

Educator Update this week

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Message from Deputy Minister, Nicole Morgan

I hope you had a restful and enjoyable summer break and are returning to school feeling recharged. My sincere thanks to each of you for your commitment to students and education in these challenging times. Yukon was one of the few jurisdictions that kept K-12 schools open and operating safely throughout the 2020–21 school year and this is a testament to your tremendous efforts.

Near-normal operations

Schools are the heart of a community. They create important stability for children and families and opportunities for growth and development for our future. I'm pleased that schools are in a position to re-open at near-normal operations, with some [health and safety measures](#) kept in place to keep school settings low-risk.

Central administration staff have been working with school administrators and school councils to translate these [health and safety guidelines](#) into Operational Plans to Reduce Communicable Disease for individual schools. Continued learning for all students has been a priority since the beginning of the pandemic and these plans will include flexibility to ensure learning continues over the course of the school year in alignment with the updated [Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan](#) (formerly known as the Continuity of Learning Requirements).

Pandemic recovery

Educators have demonstrated adaptive leadership since the onset of the pandemic and we know this year will be no different – especially as we begin to focus our efforts on post-vaccine pandemic recovery. It is important to recognize students, staff and families have been impacted in many different ways and that some of the

longer-term impacts of the pandemic are yet to be realized. Let's continue to work together to respond to these needs.

Resources

To help prepare for the school year, I encourage you to review:

- [Health and safety guidelines for K-12 schools.](#)
- Your school's Operational Plans to Reduce Communicable Disease
- Yukon [Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan - Guidelines for Schools for the 2021-22 School Year.](#)

Every day in your work you are changing lives and shaping the future of your community. I Wish you a great start to the 2021-22 school year and success throughout.

K-12 Guidelines for Schools 2021-22: COVID 19

The Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Department of Education have published [K-12 Guidelines for Schools 2021-22](#) to guide preparations for teachers, administrative staff, students and families for the upcoming 2021-22 school year. These guidelines will be revisited regularly to ensure they reflect the current COVID-19 situation. The former continuity of learning document, now called the [Education Recovery Plan: Guidelines for K-12 Schools](#) has been updated to provide guidance for the 2021-22 school year.

Professional Learning Opportunities

August 19-20 PD Days

For those of you who have a PD day on August 19 or August 20 (most Yukon schools) and have some unplanned times throughout the day, repeated offerings will be available both live and on-demand, by the Department of Education and the YTA. Explore the [schedule](#). Sessions are still to come.

Resources for Educators

Balanced Literacy Document for K-12 Yukon Classrooms

Contact Curriculum and Assessment for a printed copy or download here: [A balanced approach to Literacy Instruction](#). Stay tuned for upcoming professional development on this document.

Agency in the School Approvals

The Agency in the School Approval Committee met in late May. There are two new Agency in the School Approval Committee approvals in place, including:

- Cyberbullying and Harassment for Grade 6 by [Yukon Workers Compensation Health & Safety Board](#)
- Cyberbullying and Harassment for Grade 9 by [Yukon Workers Compensation Health & Safety Board](#)

More details: <https://www.yukonschools.ca/learning-opportunities.html>

Kids on the Farm Program

Consider getting your students out on a local farm this fall with the Kids on the Farm program. Tours cost only \$7/student and transportation subsidies are available. The fall farm tour season runs from August 23 - September 30, 2021. There are many local and diversified farms in the Whitehorse area to choose from. Visit

a farm that's new to you! Consider touring a different farm from your colleagues, then have your students share and compare their experiences. No matter which farm you choose, your students will learn about plants and animals, where food comes from, and achieve specific curriculum connections. Check out our website for complete farm descriptions, more info and to book tours: kidsonthefarm.yukonfood.com.

Janine Jewell

Kids on the Farm Coordinator

867.333.2980

kidsonthefarm.yukonfood.com

Connected North

Connected North will be running again this year so that Early K- Grade 12 educators can book engaging sessions to support the implementation of the Yukon curriculum at no cost to you or your school.

Watch [a video to describe what educators can expect when they participate in the program](#).

For more information about the program, or to get started, contact Connected North School Lead: Brenda Sherry at bsherry@takingitglobal.org.

Email Platform Switch

FirstClass has been the cornerstone of communication, sharing and collaboration for the Department of Education for many years. To align with more modern communication systems, we are switching email platforms.

The department is hard at work readying Microsoft 365 (M365) Outlook for the beginning of the school year to provide a modern, robust communication system to improve our ability to communicate, share and collaborate.

FirstClass will continue to be available to help ease the transition to M365 Outlook initially, allow users to move important data and will be slowly phased out. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

How Will Email Work?

The vision is @yesnet.yk.ca email will flow to both FirstClass and M365 Outlook until December. In January, email will no longer flow to FirstClass, but FirstClass will remain accessible to move data until the end of the school year. Staff and students will be able to send emails from both systems until January.

When Will M365 Outlook be Ready?

We are aiming for the first week of October; however, technical challenges may introduce delays. We want to be sure this is implemented correctly.

How Will Data be Migrated?

The vision is a fresh start in M365 Outlook, as data cannot easily be migrated out of FirstClass. We will provide staff resources on how to migrate important emails and contacts as they become available.

Will There be Training, Documentation & IT Support?

Yes, staff will have training materials and documentation provided to them. ITSS will provide support if something doesn't work.

Other Opportunities for Schools

From the Ground Up, August 30 to September 27

Yukon government Health and Social Services (in partnership with Education and Energy, Mines and Resources) invites you to participate in From the Ground Up (FTGU), the Yukon Healthy Choice Fundraiser. FTGU is more than a successful fundraiser for schools and early learning centres; it connects farm to table, supports local food and builds community. We are growing healthy habits!

From August 30 to September 27, students from participating [schools and early learning centres](#) will be selling boxes of local veggies.

If your school is participating, encourage your students to get involved. Each box of vegetables is \$35 for 20 lbs (\$40 in Dawson). Can't eat that many veggies? Buy a box to donate!

For more information on FTGU, please visit their website: www.yukonfromthegroundup.ca

Check-out their video: youtu.be/fbfnGg51ROw

Action Items for Consideration

- Explore the [schedule](#) for the August 19-20 PD days (most Yukon schools)
- Check out the featured [resources](#) this week.
- Encourage your students and their families to participate in the [From the Ground Up](#) initiative.
- Watch last year's [highlight reel about the impact of the Yukon Connected North program](#) and learn about [what you can expect by participating in the Connected North program](#) and get started planning by contacting bsherry@takingitglobal.org

Quick Links to Resources Related to Our COVID-19 Response

- [K-12 School Guidelines for 2021-22 COVID 19](#)
- [Yukon Education Recovery Document: Guidelines for K-12 Schools](#)
- [Education updates and supports on COVID-19](#)
- [Talking and Sharing with Kids and Families on COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 and teenagers: Supporting Youth Mental Wellness](#)
- [Mental health and wellness support during COVID-19](#)
- [Wellness Together Canada free resources and support](#)
- [Yukon information on COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [Practice the Safe 6](#)
- [Non-medical masks in the workplace](#)
- [Canada response and Health Canada information](#)
- [Council of Yukon First Nations COVID-19 info hub](#)
- [Yukon vaccination clinics and information about the vaccine](#)