

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear School Teams,

Drin Hozo,

What an incredible year of growth we've had over the 2022-23 school year. It has been an absolute honour and pleasure to lead the Yukon's newest school board and start building relationships with so many people – families, students, teachers, First Nation staff, EAs, Principals, Elders and Knowledge Keepers – across our lands.

The Yukon is an extraordinary place in the world – a place where people come together to authentically build relationships, share worldviews, and create a society that is strong and resilient. This is what the First Nation School Board is about: truly working together to build a better Yukon for all.

In our first year, we were a small but mighty team, and yet alongside our school teams, we accomplished a great deal:

1 Literacy Plan: In February, we launched our groundbreaking literacy plan that aims to reverse the dire literacy rates in the territory. The plan involves regular assessments, replacing unproven programs with evidence-based science of reading approaches,

converting all Reading Recovery Teachers into new Literacy Teacher positions, and increasing training, supports and resources for all school teams.

2 Math Strategy and Math Advocacy Program: This YFNED program operated exclusively in FNSB schools and supported teachers in the delivery of comprehensive math lessons as well as facilitated math camps. We saw incredible results with our students engaging with numeracy after participating in these land-based and innovative math camps.

3 Positive Referendum Results: Three more schools joined the FNSB (Carcross, Pelly and Burwash Landing), for a total of 11 schools operated by FNSB for next school year

4 Increased level of student and educator supports: Many schools reported they have received unprecedented level of support and resources from FNSB staff. There will be an increase in supports next year.

5 Negotiated core funding: Although only finalized a few months ago, this allows the FNSB to hire key staff positions such as Language and Culture coordinators, Literacy Coaches, HR, Communications, and Finance and more.

6 Successful partnership with Minister Jeanie McLean: Kudos to our visionary minister who has been integral to the successful establishment and operations of FNSB – and with her Department of Education staff, with whom we are able to advance necessary changes to the public education system in the Yukon as a whole.

7 Supported by Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on so many levels, including Math Advocates, Education Analysts, and many senior team members given temporary assignments to support the FNSB.

Thank-you for your kindness, patience and willingness to work with the FNSB to start making the changes in our public schools that will make a real difference for your learners. I am looking forward to seeing you in August.

Mahsi Cho and Nántëney-'in (see you again soon),

Melissa Flynn | ed@fnsb.ca



Phrase 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.

Did you know? It's not common for First Nation languages in Canada to have a direct translation of "good bye." Rather, when someone is leaving, it is an opportunity to look forward to the next time we will be together. In looking forward to the 2023-24 school year, "see you again" from all staff at the FNSB.

English See you again

Southern Tutchone Nanugishj

Northern Tutchone Nene jingné

Gwich'in Nihkàa natanel'yaa

Tlingit Tsu yei ikkwasatéen

Kaska Nagādzenūtā sĭ

Hän Nántëney-'in

Upper Tanana K'àhdaqadè' nantinagn'iin



Message from your Lead Literacy Coach, Megan Norris

Through the month of May and early June, I continued travelling to our schools across the territory to support staff and students alone and with teams from both FNSB and YFNED. Here are the highlights:

- **Old Crow:** FNSB staff and I travelled to Old Crow to visit staff and students and support VGFN’s Family Fun Literacy Night. There were 8 literacy stations where families could play games and win prizes. It was a blast!
- **Whitehorse:** I visited Grey Mountain Primary and Takhini Elementary School to demo literacy lessons, deliver resources and meet with school staff.
- **Pelly Crossing:** FNSB staff and I visited Eliza Van Bibber School to meet staff and students.
- **Carcross:** FNSB staff and I visited Ghùch Tlâ Community School to meet staff and students.
- **Dakwakada/Haines Junction:** I visited St. Elias Community School to support staff and students at the end of the school year.
- **Beaver Creek:** FNSB, in collaboration with White River First Nation and Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, hosted the Relationship Matters Team in Beaver Creek for a week of incredible resiliency training and team-building. The visit included a community night with music and dancing, community meals, a parent night, and time at Nelna Bessie John School with students planning for next year. We are incredibly grateful for the time together! Tsin’ji choh!



Literacy Assessments: Thank you to all our Grade 1-3 teachers who submitted their classes’ literacy assessments. Results have been shared with teachers and parent letters will be sent out before the end of the year.

