
is, of course, an essential  
task for partnerships.*

*– Susan Auerbach*

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# Ethics and code of conduct

School Councils model core ethical values and are accountable for professional conduct to their electors and the Minister of Education. All School Council actions and decisions are guided by the best interests of all learners.

## Actions

- Model core values of integrity, respect, fairness and responsibility
- Develop a Code of Conduct to follow as School Council members and hold one another accountable
- In the decision making process, respect different points of view, yet ensure support for, and abide by, the majority decision of the School Council as a whole
- Ensure that School Council processes are transparent and accessible
- Maintain the oath of confidentiality regarding private information about a student, teacher, principal or parent and, in particular, matters related to student or staff discipline and staff performance evaluations
- Distinguish between self-interests and the interests of the School Council as a whole
- Do not use School Council position for personal bias, gain or benefit or for that of any individual or agency
- Recognize and avoid conflict of interest situations by removing oneself from related School Council participation, discussion or voting
- Ensure separation between one's role as parent and as a School Council member in all interactions
- Work as a collaborative and supportive team member of the School Council

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## Building partnerships

School Councils use strong interpersonal skills to build positive and effective working relationships and collaborative partnerships with the school, parents, families, First Nations and the wider community to support **Success for Each Learner**. Understanding the complex relationships that make up a school community is key to working effectively with all partners.

### Build Relationships With and Engagement of Parents, Families and Community

School Councils actively seek relationships with, and the involvement of, parents, families and community members to support the success of each learner.

#### Actions

- Provide regular communication about school and School Council initiatives to families and the community
- Solicit family and community input by providing forums for community dialogue
- Support family involvement in school and home learning activities
- Encourage family involvement within the school through a variety of options
- Structure ways to communicate with, and engage, families of diverse languages and cultures within the school and the community
- Encourage community participation in working on ad hoc committees
- Advocate on behalf of the priorities of the school and champion student success to parents and the community
- Redirect parent complaints made to the School Council through the dispute resolution process

*Effective collaboration happens between people —  
one person at a time.*

*— Hank Rubin*

## Build Collaborative Relationships

School Councils build positive, respectful and collaborative relationships with all educational partners to support **Success for Each Learner**.

### With the Principal

#### Actions

- Review the roles and responsibilities of School Council members and ensure that they are jointly understood
- Ensure that School Council members distinguish between their role and the principal's role and responsibilities in school operations
- Give advice and make decisions collaboratively in accordance with the mandate of the School Council
- Recognize and celebrate student success and school accomplishments
- Develop a joint protocol for communication of concerns or complaints made to the School Council that should be redirected to school staff or the principal
- Provide input into the development of decisions about the annual school operations and maintenance budget, the school calendar and the creation of locally developed courses and resources that support student success

### With the School Staff

#### Actions

- Encourage staff representatives to participate in School Council meetings
- Plan opportunities for staff appreciation to recognize their efforts in working towards student success
- Encourage teachers to follow the Yukon Teachers' Association (YTA) code of conduct when issues arise about YTA colleagues

### With Students

#### Actions

- Encourage students to participate in School Council meetings
- Recognize student success and accomplishments

### With the Superintendent

#### Actions

- Structure opportunities for the superintendent to meet the School Council, parents and the community
- Work together in the posting, interviewing and selection of the principal
- Review the School Council roles and responsibilities with regards to the School Growth Process and School Review recommendations
- Make recommendations for allocation of resources with the budget approved for the school and within the context of the School Growth Plan

### With Department of Education Staff

#### Actions

- Access support regarding School Council issues, procedures and resources through the Department's School Council Liaison staff person
- Invite Department of Education staff to serve as a resource to School Council
- Make recommendations in cooperation with the principal to the Department of Education staff related to staff requirements, transportation services, school facility, capital budgets and other areas related to the School Council mandate
- Participate in Department of Education committees and processes as required

### With Levels and Departments of Government

#### Actions

- Build positive connections with Yukon First Nations community leaders, and municipal, territorial and federal government representatives
- Support the principal in connecting with other agencies, organizations and departments of government



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*Protocols are really what we would call "Ways of Knowing."  
- Northern Tutchone Elder, Lizzie Hall*

### **Build Partnerships with Yukon First Nations (YFN) Parents, Families and Communities**

School Councils build authentic partnerships with First Nations families and communities to create culturally responsive schools and enhance the success of each First Nations learner.

