

March 10, 2023

Educator Update this week

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Youth summit

Opportunity for youth to share their voice in a meaningful way

Please post and share the attached poster with students aged 12 and up for a wonderful opportunity to share their voice to contribute to a territorial youth strategy for the Yukon. The event is taking place April 16 to 19 in Whitehorse with a virtual option for those not wishing to travel. Students can register at yukonyouthsummit.com.

Mental health and wellness resource

The Government of Canada launched “Get Help Here” this winter, a campaign to raise awareness that **free**, credible resources are available 24/7 to help support the mental health of people in Canada.

Mental health is an important part of everyone’s well-being. Many factors can affect mental health, and they aren’t all within one’s control. The last few years have been challenging for us all, including for youth and young adults. The disruption to their daily lives, routines, and relationships left many feeling afraid, angry, and anxious for their future. Almost [1 in 3 youth](#) in Canada indicated their mental health got worse during the pandemic.

To help support mental well-being and substance use, there are resources available anytime, from anywhere. They include the Kids Help Phone and supports for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. We also invite youth of all ages and backgrounds to check out the Wellness Together Canada portal, which provides free, 24/7 information and supports, including one-on-one counselling, across Canada.

For these resources and more, visit Canada.ca/mental-health.

Clarifications on Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Student Support Services is working on a broader communications plan on IEPs and hopes to have it out in the next few weeks. In the meantime, below is information on how IEPs should be used:

- An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a formal document that is mentioned in the *Education Act*. An IEP can be used for communicative, cognitive, behavioural or multiple needs. IEPs can also be used for gifted students.
- IEPs can be modified or adapted.
- IEPs are not just academic. They can be for social, emotional, and/or physical (looking at the whole child).
- If a student has an IEP they are able to graduate. However, if through the IEP the student's curriculum is so modified that they are unable to receive the minimum required curriculum credits, then the student would receive an Evergreen certificate instead of a Dogwood Diploma. This should be discussed at the school based team meeting with the parents so they understand what it means.
- An IEP does not automatically get a student an EA. There is a process for requesting EAs and a student doesn't need to have an IEP in order to be assigned an EA.
- We will support students that need support regardless if they have an IEP or not.

These are just a few of the questions we have been hearing. There are more questions to be answered and we are working to address these with the forthcoming communications. If you would like to provide us with questions you are hearing around IEPs, please send your questions to the Director of Student Support Services, shanna.epp@yukon.ca. We want to make sure that we are answering the questions you are hearing. The communications plan is not static and we will update info FAQs as needed.

There is a community of inquiry looking at IEPs and holistic supports for students. Changes and recommendations are intended to be shared in the near future.

Updates on other initiatives we are working on at RISE and Student Support Services include:

- Making sure all that we do is culturally responsive and reflective
 - Will update forms, templates, processes, and policies to make sure a cultural lens is applied
- School based team process
 - Updating forms and templates
 - Streamlining process
 - Clear guidelines
- Assessments
 - Currently we have 2 contracts in place to help with educational psychological assessments. We are putting additional contracts in place.
 - We will continue to work with schools to get assessments done for students that require them (more follow up with schools needed).
 - Communications around assessments: when they are appropriate, when they aren't, what they are, etc.

- Reviewing systems: Aspen and Nucleus, do they still meet our needs?
- EA allocation process
 - This year we have asked LATs and Principals to be a part of the process
 - We will look to review the allocation process for next year
- Updating/replacing the Student Support Handbook

If you have any questions about any of the items above or want to hear about the other things we are working on please do not hesitate to contact the Director of Student Support Services, shanna.epp@yukon.ca

Professional learning opportunities for students and teachers

Your Voice is Power opportunity for youth

Connected North is partnering with Your Voice is Power and hosting an event at Yukonstruct in Whitehorse on Saturday, March 25 at the end of the Spring Break. This event is hosting in person by Brenda Sherry. This session is designed for youth, but if educators wish to attend for their professional learning, they are also welcome to attend.

Please share the attached flyer with any **youth in Grade 9 to 12**. If your school is interested in participating in the project at another time, future virtual arrangements can be made. Please reach out to [Brenda Sherry](#) with any questions or future bookings.

Learning Assistance Teacher Conference on May 1, 2023

Save the date for the LAT Conference on May 1.

All Yukon Learning Assistance Teachers are invited to a one-day conference in Whitehorse to discuss where we are now and where we are going with respect to IEPs, school based teams, universal supports, and more. Student Support Services staff will give an overview of the types of consultation and support that they can offer. Activities to elicit your ideas and feedback will be incorporated in the day. If you have any suggestions or questions or would like to be on the planning committee, please contact Leslie Peters at leslie.peters@yukon.ca.

Yukon-Stikine Regional STEM Expo

The 2023 Yukon-Stikine Regional STEM Expo (formerly the Yukon-Stikine Regional Science Fair) will take place at the Mt. Mac Rec Centre in Whitehorse on **Thursday April 6**.

We encourage your school or class to participate in science fair projects, with the top projects from each school being eligible to attend the Regional STEM Expo (either in person or via videoconferencing if travel to Whitehorse is not possible). From there, the top 3 students from grades 7 and up will be representing the Yukon at the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Edmonton in May.

Science fair projects are great for meeting the competency-based approach of the curricula; the process of imagining, designing, creating, executing, and communicating a science fair project can be transformative for students.

Students have many options for projects: they can conduct experiments, create innovative solutions, or demonstrate traditional First Nation ancestral technologies.

If you have any questions, please contact yukonstikersfs@gmail.com.

Resources for educators

Newly approved, locally developed courses

Ancestral Technology 11 - part of the CHAOS program 11.

This is a new course developed by Wood Street Center. To view the course curriculum and permission form if you would like to offer it at your school, please view the [curriculum and assessment website](#).

Quick Links

- Check [Teams](#) for the PD opportunities
- [School health and safety during COVID-19](#)
- [Mental health and wellness supports](#)
- [Can your child go to school, daycare or return to regular activities?](#)
- [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](#)