



Office of the Minister
Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

February 16, 2015

Ms. Roberta Hager-Ball, Co-chair
First Nation Education Commission
c/o First Nation of Na-cho N'yäk Dun
P.O. Box 220
Mayo, Yukon Y0B 1M0

Ms. Tosh Southwick, Co-chair
First Nation Education Commission
c/o Yukon College
P.O. Box 2799
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5K4

Dear Ms. Southwick and Ms. Hager-Ball:

Re: Public Consultations on the *Students Financial Assistance Act*

The Department of Education is reviewing and considering updates to the *Students Financial Assistance Act*. As part of this process, we will be holding consultations to seek input from Yukon First Nations and key stakeholders.

I invite the First Nations Education Commission (FNEC) to be part of the consultation. Department representatives will provide more information in the coming weeks about the consultation process and timeline. Each First Nation is being invited to participate directly or through FNEC, as they prefer.

The department's goal is to promote lifelong learning and success for each learner. Each year to help meet this goal, we provide a significant amount of financial assistance to support Yukon students pursuing post-secondary education. In 2013-2014, the Yukon Grant provided more than \$3.6 million to support 761 Yukon students pursuing post-secondary studies. This funding is increased annually based on the rate of inflation and is awarded based on the provisions of the *Students Financial Assistance Act*.

As we review and consider updates to this Act and its regulations, we invite and encourage Yukon First Nations, students, parents, educational institutions such as Yukon College, other providers of student financial assistance and Yukon community members to participate by providing perspectives and feedback on possible changes to this legislation.

Public input will be sought on the following themes:

- eligibility of Yukon students who may also receive financial assistance from the Government of Canada;
- eligibility of students who achieve high school equivalency in Yukon;
- differences in funding between students attending post-secondary education outside and inside the territory;
- review of student categories; and
- criteria for determining continuous residency.



Our aim is to create greater fairness and flexibility in accessing, applying for and awarding Yukon's significant financial assistance resources to current and future post-secondary students in a fiscally responsible manner.

The important feedback gathered from these consultations will help us to determine how this legislation can best serve Yukon students and will help to inform decision-making on eligibility rules, grant amounts, and effective program administration.

I hope that FNEC will join us to provide important feedback on student financial assistance in Yukon.

If you have any questions, please contact Judy Thrower, Director of Training Programs at the Department of Education, at 867-456-6748 or judy.thrower@gov.yk.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Graham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "G".

Doug Graham
Minister of Education