#### **Actions**

- Encourage YFN and other First Nations to become members of the School Council, whether as elected members or as Guaranteed Representatives

- Understand First Nations governance responsibilities of the Guaranteed Representatives in addition to their School Council role
- Structure opportunities to learn about local First Nations communities
- Encourage discussions about local First Nations culture, communication and approaches to learning with the school community
- Support the school staff and community in cultural sensitivity awareness
- Engage First Nations community members in ongoing, authentic dialogue about enhancing the achievement of each YFN student
- Support a School Growth Plan that is reflective of the YFN learners' needs and based on consultation with local First Nations community members
- Support integration of YFN cultures, languages, heritage and traditions within prescribed curricula, locally developed courses, and through cross-curricular planning to ensure 20% local curriculum. Consult with Education Support Workers (ESW), Community Liaison Coordinators (CLC) and Elders
- Endeavour to alternate the location of School Council meetings at the school with local First Nations governance or community sites
- Encourage the participation of the First Nations Elders at School Council in school programming where applicable
- Advocate for and support YFN students in key transition points between grades and schools

# Learner growth and development

School Councils support continuous improvement and success for student and adult learners.

## School Growth Process

School Councils actively participate in and encourage the involvement of all school and community members in the School Growth Process to support the success of each learner.

### Actions

- Participate in and work with the principal, students, staff, parents, First Nations, and the community in developing shared values, vision and mission that support student learning and success

- Participate in and encourage meaningful involvement of all school staff, parents, First Nations, and the community in the School Growth Process and in School Growth teams
- Participate in and work with the principal, students and staff in developing school goals and a School Growth Plan that are based on evidence of student learning and Department of Education educational directions
- Approve the annual School Growth Plan as a reflection of meaningful participation in the process by parents and the school community
- Support and promote school goals and the School Growth Process to parents and the community
- Report back about school goals to parents and the community
- Inquire about and be knowledgeable of student and school progress towards goals as a result of strategies outlined in the School Growth Plan
- Work in cooperation with the principal to align resource allocation with the priority of student success and the strategies outlined in the School Growth Plan
- Participate in the School Review process at the local school and support the school in using the recommendations to guide the School Growth process and plan within available resources
- When possible, participate in the School Review process in other schools
- Maintain confidentiality regarding student data

*The most sophisticated "boards" monitor themselves by self-evaluation or self-assessment.*

– Nancy Walser



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## School Council Development

School Councils continuously self-assess and develop their leadership skills to enhance their effectiveness in supporting the success of each learner.

### Actions

- Understand the legislation related to School Council roles and responsibilities
- Recruit future School Council members and encourage diverse gender, racial and ethnic representation
- Establish a plan and processes for orientation and training of new School Council members
- Participate in regular self-assessment and set goals for improvement
- Participate in ongoing professional learning opportunities that support continuous development as a School Council member
- Strive to be well-prepared for School Council meetings to enable informed discussion and decision making

- Provide opportunities for sharing and rotating School Council roles and responsibilities to build skill and sustainable School Council leadership
- Maintain records of School Council meetings and decisions
- Ensure financial procedures and efficient record keeping are maintained
- Network with clusters of School Councils to share effective policies and practices

## School Council Chairperson Development

School Council Chairpersons self-assess and continuously develop their facilitation skills to enhance the effectiveness of the School Council.

### Actions

- Plan meeting agendas with specific purposes. For example: information giving, goal setting, reviewing student achievement evidence, seeking input through discussion, debating issues or decision making

- Facilitate discussion and decision making at meetings
- Encourage the sharing of ideas and perspectives of school and community members in discussions and decisions
- Welcome and receive delegations at School Council meetings
- Liaise with the principal
- Establish working or ad hoc committees
- Serve as spokesperson for the School Council
- Anticipate and plan for conflict by providing opportunity to hear dissent, participate in informed debate, and collaboratively problem solve solutions
- Manage conflict by responding in a calm manner, referring to meeting ground rules, and communicating expectations for respectful behaviour

# Process skills

School Councils continuously develop their knowledge and skills in facilitation, policy development and review, and hiring and performance review.

## Facilitation Skills: Running Meetings

School Councils engage in processes that contribute to effective meetings.

