

Letter from the Interim Executive Director



Dear School Staff,

Drin Hozo! With only a few weeks left before our much-deserved break, I am sending a huge “Mahsi Cho” to all our amazing teachers, educational assistants, and administrative staff for your tireless devotion to your students and the passion you bring to the teaching and learning every day. I love working with you and am grateful for your support and engagement adopting to the new direction of the First Nation School Board.

In all our many trips to FNSB communities this fall, we have seen firsthand how people care for one another in ‘good times and bad.’ It’s been a privilege to start building relationships in your communities, and begin offering our support.

In November, we elected our first board of trustees who will be the directors overseeing the work of the First Nation School Board. The five elected trustees are an impressive crew of proven leaders and hard-workers. Check out their profiles below.

I hope you have a wonderful holiday!

Melissa Flynn | ed@fnsb.ca

Meet Your Trustees

Five First Nation School Board trustees were elected on November 7, through a territory-wide election. They will be carrying out the work of running our public schools in collaboration with Yukon’s Minister of Education.



Jocelyn Joe-Strack, a Champagne and Aishihik First Nations citizen and trained microbiologist and hydrologist, is the Indigenous Knowledge Research chair at Yukon University and was an appointed member of the now completed Interim Governance Committee of the First Nation School Board. Jocelyn champions a whole-person approach to education and healing, and lives in Whitehorse with her husband and two children.



Dana Tizya-Tramm, a Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizen, lives in Old Crow with his wife and two children, and is nearing the end of his term as Chief of the VGFN. As Chair of the Chiefs Committee on Education, Dana plays a central role in negotiations to advance First Nations education including the establishment of the First Nation School Board. He was recently appointed Chair of the First Nation School Board trustees.



Erin Pauls, or **Kothetty**, is a Tahltan with Tlingit, British and Russian ancestry and is a citizen of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. She has two children whom she considers her greatest teachers. She holds a Level 3 in Early Childhood Education, a Bachelor of Education, and a Masters in Educational Leadership and is working on her PhD in Education. Erin has worked in early childhood education, as a teacher with the Department of Education, as the director of Dusk’a Headstart, and in her current role as Education Director for Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. She was also an appointed member of the Interim Governance Committee of the First Nation School Board.



Shadelle Chambers, a Champagne and Aishihik First Nations citizen, has an MBA in Aboriginal Business and Leadership and has served six years as the Executive Director for Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN). At CYFN she has been integral in the development of many supports and services for Yukon First Nations including Family Preservation Services and has played a key role in the operations of Yukon Native Language Centre (YNLC). She lives in Whitehorse and is the mother of two teenagers.



Gillian Staveley, Liard First Nation, lives in Faro with her husband and two boys. She has a master’s degree from the University of British Columbia and now serves as Director of Culture and Land Stewardship with the Dena Kayeh Institute where she works to advance the importance of land, language and culture. She has experience on numerous boards, councils and committees and understands the importance of listening to community members about issues of concern.

Swearing-in Ceremony

On Saturday November 19, the five newly elected trustees participated in a ceremony at Grey Mountain Primary involving a smudging, a ceremonial fire, a gift presentation from the members of the appointed Interim Governance Committee, as well as an oath-swearing.

“It’s a historic day,” Education Minister Jeanie McLean said. “I feel very, very emotional. I want to congratulate Shadelle, Erin, Jocelyn, Dana and Gillian. You’ve made history.”

Congrats to Shadelle Chambers, Dana Tizya-Tramm, Erin Pauls, Jocelyn Joe-Strack and Gillian Staveley. And a special thank you to the Interim Governance Committee members:

Dr. Alyce Johnson, Erin Pauls, Jocelyn Joe-Strack, Mark Wedge, Melanie Bennett, and Kirk Cameron whose guidance and wisdom helped shepherd the FNSB to this historic stage.



