

Letter from the Interim Executive Director

Dear School Staff,

Drin Hozo, and welcome to the 2022-23 school year, the first for your school under the new First Nation School Board! Today all 8 of our schools have officially started classes and we're on Day 8 of assuming co-authority over your schools alongside Government of Yukon. We are honoured and humbled to be in this position of leadership – to slowly and carefully usher in a new era of student-centered education that follows Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing.

First of all, thank-you to all of you for joining us for our PD days on Aug 18 & 19, and for participating with such openness and heart in our on-the-land sessions. I acknowledge and appreciate your keenness to learn and grow. Change is not always easy, and I hope the PD days have given you ideas on how to acknowledge this shift in your own personal role in the school environment.

This change is happening slowly. So far, the school year may be looking like any other – or possibly worse. With issues like staffing shortages or EA allocation removals, we at FNSB acknowledge these realities and are working with Yukon government and YEAP to finalize our funding resources. We are working our hardest to advocate for the resources and requirements needed for all our schools. Over the coming months, with the budget and authority to do so, FNSB will begin to directly address the needs of our schools.

We ask you to take the long view, as we gradually introduce changes at our 8 schools. We are here to support school teams in the transition to local ways of knowing and doing in the delivery of the BC curriculum, while enhancing academic excellence. As introduced at our PD days, please focus

your commitment to change this school year on the themes of **Connecting to Land** and **Connecting to Community**, however that best works for you.

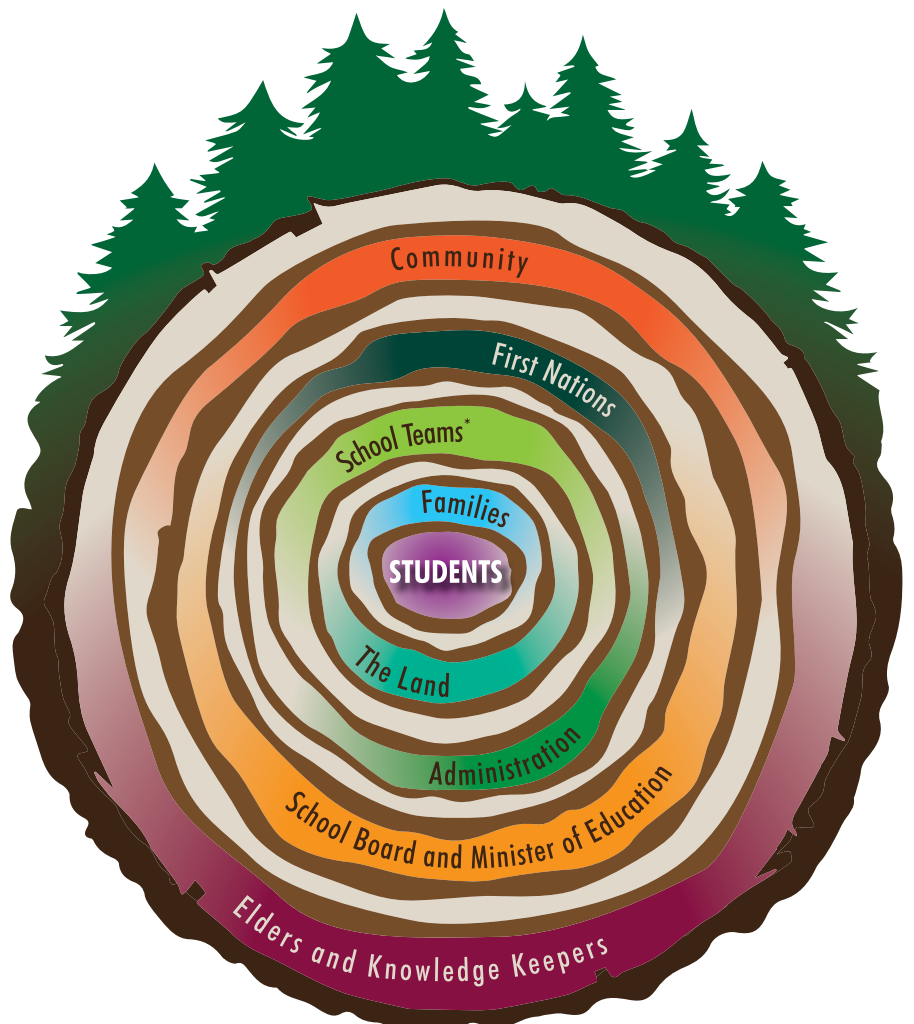
Melissa Flynn
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FNSB Org Chart