### Actions

- Establish a regular meeting schedule and communicate the dates, times and places
- Post an agenda in advance of meetings with the purpose and topics for discussion
- Create an inviting and welcoming environment at meetings
- Establish agreement on ground rules or norms for working together and managing meetings
- Hold self and others accountable for respectful communication
- Establish procedures to run effective and efficient meetings (eg. Robert's Rules of Order)
- Create working or ad hoc committees as needed which may include the staff and the wider community. Give direction, a timeline and processes for reporting back to the School Council
- Refer items that require confidentiality to "in camera" or closed meetings

- Make decisions by majority vote, ensuring a quorum of 50% plus one School Council member

## Facilitation Skills: Communication

School Councils structure effective two-way communication with all education partners.

### Actions

- Listen actively and speak respectfully towards others
- Develop a process for communicating and sharing information between meetings among School Council members
- Provide opportunities for members of the community to provide input to the School Council through a variety of formats
- Invite the school community to face-to-face meetings to create awareness, elicit input and engage in dialogue and respectful debate around key questions and issues
- Share accessible information with parents and the community in a variety of formats
- Follow territorial government and Department of Education policy in communicating with the news media
- Ensure that statements of the School Council are reflective of collective decisions and not individual positions

## Facilitation Skills: Problem Solving and Decision Making

School Councils apply effective processes for solving problems and making decisions.

### Actions

- Ensure that decisions are based on accurate information and in the best interests of all students
- Make decisions within the legislation and the context of school priorities and goals
- Develop collaborative and transparent processes for decision-making
- Identify and clarify the main issue
- Establish the purpose for making the decision, identify relevant knowledge or expertise required, and who needs to be consulted
- Generate alternatives within a collaborative decision making process. Seek diverse perspectives and respect differences of opinion
- Consider the consequences of possible alternatives and establish criteria for selecting a best course of action
- Determine the best solution and clarify the reasons behind the decision
- Communicate the resolution of the issue and the actions that will follow
- Maintain confidentiality related to contentious issues

## Facilitation Skills: Managing Conflict

School Councils structure effective processes for managing and resolving conflict and ensuring a safe environment. School Councils develop a dispute resolution procedure for hearing parent concerns with the principal, school staff or the Department of Education and inform parents and the school community about the dispute resolution process.

### Actions

- Hold School Council members and participants in meetings accountable for ethical, respectful behaviour and communication
- Seek first to understand by listening actively to concerns, acknowledging feelings, asking clarifying questions, and checking for understanding by paraphrasing the concern and underlying interest
- Strive to respond to concerns or differences in points of view without defensiveness
- Collaboratively problem solve solutions to concerns and create a mutually agreeable solution that is based on common interests

## Policy Development and Review

School Councils collaboratively engage with the school community in the development and review of local school policies and provide input into Department of Education policies.

### Actions

- Become familiar with existing school policies and review policies that require revision or updating
- Develop policies consistent with the Yukon government legislation, *Education Act and Regulations*, and Department of Education policies and procedures
- Establish, modify and approve policies for school attendance, discipline and school rules and other related School Council responsibilities in cooperation with the principal
- Structure opportunities for principal, school staff, and community-wide input into the development of policies
- Ensure that policies reflect the values and priorities of the principal and staff, parents and the community in keeping with support for student success
- Strive to access and share policies with other School Councils
- Ensure new school policies are communicated to students, school staff, parents and the community

## Hiring and Performance Review

School Councils follow due process and adhere to Department of Education hiring protocols and performance review policies and practices.

### Actions

- In collaboration with the superintendent, identify principal candidates for interviewing, develop interview questions based on the *Educational Leadership Framework for Yukon Principals and Vice-Principals* and the priorities of the school community, participate in the interview process, and select a principal based on Department of Education policies
- Support the principal's goals as outlined in his or her performance plan within a regularly scheduled Administrator Evaluation process
- Following due process, and if deemed necessary, may direct the superintendent to complete an evaluation of a principal, teacher or staff member and will receive a summary of the evaluation report
- Following due process, and if deemed necessary, may recommend to the superintendent the dismissal, transfer, discipline or demotion of a teacher, principal or other employee in the school with reasons for the recommendation
- Recognize and celebrate the efforts and successes of the principal and staff in supporting student success

# Appendices

*If we don't pay attention to the functional dynamics of the group — either by attending to them ourselves or by being responsible for ensuring that other colleagues pick up the pieces of the responsibility — then the collaboration will fail.*

*— Hank Rubin*

## Acknowledgements

The Yukon Department of Education acknowledges the shared leadership demonstrated by a number of individuals, committees and associations in the collaborative development of the *Leadership Practices Framework for Yukon School Councils*.