Old Crow

Staff from the First Nation School Board travelled up to Old Crow during the week of Nov 1-4 for the ceremony and celebration for Chief Zzeh Gittlit School becoming a FNSB school. There was feasting (fresh caribou!), stories, games, music, dancing and a beautiful spruce bough ceremony to bring renewal and good energy to the school.

Mahsi Cho to everyone in Old Crow for welcoming us and sharing your ideas for the future of education in your community.



Literacy PD

On November 21, the amazing team from Centre for Literacy from Edmonton worked alongside FNSB staff to deliver a fantastic Literacy PD in Whitehorse. We invited not only our Whitehorse-based FNSB K-3 teachers but also local First Nation education teams, YFNED education advocates, as well as staff from Yukon's Department of Education. We had a fantastic group of participants and there were some invigorating conversations about the Science of Reading and the components of our Literacy Plan.

Our Literacy Plan aims to improve literacy outcomes for students in a culturally-inclusive model. We do this by using the most up-to-date research and techniques in literacy teaching, utilizing a team of Literacy Coaches to provide ongoing support to teachers, and by developing localized resources in collaboration with community.

For more details:
www.fnsb.ca/literacyplan



How to Work with Elders and Knowledge Keepers

The Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) recently designed and printed a poster that we will be distributing to all FNSB schools and classrooms that helps guide the way people work with Yukon First Nations Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Yukon's 14 First Nations worked together to produce these guidelines to ensure respectful community protocols are followed when students or school staff are interacting with Elders and Knowledge Keepers. If you have any questions, you can reach out to the Education Analysts at education@yfned.ca

Education Analysts launching Grad Planner workshops

The second edition of the First Nations Grad Planner has been printed and is being distributed across the territory. The Education Analysts are offering a Graduation Workshop across schools and will hold their first session at St. Elias School on December 7. For more information contact: education@yfned.ca



Wonderful trip to Ross River and Watson Lake

Staff from the FNSB traveled to Ross River from Nov 23-24 and onto Watson Lake on November 25 -- and had a really meaningful time connecting with the fantastic students, the teachers and school staff, as well as parents and the wider community.

Our Literacy Coach Megan Norris and Interim Executive Director Melissa Flynn spent the days of Nov 23 & 25 in PD with the schools' teachers -- learning from folks from the Centre for Literacy about the Science of Reading and learning about our new Literacy Plan.

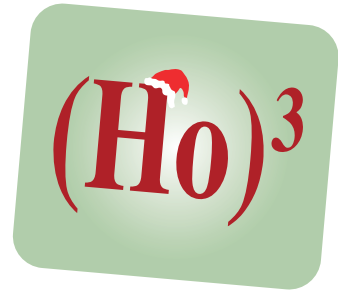
On the evening of Nov 23, with the help of YFNED, we hosted a community dinner for Ross River where almost 100 people came out! We were able to meet so many wonderful students and families and share information about how we're doing things differently, delivering a literacy plan in a good way that builds local capacity. Thank you to the community, the parents, the students, and the school for having us. Our newly elected FNSB trustee Gillian Staveley made it out, too!

Sogla Senla!



News from the Numeracy Team

The team of YFNED Math Advocates have been busy in FNSB schools this month. They have hired two new Math Advocates, Lauren Walker and Stephen Horton, bringing the team to four people! They have been busy visiting schools, working with teachers in Haines Junction, Watson Lake and Ross River and trying some land-based learning using *Micro: bits* (these are pocket sized computers that can be used for coding and gathering information). Stephen introduced these at the St. Elias Community School and got instant engagement from the students. The Math Advocates hope you have an excellent Christmas Break and will be back on the road in January travelling to Beaver Creek! Ho ho ho!