This Org Chart isn't your typical top-down model with boxes and arrows. It reflects the crucial shift in perspective we wish to carry out in our FNSB-run schools. It shows the student in the center with all other entities radiating outward in wrap-around rings of mutual support. Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Community form the outer layer, protecting and preserving the whole through their wisdom and guidance. All rings come with unique responsibilities and jurisdiction, and no one ring is more important or more powerful than the next. By using the image of a tree in a forest, we convey our connection to the land, the ultimate teacher. As we shift towards this model, we encourage everyone – school staff, families and students alike – to reflect on how this might change the way you relate to and interact with education in your school. This is a living document that aims to portray a new, wholistic worldview built on relationships between all the layers.

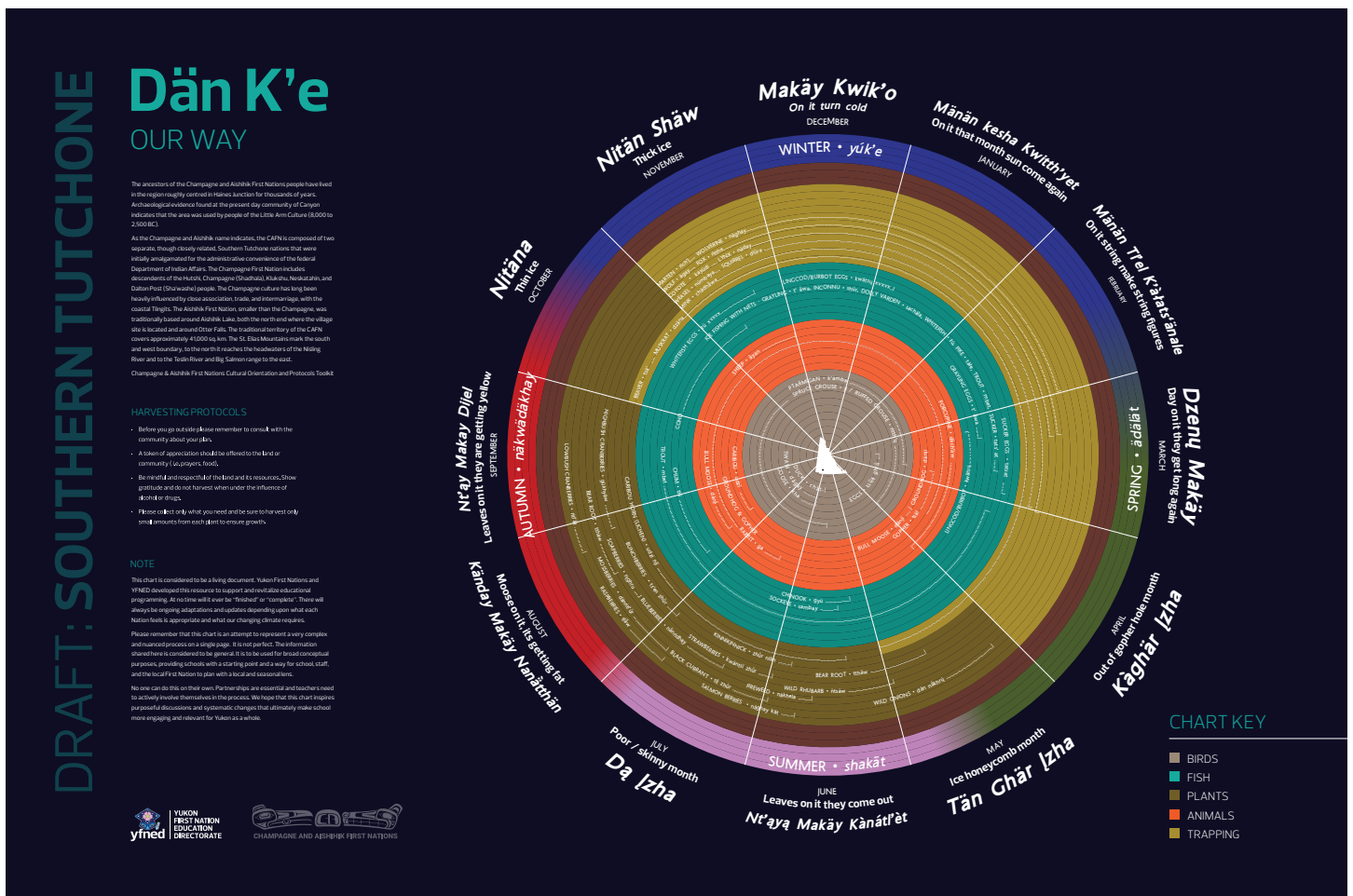
FIRST NATION SCHOOL BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