Instrumental in guiding the process and shaping the document were members of the **Department of Education Leadership Advisory Committee**, comprised of representatives from the Association of Yukon School Administrators (AYSA), Yukon Teachers Association (YTA), Yukon First Nations (YFN) groups, the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC), Yukon College (YC), and the Yukon Department of Education.



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## Education Act and Regulations reference index

The sections of the *Education Act* that are important for School Council members to be aware of in carrying out their responsibilities are listed below.

### Topic and Section Number

Aboriginal languages 52(5)  
Agreement with First Nations 53  
Agreements with Government of Yukon 117(1)  
Agreements with Minister 7  
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## Glossary of educational terms

A glossary of educational terms is included to create common understandings and to ensure that the language is accessible to all educational partners and members of the profession and the public. This glossary is the same as the one in the *Educational Leadership Framework for Yukon Principals and Vice-principals* document.

**Achievement** Achievement relates to the ability of students to analyze critically, reason and think independently, and acquire basic learning skills and bodies of knowledge; to develop in students lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world around them and a capacity for creative thought and expression; to develop in students a sense of self-worth and personal initiative; to develop an appreciation of the fine arts and an understanding of cultural heritage; to develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and well-being; to develop a sense of social responsibility, and a tolerance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others; and to prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives; to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with changes in the workplace.

**Accountability** Accountability is the regular monitoring and assessment of students, curriculum, schools, and the education system to identify what is working in the system and what is not and to provide an informed basis for change. In the context of institutional accountability, assessments are undertaken to determine the effectiveness of schools and school personnel. In the context of school improvement, assessment is an essential tool for evaluating the effectiveness of changes in the teaching-learning process.

**Assessment** Assessment is the process of collecting, synthesizing and interpreting information to aid in decision making. In an educational context, assessment is the process of observing learning—describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about a student’s or one’s own learning. Different types of assessment instruments include achievement tests, observation instruments, performance tasks, and authentic assessments. The effectiveness of a particular approach to assessment depends on its suitability for the intended purpose.

**Assessment for Learning** Assessment for learning is explicitly designed to promote learning and shifts the emphasis from summative to formative assessment, from making judgments to creating descriptions that can be used in the service of the next stage of learning. Assessment for learning happens in the middle of learning, often more than once, rather than at the end to identify particular learning needs.

**Assessment as Learning** Assessment as learning reinforces and extends the role of formative assessment for learning by emphasizing the role of the student, not only as a contributor to the assessment and learning process, but also as the crucial connector between them. Assessment as learning occurs when students personally monitor what they are learning and use the feedback from this monitoring to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand. Assessment as learning is the ultimate goal where students are their own best assessors.

**Assessment of Learning** Assessment of learning is the predominant kind of assessment in schools. Its purpose is summative, intended to certify learning and report to parents and students about students’ progress in school, usually signaling students’ relative position compared to other students. Assessment of learning results are expressed symbolically, generally as marks or letter grades and summarized across several content areas in reports to parents.

**Assumptions** Assumptions are what we hold to be true about a subject and exert a powerful force on our behaviour and professional practice.

**Change Process** Change involves changes in beliefs, behaviours or resources. A change process involves initiating, implementing, and sustaining a change.

**Code of Conduct** Code of conduct describes the rights and responsibilities and procedures for managing the behaviour of all persons on school premises.

**Collaboration** Collaboration is a process that occurs among individuals that enables participants to address issues and accomplish goals more successfully than they could have separately by bringing their collective skills, knowledge and perspectives to the situation.

**Community Development** Community refers to factors such as size of the population, ethnicity, culture, age, and socio-economics that affect interactions with the school. Community development is dependent upon the principal getting to know and understand the community by learning what the issues are, who is most responsible for them, and developing a collaborative process in which to improve relationships.

**Critical Thinking** Critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.

**Culture** Culture operates at four levels: artifacts, traditions, language, and values and beliefs. Culture is how we think about our environment. Others define culture as a pattern of basic assumptions by a given group or the way we do things around here. School cultures are complex webs of traditions and norms.

**Culturally Responsive Schools** Culturally responsive schools integrate activities, resources reflecting the cultures, traditions, heritage languages and practices of the students, parents and communities indigenous of a particular place served by the school into the school programs.

