



# Education Summit

Inclusive and Special Education



## Inclusive and special education in Yukon

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### Where we're coming from

#### OAG report

- In 2018-2019, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) conducted a review of K-12 Education in Yukon.
  - The OAG found the Department of Education did not do enough to address gaps in student outcomes and deliver programs that are inclusive and fully reflect Yukon First Nations culture and languages.
  - The OAG's report included a key recommendation in the area of inclusive and special education:
    - The department should conduct a full review of its services and supports for inclusive education and to engage with teachers, parents and specialists to determine how the Department of Education can help teachers maximize student success.
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### Where we are now

#### Review of Inclusive and Special Education

- Dr. Nikki Yee, an educator with a doctorate in special education from the University of British Columbia, was hired to conduct the review.
- During 2020-21, Dr. Yee listened to stories from Yukon First Nations, school staff, families and partners in education about their experiences with education supports.
- Dr. Yee's Final Report was released on June 1, 2021 during a ceremony with Ministers, Chiefs, Elders and members of the First Nations Education Commission (FNEC) and Advisory Committee for Yukon Education (ACYE).
- Dr. Yee's primary finding in her final report is that, in many cases, student learning needs are not being met, with devastating consequences.

#### Child and Youth Advocate Office Review

- Across 2020-21, the Child and Youth Advocate Office also completed an independent, system review of student attendance in Yukon schools.
  - The Child and Youth Advocate's report highlighted how student attendance, feeling included at school and getting the right supports are connected.
  - The report included recommendations on how to address student attendance issues, many of which overlap with those of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
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## Inclusive and special education in Yukon

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### Where we're going

Work Plan developed with FNEC and ACYE partners

- Working together is key to advancing work to address the recommendations of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and the Child and Youth Advocate Office attendance review.
- We've taken that step by developing a Work Plan together with the First Nations Education Commission and educators and partners through the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education that will guide us in our work.

### Education Summit on Inclusive and Special Education

- Our work continues together with educators, Yukon First Nations, education partners and stakeholders at the Education Summit on Inclusive and Special Education.
- The summit is the next step on our journey of working together to build a better future for all Yukon children.
- We will continue work to address the recommendations in Dr. Yee's final report, including discussing a definition of inclusive education that fits Yukon.

### Our collective responsibility to make real change

- It is our collective responsibility to make real change for Yukon students.
  - Following the Spiral of Inquiry process, Communities of Inquiry made of educators, First Nations, and education stakeholders will be established during the Summit so we can work together to advance this important work.
  - Communities of Inquiry will work together to recommend actions we can take to make real change to how we support students.
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November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – online through Zoom

## **Review of Inclusive and Special Education Summit**

\* All portions of the summit from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm will be broadcast over Zoom including the morning and afternoon ceremonies and all speakers.

8:30 – 9:30	Ceremony and Sacred Fire
9:30 – 10:00	Break
10:00 – 10:30	Deputy Minister Nicole Morgan – Update on workplan since the June 1 <sup>st</sup> ceremony and intentions for the day
10:30 – 11:45	Dr. Nikki Yee – What does it mean to value diversity through inclusion and transformative listening.
11:45 – 12:45	Lunch Break

12:45 – 1:45	Shelley Moore – Transforming inclusive education and the value of strengths-based learning.
1:45 – 2:00	Break
2:00 – 2:30	Deputy Minister Nicole Morgan – Information on the Spiral of Inquiry process and next steps in the implementation of review recommendations.
2:30 – 3:45	Online group discussions to launch Communities of Inquiry. School community discussions on Inclusive and Special Education.
3:45 – 4:00	Closing Ceremony
4:00	Closing remarks

\* School staff will participate in the day by Zoom as part of their Professional Development Day. School Administrators will lead discussions in each school during the afternoon group discussion session about what inclusive education looks like and how they can implement it in their school and individual classrooms. A guided discussion document, including a listening guide for speakers and list of possible questions for the discussion session, will be provided to Administrators in advance of the summit.

