May 19, 2015

Paddy Meade

Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services

Health and Social Services

201 - #1 Hospital Road

Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3H7

Judy Arnold

Deputy Minister of Education

Yukon Education

1000 Lewes Boulevard

Whitehorse, YT Y1A 6N2

Dear Ms. Meade and Ms. Arnold:

**Re: Health Behaviours of School Age Children Yukon Report**

The First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) would like to express appreciation for the work generating the Health Behaviours of School Age Children Report and to inform that the findings are extremely alarming and disconcerting to Yukon First Nations. We are also, however, quite concerned regarding the process by which the survey was conducted and administered and would like to remind Health and Social Services and Education about government-to-government protocol; Government is obligated to engage with Yukon First Nations prior to any Yukon wide initiative of concern to Yukon First Nations. While data was not disaggregated, our citizens do make up the majority of the student body in most rural areas where crucial data and findings are most prevalent. The principles of OCAP, therefore, should also apply in this case. Any future Yukon wide initiative that Health & Social Services pursues should be in dialogue with both the First Nations Education and Health and Social Development Commissions prior to its initiation.

At this time, FNEC would like to inquire about the accuracy of the published information as well as the cultural relevancy of the survey beginning with the process by which the questions were formulated, whether there were any pre-consultations with YFN school staff / administrators (Community Education Liaison Coordinators/ Education Support Workers/ Education Outreach Coordinators) or post-consultation follow-up. We would like to stress the importance of working with FNEC, the Health and Social Development Commission and our communities on these types of reports and initiatives – from development to implementation to dissemination. We are looking forward to engaging on a deeper level with Government both with regards to future research undertaken with our student citizens as well as ways we will collaborate to address the needs of our children. We feel that positive results can only be achieved through government-to-government relationships and interagency planning and strategizing.

We look forward to working with you.

Yours truly,

Tosh Southwick, FNEC Co-Chair Roberta Hagar-Ball, FNEC Co-Chair

cc: Lori Duncan, Health Director, Council of Yukon First Nations

 Jennifer Wykes, Education Director, Council of Yukon First Nations

 Health and Social Development Commission

 First Nation Education Commission