**Curriculum** Curriculum can mean the prescribed learning outcomes for a set of courses or grades. It can be a sequenced plan to educate students or a broad field of study. Curriculum also can mean the broad scope of school experiences that one believes has a direct impact on student learning. Curriculum can be defined as planned and unplanned concepts, content, skills, work habits, means of assessment, attitudes, and instructional strategies taught in the classroom and the variety of school activities in and out of class that influence present and future academic, social, emotional and physical growth of students.

**Data Based Decision Making** Data based decision making is analyzing existing sources of information (class and school attendance, grades, test scores) and other data (portfolios, surveys, interviews) to make decisions about the school. The process involves organizing and interpreting the data and creating action plans based on the data to plan for improvement.

**DART** DART stands for District Assessment Reading Team. The DART is focused on providing information to teachers on students' reading comprehension

and thinking skills. DART is delivered twice a year in Yukon schools to help inform instruction and improve learning.

**Dialogue** Dialogue is the process by which we make known to one another the assumptions that underlie our perspectives and the thought processes and information that shape those assumptions. Dialogue engages us in a thorough examination of our beliefs, deepens our understanding and improves relationships.

**Differentiated Instruction** Differentiated instruction involves adjusting (adapting or modifying) teaching and learning to better enable students of various abilities, interests, and special educational needs to successfully complete the curriculum.

**Distributed Leadership** Distributed Leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role. The distributed perspective focuses on how leadership practice is distributed among formal and informal leaders. Distributed leadership is an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise. In this sense, distributed leadership is a form of collective agency incorporating the activities of many individuals in a school who work at mobilizing and guiding others.

**Diversity** In education, discussions about diversity involve recognizing a variety of student needs including those of ethnicity, language, socioeconomic class, disabilities, and gender. School reforms attempt to address these issues to help all students succeed. Schools also respond to societal diversity by attempting to promote understanding and acceptance of cultural and other differences.

**Emerging Technologies** Technology is more or less the means of getting a job done, whatever the means and the job happens to be. Emerging technologies can be described as the ongoing creation, development, and use of new electronic means of processing, storing, presenting, and communicating information.

**Emotional Intelligence Competencies** Emotional Intelligence is the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively. It consists of four fundamental capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skill.

**English Language Learner** An English Language Learner speaks a primary language other than English or a variety of English which is significantly different than that used in the medium of instruction in Yukon schools, who may require focused support to attain English language proficiency.

**Ethical Dilemmas** Ethical dilemmas are the tough choices when one has to choose between one right value and another right value.

**Ethical Practice** Ethical practice is behaviour that demonstrates a commitment to moral principles that are based on core or universal moral values of fairness or justice, respect, responsibility, honesty, compassion, inclusion and tolerance.

**Experiential Education** In Experiential education a student constructs knowledge, value and skill from direct experience. It involves the active, hands-on engagement of students within and outside the classroom, making use of a diversity of learning environments.

**Formative Assessment** Formative assessment is assessment as and for learning. It is used for ongoing instructional planning and student feedback to help the student identify and meet the specific needs of his/her learning plan.

**Goals** Goals are broad, long-term statements that guide the Department of Education in realizing the vision and long-term milestones of success. Goals represent what people commit themselves to do to reach their vision.

**Inclusive Culture** An inclusive culture embraces the uniqueness and dignity of all individuals and fosters shared beliefs and values. An inclusive culture is characterized by broad community engagement and cooperation.

**Initiatives** Initiatives are specific activities or projects that will implement Department of Education strategies.

**Instruction** Instruction is the process by which content or curriculum is transported to the student. Instruction consists of three parts: input, modeling or demonstration, and active involvement or rehearsal.

**Instructional Leadership** Instructional leadership emphasizes improving the quality of teaching and learning processes for students and adults in schools through regular dialogue about learning and how to improve it based on understanding of the body of research on learning and teaching and evidence of student learning outcomes.

**Interagency/External Agencies and Organizations** Education in our schools requires political and public support so that the necessary resources are available to carry out critical functions of meeting the needs of all students.