* Teachers, Learning Assistance Teachers, Educational Assistants, School Staff, and First Nation Education Staff

Support from the Education Analysts at YFNED

The Education Analysts at YFNED are offering support to our FNSB staff over the school year with plans to visit all schools this fall. You probably met this cheerful crew at the August PD days: Lindsay Moore, Darby Newnham and Chris Stacey are offering to work with you to help integrate tools like the Seasonal Rounds into your planning and teaching. They are also sharing the Graduation Planner with counsellors and other relevant teaching staff, as well as students, families, and local First Nations. They are planning their travel schedule now. If you wish to contact them, email education@yfned.ca.



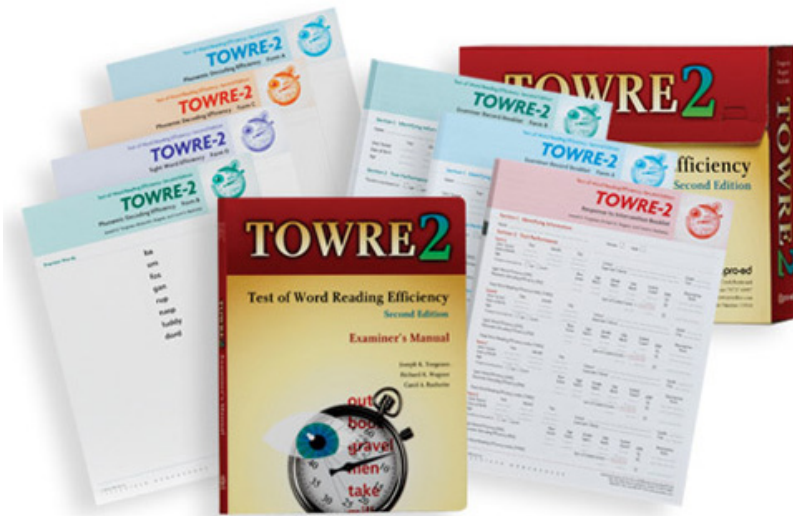
New Literacy Screening Tool

Establishing baseline data for both numeracy and literacy is a priority for the FNSB. In order to best serve our students, we need to know exactly what is happening with their learning, where the gaps are, while using the most up-to-date and evidence-based methodologies.

We have selected 3 interrelated Literacy Screening tools, through research conducted over the summer in partnership with the Speech Language Pathologists and Education Team at YFNED. Grade 1-3 teachers will complete the screening tools at least 2x per year (e.g., beginning and end of school year).

All schools with primary grades will receive the following programs:

- 1) Test of Word Reading Efficiency- Second Edition (TOWRE-2)
 - Skills measured: phonics, vocabulary, fluency
- 2) Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency- Second Edition (TOSWRF-2)
 - Skills measured: word recognition
- 3) Test of Silent Reading Efficiency and Comprehension (TOSREC)
 - Skills measured: comprehension



These screening tools were chosen because they are quick to administer (administration time is less than 10 minutes) and they will jointly provide teachers, administrators and parents with an understanding of a student's overall reading skills. The tools will inform reading instruction in the classroom, and allow school staff to effectively monitor student progress throughout the year.

The data provided by the screening tools will also allow teachers to effectively communicate to parents their child's reading abilities and help inform home-based reading strategies.

YFNED Speech-Language Pathologists will be providing support to all our primary-grade schools and are currently creating a guide and video tutorials for teachers, EAs, LATs and ESWs on how to use and administer the screening tools. We will be contacting you shortly with more details. As soon as our funding is confirmed from Government of Yukon, we will be hiring a literacy coach to provide support with this, and other literacy initiatives, at our 8 schools.