## Education Summit speakers

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### Dr. Nikki Yee



Dr. Yee is an educator with a doctorate in special education from the University of British Columbia. In 2020, she began a full review of the services and supports for inclusive and special education in the Yukon. Her final report was released in June 2021 at a ceremony at the Haa Shagóon Hídi (Learning Centre) in Carcross. She will be talking about how people with very different strengths can work together to create uplifting learning communities. She will discuss how colonial stories have shaped the way people connect and how we can use ethical relationality (Donald, 2016), and transformative listening (Archibald, 2008) to start moving beyond these challenges. She will offer one example of a Community of Inquiry that was able to use these ideas to discuss colonial truths, grapple with identity narratives, explore sensitive topics, establish respectful relationship, and create a shared vision of education.

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### Shelley Moore



Shelley Moore is a highly sought after teacher, researcher, consultant and storyteller. Her research and work is constructed based on theory and effective practices of inclusion, special education, curriculum and teacher professional development. She will lead a discussion on how our understanding of inclusion is shifting. Rather than trying to include a few students who are different, we are striving to teach to the difference. Ms. Moore's session will look at how we can get to know our students so that we can respond to, plan and create space for all of their diverse strengths and identities.



# the spiral of inquiry

## OECD seven principles of learning

- Put learners at the centre
- Emphasize the social nature of learning
- Understand that emotions are central to learning
- Recognize individual differences
- Stretch all learners
- Use assessment for learning
- Build horizontal connections

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,  
Centre for Educational Research and Innovation

## First Peoples Principles of Learning

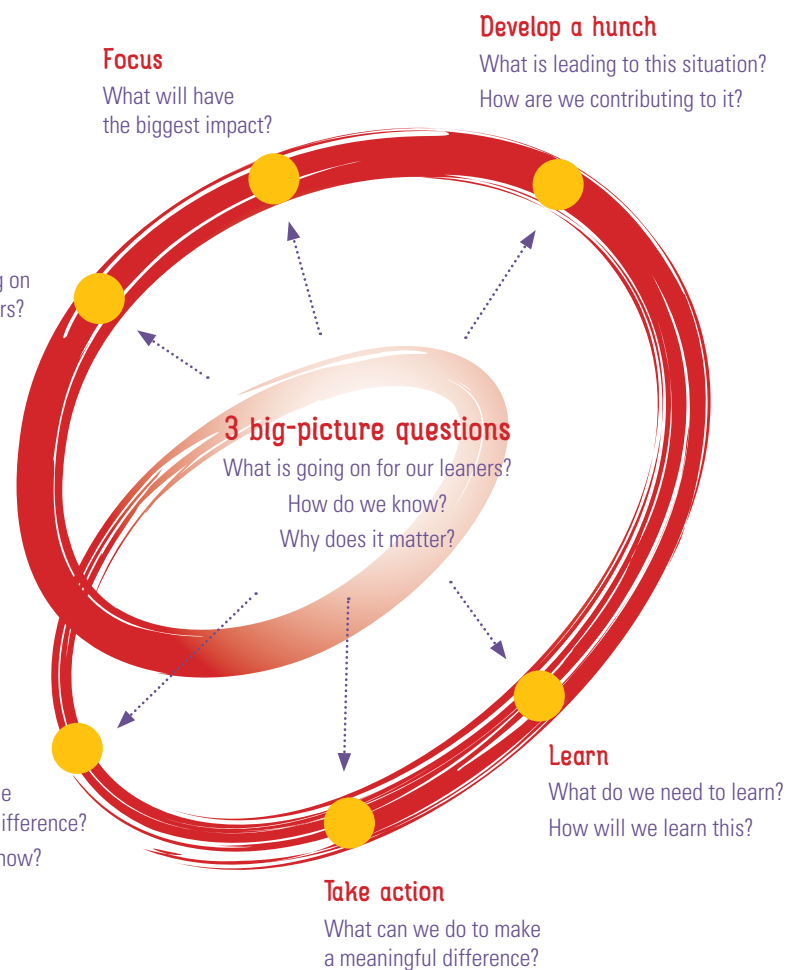
### Learning...