**Intrapersonal Capacity** Intrapersonal intelligence is turned inward and is the capacity to form an accurate model of oneself and to be able to use that model to operate effectively in life. Intrapersonal intelligence is the key to self-knowledge. It includes access to one's own feelings and the ability to discriminate among them and draw upon them to guide behaviour. Intrapersonal competencies include self-awareness (knowing one's internal state, preferences, resources and intuitions) and self-regulation/management (managing one's internal states, impulses and resources).

**Interpersonal Capacity** Interpersonal intelligence is turned outward and is the capacity to understand other people, what motivates them, how they work, and how to work cooperatively with them. It includes the capacities to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations and desires of other people (emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals), empathy (awareness of others' feelings and needs), and social skills (adeptness at inducing desirable responses from others).

**Leadership** Leadership can be defined as an act of influence involving reciprocal relationships through which members of an organization or community construct common meanings, build capacity and enhance their ability to achieve shared goals. One of the responsibilities of leadership is to give a sense of direction, and to establish an overarching purpose.

**Learning Climate** The learning climate is the "feel" or tone of a classroom or school, indicated by the total environment, including especially the way individuals in classrooms and schools relate to one another.

**Learning Community** Learning Communities comprise a group, which could include staff, students, parents, and community members, who work towards a common purpose. Learning communities or communities of practice, are the terms often given to schools in which staff members provide meaningful and sustained assistance to one another to improve teaching and student learning. Learning Communities are characterized by a shared mission, vision, and values; collective inquiry; collaborative teams; an orientation toward action and a willingness to experiment; commitment to continuous improvement; and a focus on results. A learning community model flows from the assumption that the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn.

**Learning Culture** This is a culture that is characterized by a deep focus on learning and engagement in the pursuit of learning.

**Learning Outcome** A learning outcome is a statement of something that students are expected to know and/or do at the end of an indicated grade or course.

**Legal and Contractual Obligations** Legal and contractual obligations are the responsibilities that the leader has for administering school acts and regulations, territorial policies (dictate what to do) and procedures (detail how to do it), external legal requirements, and the contractual agreements between Department of Education employers and employees.

**Literacy** Literacy is an essential aspect of communication vital to lifelong learning. Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, and communicate using printed and written materials with oral language skills as the foundation. First Nations languages, French, English language learners and information technology are an integral part of a comprehensive literacy program.

**Management** Management is the bureaucratic aspect of administration which relies primarily on rational analysis to design methods, or internal and external processes with role descriptions to implement strategic plans. Management is the technical and legal duties related to the hierarchical structure of the school system and involves compliance with legislation, policies or role descriptions as well as the stewardship of resources.

**Mandate** A mandate is a clear, concise definition of the Department of Education's purpose and role. It gives direction to the programs and services to deliver accessible and quality education to all Yukon learners including children and adults.

**Mission** Mission is the purpose or the fundamental reason for an organization's existence.

**Mission Statement** A mission statement presents a clear description of the purposes of an organization.

**Moral Courage** Moral Courage is a commitment to moral principles, an awareness of the danger involved in supporting those principles, and a willing endurance of that danger. A leader needs courage over time and the willingness to risk and risk again, and to function well under prolonged stress, and keep pursuing the values and vision of the school.

**Moral Purpose of Education** Moral purpose of education is about the deep purpose that expresses the organization's reason for existence. Moral purpose is a strong commitment to making a difference and modeling for and engaging with others to build a community committed to shared purpose.

**Moral Stewardship** Stewardship is the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in service, rather than in control, of those around us. Stewardship involves placing oneself in service to ideas and ideals and to others who are committed to their fulfillment. Moral Stewardship is based on a deep commitment to values that makes a critical difference in the lives of students and their families.

**Networks** Networks involve people working in groups around a common interest within and across organizational boundaries. Information of all kinds is both generated and shared through networks of all types. The value of networks is its capacity for sharing common problems and strategies, and sharing perspectives to enrich abilities to lead in one's own context.

**New Horizons** New Horizons is the implementation and monitoring phase of the Yukon Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 that provides a road map for education priorities for the next five years. New Horizons includes Department goals, objectives, key strategies and initiatives developed based on a synthesis of recommendations from key reviews of public education.

**Organizational Capacity** Organizational capacity focuses on strengthening the culture, and building organizational learning and collaborative processes.

**Organizational Learning** Organizational learning or collective teacher efficacy involves three stages: a trusting and collaborative climate; shared and monitored mission; and support for taking initiatives and risks, all supported by ongoing, relevant professional development.

