

December 20, 2023

Educator Update

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Warmest Holiday Greetings from the Deputy Minister

Dear Educators,

As the holiday season approaches, I extend my deepest gratitude and warmest wishes to all of you. Your commitment and passion in shaping the minds and futures of our students is truly commendable.

This year has presented its unique challenges, and your ability to adapt and thrive in these times has been inspiring. The Department of Education is fortunate to have such dedicated professionals who consistently go above and beyond for the benefit of our students.

As we enter this festive season, please take some well-deserved time to rest and rejuvenate. Enjoy quality moments with your loved ones. Reflect on the positive impact you've had on the lives of your students and the broader community. Your efforts contribute significantly to building a brighter future for the Yukon, and for that, we are immensely grateful.

Thank you again for your hard work and unwavering support. May you have a restful break and a New Year brimming with opportunities and successes.

Warm regards,

Mary Cameron

Deputy Minister

Yukon Department of Education

January 4th National Ribbon Skirt Day

January 4th is National Ribbon Skirt Day. Ribbon Skirt Day was inspired by the experience of Isabell Kulak, an Indigenous girl from Cote First Nation in Saskatchewan. She wore a ribbon skirt to a "formal dress day" at her school but was told it did not meet the standard of "formal dress". This day celebrates the ribbon skirt, which is traditionally worn by Indigenous women and girls. The ribbon skirt represents strength for Indigenous women and girls.

Ribbon skirts are a beautiful representation of Indigenous womens' storied and vibrant cultures, acceptance of the past and valuing who they are as Indigenous women. To Indigenous women, the skirt is a reminder of their roles and responsibilities to their community. It reminds them of their sacredness as women and the power in that. It tells the story of adaptation and survival. Ribbon skirts are a symbol of resilience, survival, and identity, but their meaning changes with each person who wears one and each person who shares their history. When Indigenous women and girls wear ribbon skirts, they are reaffirming what they know about themselves.

What we see today as the modern ribbon skirt is the evolution of a piece of clothing over centuries, having a diverse ancestry in its roots and traditions.

Lego Robotics Challenge

Interested in having your students meet the ADST goals in a fun and interesting way?

The Yukon Robotics Challenge provides an opportunity for students to meet curriculum goals. Students are given specific tasks to program an EV3 or Spike robot. Teams of students work together to complete as many tasks as they can prior to evaluation day. Students are then asked to show a panel of judges/evaluators how they completed the tasks and then meet with judges/evaluators to discuss some of the challenges faced in building and programming the robot.

Students from grades 4 to 7 (more flexible for rural areas) are welcome to take part. Help can be provided to teachers and students in programming and understanding the tasks. If you are new to the Challenge or if you have not participated previously, you will need to ensure that you provide your students with enough time to learn the programming/coding, and then to figure out how to do the tasks.

The Robotics Challenge culminates in a half-day event in late April. Teams who complete the standards are awarded medals, while the school with the highest percentage of teams to meet the standards receives a trophy to keep for one year and a plaque to keep.

There are a few kits available if you are interested and do not have any kits. These will go out on a first-come, first-served basis. Lego no longer makes the EV3 kits; new kits ordered will be SPIKE Prime.

The Yukon Robotics Challenge is governed by a committee. Jill Potter (Elijah Smith Elementary) and David Michayluk (Jack Hulland Elementary) are the two teachers on the committee. David McInnes is the Department rep. Glenna Howard and Laura Markle are the co-coordinators. For further information please feel free to contact Glenna at ghoward@northwestel.net . If teachers want to know how this works in a classroom, as a club, or the benefits of doing this with students, contact Jill or David at jill.potter@yesnet.yk.ca or david.michayluk@yesnet.yk.ca .

Please indicate your interest to Glenna Howard as soon as possible at ghoward@northwestel.net.

January 19th Professional Development Day

Please see the attached schedule for the January 19 Professional Development Day offerings. There will be some minor details added in January (some venues are still being determined) and an updated chart will be provided at that time. We wanted to ensure you had the topics before the Christmas break so you can plan accordingly.

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training

A Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training session will take place on March 4 and 5, 2024. **This is required training for teachers and educational assistants who support students with safety and behaviour plans.** This is also an effective refresher when working with complex and challenging behaviour in your classroom and school environment. Student teams are encouraged to attend together when possible.

Please discuss with your principal and have them contact Alison.George@yukon.ca or Brenda.Jenner@yukon.ca to register.

Quick Links

- [School health and safety during COVID-19](#)
- [Mental health and wellness support](#)
- [Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan](#)
- [Wellness Together Canada free resources and support](#)
- [Yukon information on COVID-19](#)
- [Practice the Safe 6](#)
- [Canada response and Health Canada information](#)
- [Council of Yukon First Nations COVID-19 info hub](#)
- [Yukon vaccination clinics and information about the vaccine](#)
- [First Nation School Board](#)