**BRIEFING NOTE TO ALL YUKON FIRST NATION CHIEF AND COUNCILS**

Re: Parent and Community Engagement Project to Advance Student Success

**BACKGROUND**:

Over the last few years, CYFN has hosted a number of workshops and CELC/ESW/EOC in-services. CYFN has been the primary coordinator of the Joint Education Action Plan and the implementation strategy, has hosted the annual YFN Education Summit and as the administrative arm of the First Nation Education Commission, assists FNEC with the coordination of their meetings.

During many of these meetings, parent and community engagement has been identified as am important factor affecting student achievement. Many meeting participants have stressed the need for parental support/empowerment and for stronger connections between communities and schools.

Parental, community and student support and empowerment is one of the common themes running across the four pillars of the Joint Education Action Plan. The JEAP in its entirety seeks to close the academic achievement gap between First Nation and non-First Nation students. It is understood that parental engagement, community presence in the school, community voice in decision-making on student programs and services and stronger relationships between parents/community and school teachers and staff can lead to better student learning outcomes.

**UPDATE:**

CYFN is seeking to further the pilot project initiated in 2014-15 in Carcross/Tagish First Nation and roll out a Yukon-wide Parent and Community Engagement Project in the immediate future. This project will consist of the establishment of Parent’s Committee with two parent representatives from each community. The committee will meet once this year to develop a program (such as a Parent’s Club) to be localized and rolled out in all communities. A contractor will be hired to facilitate the development these local Parent Clubs with the committee members with the aim of advocating and fostering community agency and empowerment in homes, in schools and in student academic life. A Parent Handbook will be co-developed with local YFN education partners and parents.

The project will roll out until March 2016 and an evaluation will be done for consideration of a long term programme, contingent on funding.