- ▶ supports the wellbeing of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors
- ▶ is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational
- ▶ involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- ▶ involves generational roles and responsibilities
- ▶ recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge
- ▶ is embedded in memory, history, and story
- ▶ involves patience and time
- ▶ requires exploration of one's identity
- ▶ involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred

Source: First Nations Education Steering Committee, British Columbia  
(For the full text go to [fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples](https://fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples))

### 4 key questions for learners

Can you name two people in this setting who believe you will be a success in life?  
What are you learning and why is it important?  
How is it going with your learning?  
What are your next steps?



## Communities of Inquiry

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Following the Spiral of Inquiry process, Communities of Inquiry made of educators, Yukon First Nations, education partners and stakeholders will be established so we can work together to advance work on the recommendations of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and Child and Youth Advocate attendance review.

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### Theme 1: Understand inclusive and special education

#### How:

Create a shared understanding of what inclusive and special education is and how it prioritizes positive outcomes for students. Establish and implement a vision of an inclusive classroom.

#### What:

**Community of Inquiry #1:** Co-construct definitions of inclusive and special education in Yukon and a vision of an inclusive classroom.

**Community of Inquiry #2:** Update inclusive and special education policies. Purposefully and collaboratively coordinate policies to facilitate Yukon's vision of inclusive and special education.

**Community of Inquiry #3:** Explore effective professional collaborative development structures where educators can learn how to structure learning options that will benefit students through more inclusive classroom practice.

**Community of Inquiry #4:** Cultivate connections and establish values and norms for engaging across differences and use transformative listening to engage with diverse ideas, perspectives and cultural worldviews in order to transform the culture at the Department of Education.

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### Theme 2: Be accountable and consistent

#### How:

Create accountability and reflect student voice in the delivery of special education.

#### What:

**Community of Inquiry #5:** Update and implement consistent IEP templates, processes and structures that incorporate student voice and create accountability structures around IEPs.

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## Communities of Inquiry

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### Theme 3: Provide holistic and comprehensive services

**How:**

Deliver services that are holistic and coordinated and provide a comprehensive support system for students and families.

**What:**

*Community of Inquiry #6:* Strike partnerships with Yukon First Nations, other government departments, and organizations to create coordinated and holistic supports for students and families.

*Community of Inquiry #7:* Examine budgets, funding models, staffing allocations to determine how they can be better aligned with student needs and action taken in response to the Review.

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### Theme 4: Support students to learn

**How:**

Deliver programs to teach students with learning challenges.

**What:**

*Community of Inquiry #8:* Extend existing outdoor, experiential learning programs, cultural camps and other hands-on activities as a way of teaching students with learning challenges.



## Snapshot of inclusive education definitions across Canada

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We have compiled the definitions of inclusive and special education, together with supporting principles, for other Canadian jurisdictions. Here are some examples that we thought could spark discussion. This is intended to inspire the creation of our own definitions for the Yukon.

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### Yukon

In Yukon, the vision for inclusive education is identified in the Student Support Services Manual (2015):

The vision for inclusive schools in the Yukon is that every student feels accepted, valued and safe in school and students' strengths and challenges are central to all decisions. Core values and beliefs in schools include:

- All students can learn;
- Students learn in different ways, at different rates and in different places;
- Students come from diverse backgrounds and want their differences to be respected;
- Students have the right to appropriate education programming and required supports;
- Parental involvement is essential.

Educators in Yukon are committed to help all students reach their individual learning potential. To do this consideration is given to recognizing:

- that education is life-long learning;
- the importance of the philosophy of inclusive education;
- the involvement of community in education;
- the importance of traditional knowledge, cultural practices, histories and languages;
- the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships with partners and communities;
- the importance of honesty, integrity and accountability;
- the importance of effective communication.

Further consideration is given to respecting:

- Yukon First Nation linguistic and cultural diversity, traditional knowledge, cultural practices, histories and languages;
- Elders' and seniors' knowledge as being foremost and integral to the transmission of language and culture;
- Community values: respect, love, sharing, caring, teaching.



