



COUNCIL OF YUKON FIRST NATIONS
E · D · U · C · A · T · I · O · N

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FNEC
"Holding up our dreams"

EDUCATION INITIATIVES 2015-16

Yukon Education's Education Initiatives funding supports the core operations of CYFN's Education Department. This year's funding request includes salaries and benefits of the Education Director and Education Programs Coordinator. Honoraria is provided to one Elder who attends FNEC meetings. Education Initiatives also covers costs for office space/rent, utilities, materials and supplies, printing and photocopying and administrative operations essential to the functioning of the department. Education has two very old computers that need to be replaced, one for the Director and one for the Coordinator.

As in the past, this year's annual Education Initiatives funding request covers costs for two in-services provided by CYFN Education to Community Education Liaison Coordinators/ Education Support Workers/ Education Outreach Coordinators (CELCs/ESWs/EOCs) and professional development for CYFN staff.

Annual Education Initiatives funding also covers the costs for two First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) meetings. Travel expenses are covered for one delegate from each Yukon First Nation.

COUNCIL OF YUKON FIRST NATIONS (CYFN)

The CYFN Education Department works with the First Nation Education Commission (FNEC), local Yukon First Nations, Yukon Government Education, Canada and many other partners and stakeholders. The mandate of the Education Department is to advocate and advance Yukon First Nations education interests as directed by the Commission and to work towards improving education outcomes for all Yukon First Nation students. CYFN is the technical and coordinating body of the YFN Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) and the JEAP Implementation Strategy, an outcome of a recently signed tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on Education Partnership by the three parties (Canada, Yukon, CYFN and 13 YFNs). The department also plays an administrative and coordinating role for the Commission and provides capacity-building and support services to individual First Nation Education Departments.

Alongside its partners in education, the CYFN Education Department contributes:

- To improving student learning outcomes and closing the academic achievement gap;

- To the advancement of First Nation education and addresses challenges and opportunities related to student success;
- To improving the quality of education programs and services delivered to YFN students, parents, families, communities and governments;
- To the incorporation of YFN histories, cultures and traditional languages throughout the education system, schools, curriculum, methodology and pedagogy; and
- To the advancement of YFN aspirations, goals and priorities in education at community, regional and national levels.

Funding through Education Initiatives supports the daily operations of the CYFN Education Department affording the organization to carry out its mandate as well as programs and projects rolling out under the Joint Education Action Plan. Funding for JEAP projects is being sought from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Training Policy Committee. Projects for 2015-16 include:

- 1) A pan-territorial parent, family and community engagement project;
- 2) The initial phases of a Yukon First Nation Choice School which exists as a medium to long term goal requiring the following parallel activities to be undertaken this year:
 - i. A school feasibility study;
 - ii. Professional development and training for YFN educators and education staff (YFN Education Directors/Managers, First Nation Education Commissioners and CELCs/ESWs/EOCs/frontline workers).

In addition, CYFN Education will be participating in joint activities being undertaken by its partners in education (Yukon Government, the First Nation Education Commission and Yukon First Nations) such as environmental scans, inventories, research on best practices and other initiatives required to advance medium and long term actions within the Joint Education Action Plan Implementation Strategy.

FIRST NATION EDUCATION COMMISSION

The First Nations Education Commission was re-established in April of 2013 by resolution from the YFN Leadership. The Commission has become a table for

information sharing, addressing common issues and advancing First Nation education interests in a unified manner. The common objective is to improve the education system to better meet First Nation students' and learners' needs. First Nation education matters encompass lifelong learning and include early childhood, primary and secondary education and employment training. The mandate of the Commission is to:

- Provide technical support, advice and recommendations to YFN members of FNEC with respect to education matters;
- Work to implement the YFNs' authority with respect to education matters;
- Promote collaboration amongst YFNs, governments and institutions with respect to education matters;
- Identify areas of common interest and concerns to YFNs related to education, including programs, standards and measures;
- Facilitate the development and delivery of culturally-appropriate education systems, programs, services; and
- Promote the development of internal capacity within YFNs relating to education matters.