**Outcomes** Outcomes are the results achieved through the impact of an initiative, program, or policy.

**Partnership** Partnership involves collaboration by sharing decision making with a broad group of engaged partners.

**Pyramid of Intervention** The Pyramid of Intervention is the system of supports that a school provides for its struggling students.

**Relationships** Relationships are how people interact with each other and the kind of relationships they form. A focus on people and relationships is essential to achieving purposes.

**Rubric** A rubric is a scoring tool that teachers use to assess student learning. Using a set of criteria and standards directly tied to the stated learning outcomes, educators can assess each student's performance. A rubric is a scoring guide for making performance criteria visible. A rubric can be an explicit description of performance characteristics corresponding to a point on a rating scale.

**School Councils** School Councils were created in the 1990 *Education Act* in the Yukon. School Councils have defined roles and responsibilities for the

administration of schools and education programs. School Councils share responsibility with the Department of Education, First Nations, and parents. School Councils follow specific regulations, policies and protocols.

**School Growth Process** The purpose of the School Growth Process is to improve student learning. The School Growth Process provides a means to achieve comprehensive engagement for students, teachers, parents, and community members for each school. The School Growth Process leads to a school growth plan, which is reviewed yearly, and focuses on dialogue, evidence-based decision making, and cooperation among diverse community members.

**School Operations** School operations include responsibility for the maintenance and operations of the facilities, safety, fiscal and budgetary procedures, personnel practices, and resource acquisition within a framework of Department of Education and government policy and procedures.

**School Wide Writes** School Wide Writes is an assessment that helps teachers strengthen students' writing skills through a personal and impromptu writing assignment. It is delivered to Grades 2–9 twice a year and based on the British Columbia Performance Standards.

**Self-Assessment** Self-assessment is a process in which individuals engage in a systematic review of their performance, critiquing their own work, usually for the purpose of improving future performance. It usually involves comparison with standard, established criteria.

**Self-Awareness** Self-awareness is knowing one's internal state, preferences, resources and intuitions.

**Self-Management** Self-management is managing or regulating one's internal states, impulses and resources.

**Shared Vision** Shared vision is building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there.

**Social Awareness** Social awareness involves empathy (skill at sensing other people's emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns), organizational awareness (the ability to read the currents of organizational life, build decision networks, and navigate politics), and service orientation (the ability to recognize and meet customers' needs).

**Standards** Standards are agreed upon values used to measure the quality of individual performance.

**Strategies** Strategies are patterns of activities designed to achieve objectives.

**Strategic Planning** Strategic planning is a systematic and regular process in which leaders review mission, vision, core values, use an environmental scan and review previous results to plan and move forward.

**Student** A student is a person enrolled in a K–12 educational program provided by a board or authority and for whom a professional educator has responsibility.

**Summative Assessment** Summative assessment is assessment of learning. It measures students' competencies and skills and reports their level of learning in relation to the established grade level learning outcomes.

**Systems Thinking** Systems thinking is a way of thinking about, and a language for describing and understanding, the forces and interrelationships that shape the behaviour of the systems. This discipline helps us see how to change systems more effectively.

**Twenty-First Century Learner** The 21<sup>st</sup> century learner is someone who is working towards mastering the essential 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills including: critical and analytical thinking skills, problem solving, team work, flexible organization and personal management skills, global awareness and understanding, and comfort in operating in current and future electronic environments.

**Values** A value is a deeply held view of what is found worthwhile. Values describe how we intend to operate as we pursue our vision. Values are a set of guiding principles in the form of short phrases that guide behaviour and decision making and set acceptable norms for Departmental staff culture.

**Vision** Vision is a picture or images of a possible and desired future you seek to create. It shows where the organization wants to go and what it will be like when it gets there. A vision gives shape and direction to an organization's future. It inspires and guides decisions and actions.

**Vulnerable Students** Vulnerable students are identified as students whose learning capacity may be at risk in terms of academic achievement and social functioning and who primarily come from less affluent socio-economic backgrounds.

**Yukon First Nations** Yukon First Nations represent the distinctive 14 Aboriginal nations within the Yukon. Three broad themes relate to Yukon First Nations: respect and recognition of Yukon First Nations to represent the interests of their people; a call for improved achievement among Aboriginal learners; and the need for the Government of Yukon, in partnership with Yukon First Nations, to initiate specific legislative, policy, and structural reforms of Yukon's education system.



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