Although our Literacy Plan will begin full implementation next year, these assessment results are providing us with a snapshot into how our students are learning to read and form a baseline from which we can measure our future success. Thank you to everyone for walking this new journey with us, undertaking new assessment and teaching methodologies.

Literacy PD: We look forward to offering the 2-day Literacy PD in August to all K-7 teaching staff when we will be able to introduce you to our new Literacy Coach Team, who will provide even greater supports to your classroom in the 2023-24 school year.

“Thank you to all staff and students for such a wonderful first year together! I’m incredibly grateful for all the learnings and look forward to another year working together. Wishing everyone a safe and restful summer!”

Pride Parade

Takhini Elementary School held a most heart-warming school-wide Pride Parade on June 12 to celebrate and honour Pride month. What a great event was had by all, which included a colourful public parade out on the street by the school. This kind of event shows the kind of welcoming attitude we strive to foster at all our FNSB schools, to pay respect to and stand up for members of the LGBTQ2S+ community, their families, and extended families. It was a beautiful, age-appropriate event for which FNSB is proud to offer support.



Math is Everywhere

An Update from Marie Daniels, Math Advocates Team Lead

The summer holidays are fast approaching and the Numeracy Team has been busy planning for next year, visiting schools and supporting end-of-year activities.

Members facilitated Math Camps in late May in Ross River and Watson Lake. Students from both elementary schools got the chance to try their hand at being forest biologists by conducting plant surveys and then learning how to calculate and represent their data. They also practiced their estimation and measurement skills in our “How Big Is It?” game (do you know what the average wingspan of an eagle is?). We wrapped up the Math Camps with shelter building, where students showed how they could work together to build a water-proof shelter and then explain to their peers what aspects of their shelter made it effective.

It was great to see students having fun doing “math” outside.

The Numeracy Team wishes everyone a great summer!



Community Committee Agreements

Dana Tizya-Tramm, Chair of the First Nation School Board Trustees, will be travelling to communities this summer to hold public information sessions and work towards finalizing a unique Community Committee for each of our schools in time for the new school year. Community Committees replace School Councils and have the potential to wield a much greater level of authority and decision-making. It's an exciting time to get involved with the future of your community school!

First Nation School Board invites you to a Public Meeting on Community Committees

Do you want to help shape the future of your community school?

The FNSB is coming to your town to hold a public info session about Community Committees and how they can make big decisions for your school.

Pelly Crossing
June 20

Ross River
June 21

Watson Lake
June 22

Beaver Creek
June 26

Burwash Landing
June 27

Haines Junction
June 27

Food and refreshments will be provided. For more info: www.fnsb.ca

Welcome Bonnie Charlie!

Finance Clerk, First Nation School Board

Bonnie was raised in Teslin, a member of the Kukhhittan clan of Teslin Tlingit Council, but moved to Whitehorse for high school and has lived here since. Her mother, Bessie Cooley, is a well known Tlingit language and culture teacher.

After receiving her diploma in Accounting at Yukon College, Bonnie worked 34 years with the finance department at Yukon government's Department of Education, where she most recently held the position of Capital Project Cost Analyst/Budget Analyst. This makes Bonnie very familiar with the financial operations of Yukon public schools putting her in a great position to support the First Nation School Board schools.



“Being part of the set up of this new school board is pretty exciting,” says Bonnie. “I completely support the work we are doing. It is so good to see Yukon First Nations finally sharing authority over our public schools.”

Bonnie and her partner love to camp, and enjoy hockey games and music concerts. She has two daughters for whom she is extremely proud: Lenna works as a heavy equipment mechanic in Edmonton and Geena is a nurse at the Whitehorse General Hospital. She also spends a lot of time with her mom.



SAVE THE DATE

Literacy PD

"Literacy blocks using evidence-based approaches"

For K4 - gr. 7 teachers, EA's, principals, Literacy Teachers, ESW's, Literacy Coaches

**STERNWHEELER HOTEL
CONFERENCE ROOM, WHITEHORSE
AUG 17-18 OR AUG 22-23
8:45AM-3:00PM**

Please bring your UFLI Foundations manual and binder.
If you don't have them yet, you will be provided with a manual and binder at the conference.

Please watch the UFLI YouTube videos before the PD:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxzUU3RmTSIYw_4Ylp_FWTg

Light breakfast, lunch, and coffee/tea provided.