Word of the Month

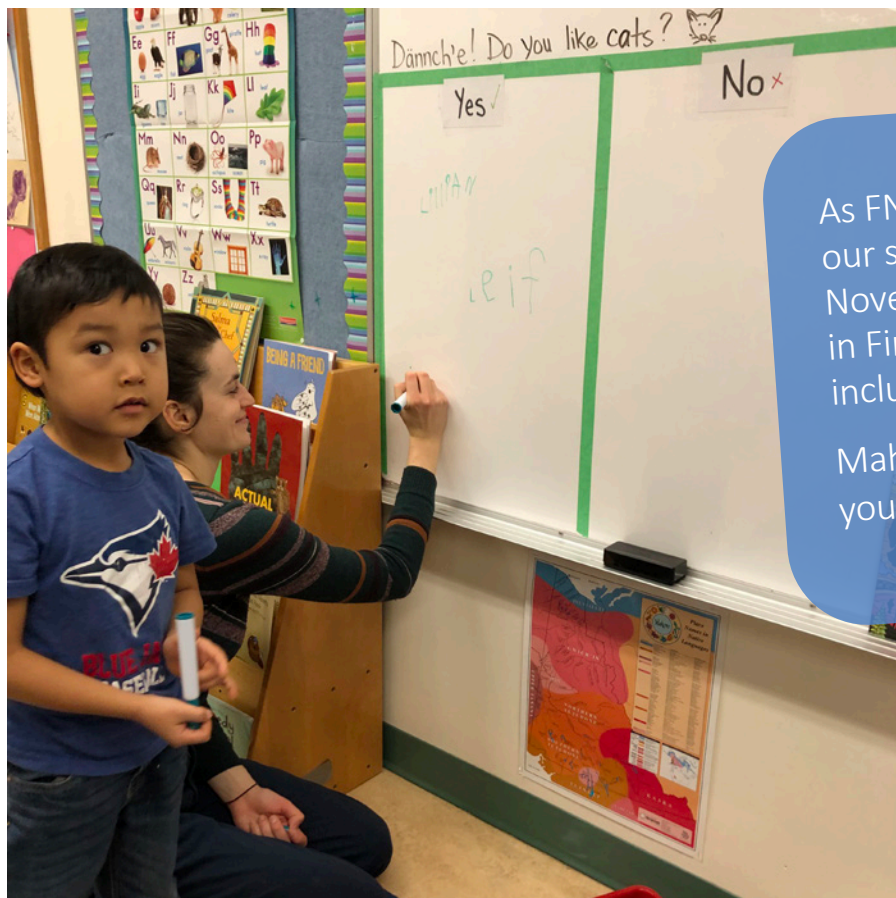
Every month we will introduce you to a common word or phrase in all 8 Yukon First Nation languages. Choose the phrase(s) for the Traditional Territory where you live and try to use this as often as you can in your speaking and writing.

Check www.ynlc.ca for sound clips and more resources.

English	<i>Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays</i>
Southern Tutchone	<i>Ut'ákwádinch'e dzenù nàkwàntth'át</i>
Northern Tutchone	<i>Ut'óhudinch'i húlin dzenú</i>
Gwich'in	<i>Drin Tsal zhìt shòh ohfii</i>
Tlingit	<i>Gu.àtshé hà s'átí yagiyí i jiyís wùk'ê</i>
Kaska	<i>Dene Tie chuyé gúlín</i>
Hän	<i>Drin Tsul zhìt shò àhtqy</i>
Upper Tanana	<i>Dzeen shiit choh shiit soonayh ahtij</i>

DECEMBER LANGUAGE CHALLENGE

TEACHERS: Try working this phrase into a Christmas craft in your classroom. Snap a photo and send to [communications@fnsb.ca!](mailto:communications@fnsb.ca)



As FNSB staff visited most of our schools over the month of November, we noticed an increase in First Nations language usage, including the “Word of the Month.” Mahsi Cho for your inclusion of your local language!

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

Takhini Elementary School Kindergarten teacher Rosalind Crump, pictured here with her student Jayden, uses the Southern Tutchone greeting “Dannche” in her daily teaching.