



Department of Education (E-1)
PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

January 19, 2021

Dear Rural Administrators and Kindergarten teachers:

Re: Share your input on Early Kindergarten

I am writing to provide an update on planning and preparation as we work toward implementing consistent, full-time Early Kindergarten programs at all rural schools by the start of the 2021-22 school year, and to invite you to share your input to ensure we launch a successful program that meets the different needs and contexts of each of our rural schools.

In 2019, the Government of Yukon announced its intent to work towards bringing Early Kindergarten to all rural schools, as part of our commitment to supporting early childhood development efforts and to help ensure an effective transition for children into their primary school years. Early Kindergarten provides children 4 years of age a literacy rich, play-based learning environment to support the transition to Kindergarten. The Early Kindergarten program is meant to provide children the opportunity to engage in an early learning environment over a two-year period.

Early Kindergarten is currently being offered on a half-day schedule in most rural schools, except in Watson Lake and Dawson City. Beginning in August 2021, Early Kindergarten and Kindergarten will be available to families as an optional, full-time, full-year program in all rural communities. Enrollment will be available to all children who are of age and will not be limited.

As educators, your extensive experience and valuable input is needed to help us make sure this enhanced program is a success. We would like to invite you to provide your input through one or more of the following means:

- 1) Attend an information session and discussion with other rural school administrators and educators.

This call will be hosted by Superintendent Marilyn Marquis-Forster and Director of Assessment and Curriculum Paula Thompson. The purpose is to provide you with more details about the Early Kindergarten process and planning, to give you an opportunity to

provide your feedback to us on specific items, to ask your questions, and to share your concerns.

When: Wednesday January 27, 2020, 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

How to attend: Join our Zoom Meeting

<https://yukonedu.zoom.us/j/98377806543?pwd=cIRHbEpKeHhKYWo4SktyZ3c4dWlhQT09>

Please note, if you cannot attend live, a replay will be made available for your reference.

- 2) Read the attached Frequently Asked Questions and Information for Rural Teachers documents as background information.
- 3) Submit your written comments following the meeting/replay and reading the documents. When providing written comments, please consider the following questions:
 - What considerations do we need to keep in mind to make this program enhancement successful?
 - Currently, what works well in our Early Kindergarten programs?
 - What are some best practices we should bear in mind?
 - Do you have any concerns related to these proposed changes?

Please send your comments and any additional questions to our team via email to curriculum@gov.yk.ca by February 15, 2021.

We understand this is an ambitious timeline and thank you in advance for providing your thoughtful input. Our goal is to ensure that we have thoroughly considered all the needs of your school and the context of your school community.

If you have any questions about the engagement process, please do not hesitate to contact our Early Learning project team through the curriculum@gov.yk.ca email. We look forward to these discussions and to your input on this exciting project.

Sincerely,



Kelli Taylor

Assistant Deputy Minister of Education
Policy and Partnerships