The decision to focus on a targeted plan for literacy was informed by the OHRC's Right to Read Inquiry Report, which outlines the importance of using evidence-based screening assessments twice a year, and the 2019 Auditor General's Report, which highlights the low reading and writing levels among students in the Yukon. Our responsibility to literacy success drives this program.

FNSB is focusing on collecting robust information about students' reading levels to establish a baseline of student's skill levels and support progress monitoring throughout the year. This data is also essential as we track the overall literacy progress at our FNSB schools over the coming years. The FNSB is not recommending any reading programs at this time.



The SLPs from YFNED will be offering two after-school PD info sessions on this new Literacy Screening method via Zoom. These sessions are for LATs, Primary Teachers, First Nations Education staff and principals.

Sep 6 @ 3:30

General information about why we selected these assessment tools, what they look like and how they will benefit our students. We will also provide an introduction and overview of the first of the three modules (TOWRE-2). Zoom link will be distributed at your school soon.

Sep 13 @ 3:30

Introduction and overview of the other two modules (TOSWRF-2 and TOSREC). Zoom link will be distributed at your school soon.

Full Instructional videos will be sent to each school along with the resources within the first 2 weeks of September and can be accessed by all school staff.

Numeracy



Marie Daniels, YFNED Numeracy Coach and former administrator and math teacher at FH Collins, has established math programs at four of our FNSB schools, offering Math Advocate supports, coaching, programming, and Math Camps, as well as math PD for our educators. These schools are St. Elias Community School, Johnson Elementary, Nelnah Bessie John School and Ross River School. The FNSB fully supports Marie Daniels and her team of Math Advocates and we are aiming to introduce this Numeracy program at our remaining four FNSB schools later this school year. We are so grateful to have this math powerhouse team provide supports to our schools.

School Board Trustees Election

Yukon School Board Trustee election (for both FNSB and the French School Board - CSFY) will take place this fall. Co-located polling places will be open across the territory. Five trustee positions are open for each board.

Nominations will be open from **Monday, October 17** to 12 noon on **Thursday, October 27, 2022**. More information for candidates will be available soon.

Polling day will be **Monday, November 7, 2022**.

Exact details on qualifications for nominees and voter eligibility will be posted at both www.fnsb.ca and www.electionsyukon.ca very soon.

Interim Governance Committee

The following people were appointed to the Interim Governance Committee by the Minister of Education to assume the work and responsibilities of launching the First Nation School Board until trustee elections are completed this November. This ensures a successful start to the school year for schools moving to the new school board. The IGC will dissolve after the five trustees are elected in November.

Over the summer, the IGC has been hard at work developing the Policies & Procedures Manual for our new school board. They have been working with our HR specialist to write Job Descriptions for board staff. They also worked on developing the FNSB Org Chart above.



Dr. Alyce Johnson, Phd, is a Kluane First Nation Elder and former principal of Kluane Lake School. She holds a PhD in Indigenous Studies from Trent University and in 1973, was a youth signatory to *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*.



Erin Pauls, is a former school teacher who won the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence for her work as director of Dusk'a Headstart Preschool. A member of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and currently their Director of Education.



Jocelyn Joe-Strack, an Indigenous scientist, philosopher, entrepreneur, and member of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Currently the Research Chair in Indigenous Knowledge with Yukon University.



Mark Wedge, a Carcross/Tagish First Nation Elder and former chief. Mark has held, and currently holds, many leadership roles focused on education, and economic & social development.



Melanie Bennett, life-long educator and former school principal, member of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, and current Executive Director of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate.



Kirk Cameron, Chair of the IGC, is a governance consultant, Whitehorse City Councilor, and former Deputy Minister and senior bureaucrat.



PD Day Recap

We had the extraordinary opportunity to bring together all staff and administration from our 8 schools for 2 days of PD in Whitehorse, which included on-the-land learning with Elders and Knowledge Keepers. We were honoured and delighted to share ways of incorporating Yukon First Nations culture into school learning – and we're excited to begin our tenure as a school board in the Yukon -- to serve all Yukon learners with a public school education grounded in two worldviews. Many thanks to Yukon First Nation Education Directorate for supporting our first PD.



Field Trip Forms

All field trip or complex field trip forms need to come to ed@fnsb.ca.

Newsletter for Parents/Caregivers will be distributed later this week.



If you have photos or stories to share in future FNSB newsletters or on our new Facebook and Instagram pages, please email communications@fnsb.ca.