FNEC shall participate in Yukon government consultative initiatives including:

Yukon Literacy Strategy	Student Financial Act Review
Yukon Rural Strategy	Curriculum Redesign
Gadzoosdaa Review	Yukon Labor Market Strategy

FNEC shall participate in the development of the Joint Education Action Plan Implementation Strategy with CYFN and Yukon Government.

FNEC now has 13 Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations that have appointed official representatives and comprises the following membership:

Co-Chairs: Tosh Southwick and Roberta Hager
Alternate Co-Chair: Vera Owlchild
Honorary Elder: Mark Wedge

1. Carcross Tagish First Nation, Geraldine James
2. Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Paula Banks and Vera Owlchild
3. First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun, Roberta Hager
4. Kluane First Nation, Tosh Southwick and Kluane Adamek
5. Liard First Nation, Helen Loots

6. Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, appointment required
7. Ross River Dena Council, appointment required
8. Selkirk First Nation, Julia Joe
9. Teslin Tlingit Council, James Smarch and Robin Smarch
10. Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nation Ashley Doiron and Dexter MacRae
11. Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation, Jeremy McCullough
12. White River First Nation, appointment required
13. Ta'an Kwach'an Council, Lynn Sparks and Linnea Rudachyk
14. Council of Yukon First Nations, Jennifer Wykes

Due to the rising profile of the First Nation Education Commission and its importance as a consultative link between Yukon Government and Yukon First Nations and their Leaderships on education matters, FNEC is requesting funding to support four additional meetings well as a FTE Technical Assistant/Researcher position. The request is within reason given the number of education initiatives being rolled out by the department, the complexity of some of the issues on which Yukon Government Education seeks YFN engagement and consultation and the administrative requirements to support six meetings annually. Moreover in the latter part of the 2014-15 year, FNEC and Yukon Government Education had made a verbal agreement to dissolve the Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee (YFNEAC), an advisory body to Yukon Government Education. Yukon Government Education and FNEC were in negotiations regarding the transfer of funds originally supporting four YFNEAC meetings to FNEC, given FNEC's direct link to individual Chiefs and Councils. The FNEC table presents a more formal and legitimate process for government-to-government discussions on matters concerning YFN education since it is a Chief-appointed body with a mandate to advise and make recommendations to their Leaderships.

The CYFN Education Department is the technical, administrative and coordinating body for the Commission overseeing meeting logistics and budgets. CYFN is responsible for drafting agendas, preparing minutes and briefing notes and providing expert advice on education issues and initiatives to the Commission. Over 2014-15, the department struggled with capacity issues and heavy workloads given the task of balancing FNEC administrative/technical/preparatory requirements and community presentations with CYFN project deliverables. At this time, the CYFN Education Department and FNEC is requesting additional funding for a position housed within and under the directorship of CYFN to meet

the informational needs of the Commission thereby enabling better informed decision-making on matters affecting YFN students.

CYFN shall participate in the development of the Joint Education Action Plan Implementation Strategy with Yukon Government.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION LIAISON COORDINATOR (CELC), EDUCATION SUPPORT WORKER (ESW), AND EDUCATION OUTREACH COORDINATOR (EOC)

CELCs, ESWs, or EOCs are often a teacher's first contact with First Nation communities. As employees of their respective First Nations, they are an integral part of the school community and provide a link between schools, students, parents, families and First Nations (see the list of CELCs, ESWs, and EOCs on page 63). CELCs, ESWs and EOCs provide several services:

- Support First Nations students, parents and teachers;
- Provide counselling or referrals for First Nations students and/or parents;
- Assist with planning and securing resource people within the community for lesson and unit plans;
- Provide guidance pertaining to First Nations curriculum content;
- Plan and provide workshops and training related to cultural relevancy; and
- Act as a liaison between the school and the community.

CYFN Education provides in-service support to CELCs/ESWs/EOCs twice per year in areas requested by the cohort. CYFN also supports this group in partnership with the First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit by affording the group to attend teacher professional development opportunities and the Summer Academy.