

Briefing for Yukon Literacy Strategy Working Group Members

Topic: Proposed 2016-2026 Yukon Literacy Strategy for Final Approval and Signature

The Yukon Literacy Strategy Working Group and the First Nations Education Commission have reached consensus on the proposed 2016-2026 Yukon Literacy Strategy. They are now seeking approval and sign-off of the strategy from their respective leadership.

Highlights:

- Research has shown that improving literacy can improve an individual's educational, social, health and economic outcomes. Strengthening literacy and essential skills in Yukon will improve these outcomes for Yukoners and their communities.
- In order to improve literacy in Yukon, all partners, from government to families to educators to First Nations to non-governmental organizations to the private sector, need to work together to support the diverse needs of Yukon learners.
- All partners have recognized the importance of working together to support literacy and they did so successfully by developing the 2016-2026 Yukon Literacy Strategy through a consensus-based process.
- The 2016-2026 Yukon Literacy Strategy will guide the development and evaluation of literacy programs and initiatives across the life-long learning continuum over the next ten years, including early childhood, K-12, and adult learners in Yukon.

- The partners focused on the role of research and the importance of reflecting Yukon First Nations philosophies, goals and priorities in developing this proposed strategy.
- The fundamentals of the strategy are its vision, goal, and objectives:
 - *Vision: an enduring culture of literacy, including Yukon First Nation languages and culture.*
 - *Goal: Yukoners embrace life-long learning and have the literacy skills they need to succeed on their own terms at school, at work, within their families and as members of diverse communities.*
 - Objectives (in brief): awareness; opportunity and achievement; quality; partnerships; language fluency and cultural competency, including in Aboriginal languages.
- The proposed strategy also defines literacy from a Yukon perspective, describes the challenges, opportunities for literacy in Yukon, and includes expected outcomes from the Strategy's implementation.
- A key way that we will continue to work together is by coordinating our literacy programs and services to make sure as a whole we are meeting the needs of Yukon learners of all ages.

General Background:

- In December 2012, the Department of Education hosted the New Horizons Education Summit: A Focus on Literacy.
- This summit led to the creation of the Yukon Literacy Strategy Working Group, which included Yukon government departments, NGOs, First Nations, Yukon College and the business community. This working group is responsible for the development of a literacy strategy and action plan for Yukon. The working group determined that more time was needed to ensure the proposed strategy reflected First Nations priorities by means of the First Nations Education Commission (FNEC), so the timeframe to complete the strategy was extended by one year.

- Agreement on FNEC's proposed changes amongst the working group participants was achieved at a joint meeting in the spring of 2015.

Next Steps:

- For partners: Over the fall and winter of 2015, partners will brief their leadership and seek approval and final sign off on the proposed strategy, advising the working group by February 2016.
- For the working group:
 - Continue drafting the Literacy Action Plan.
 - Develop an evaluation framework: to be developed once the strategy is signed by governments and organizations.
 - Transition to Yukon Literacy Strategy Committee: working group will continue to advise on the implementation of the strategy as a committee.