# Snapshot of inclusive education definitions across Canada

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## Northwest Territories

Inclusive schooling in the Northwest Territories:

- Recognizes that every student can learn.
  - Is individualized – educational programs and decisions focus on the individual student's strengths and needs, and are based upon the student's best interests.
  - Ensures access to appropriate learning opportunities by utilizing evidence- based instructional and support strategies to remove barriers to learning.
  - Enables all students to participate within a common learning environment shared amongst age-peers in the community in which the student resides.
  - Is delivered within an accessible physical environment where all students and school personnel feel welcome, safe and valued.
  - Is respectful of student and staff diversity in regards to their race, colour, ancestry, nationality, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, family status, family affiliation, political belief, political association, social condition and a conviction that is subject to a pardon or record suspension. (NWT Human Rights Act, Section 5 (1) 2014)
  - Is characterized by collaboration: parents, affected student (where appropriate), school principals, classroom teachers, program support teachers, support assistants, and other professionals collaborate to make decisions related to the educational needs of individual students.
  - Promotes the involvement of parents/guardians in their child's education.
  - Establishes and maintains a professional learning program to ensure that educational staff have the knowledge and skills needed to provide effective instruction to a diverse student population.
  - Promotes partnerships between schools and their communities, operating effectively through a
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## Nunavut

Inclusion builds on the Inuit belief that each individual is valuable, belongs and contributes, and helps all students become able human beings: inummarik.

Inclusive Education – Inclusive Education is the process that leads one to becoming an inummarik. It diminishes and removes barriers and obstacles that may lead to exclusion and is responsive to meet the diverse academic, physical and emotional needs of students. It is represented by two inter-connected pillars: 1) Safe and Caring Schools and 2) Student Success.



## Snapshot of inclusive education definitions across Canada

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### British Columbia

Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with integration and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others.

Special educational needs are those characteristics which make it necessary to provide a student undertaking an educational program with resources different from those which are needed by most students. Special educational needs are identified during assessment of a student; they are the basis for determining an appropriate educational program (including necessary resources) for that student.

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### Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan “inclusive education” is used to describe education for students with diverse backgrounds who may or may not require additional supports or may or may not have a diagnosis. The ministry defines inclusive education as “providing equitable treatment and appropriate, high quality education to all students. It encompasses a blend of philosophical beliefs, practices and processes to create flexible support systems and learning environments based on students’ strengths, abilities, interests and needs.”

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### New Brunswick

Respect – Diversity – Inclusion. Inclusive education is a pairing of philosophy and pedagogical practices that allow each student to feel respected, confident and safe so he or she can learn and develop to his or her full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centered on the best interests of the student, which promotes social cohesion, belonging, active participation in learning, a complete school experience, and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community.

These values and beliefs will be shared by schools and communities. Inclusive education is put into practice within school communities that value diversity and nurture the well-being and quality of learning of each of their members. Inclusive education is carried out through a range of public and community programs and services available to all students. Inclusive education is the foundation for ensuring an inclusive New Brunswick society.

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### Question:

What do you think inclusive education means in our unique Yukon context?



## Supports available

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Some discussions about education experiences during the Summit may be overwhelming or painful for some. Counselling and supports for adults, youth and families are available below. We encourage you to access them as needed.

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### First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line

**Phone:** 1-855-242-3310 (Open 24/7)

**Website:** [www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1576089519527/1576089566478](http://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1576089519527/1576089566478)

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### CAIRS Society

**Phone:** 867-667-2247 (Open Mon-Fri, 8:30am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-4:30pm)

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### Yukon Distress and Support Line

**Phone:** 1-844-533-3030 (Open daily 7pm-12am)

**Website:** [yukon.cmha.ca/home/mental-health/find-help-now/reach-out-support-line/](http://yukon.cmha.ca/home/mental-health/find-help-now/reach-out-support-line/)

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### Counselling services

**Whitehorse phone:** (867) 456-3838

**Community hub phone:** 1-866-456-3838

**Website:** [yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-wellness/access-counselling-services-yukon](http://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-wellness/access-counselling-services-yukon)

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### Employee and Family Assistance program for government staff

**Phone:** (867) 668-3327 or toll-free at 1-855-767-7429

**Website:** [yukonconnect.gov.yk.ca/employee-info/Pages/efap.aspx](http://yukonconnect.gov.yk.ca/employee-info/Pages/efap.aspx)

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