



## OUR LOGO

Created by artist and teacher **Vernon Asp**, each element of our logo represents something significant to Yukon First Nations: wolf and crow are our clans; the mountains and rivers signify that we are part of the land and part of the water; the drum represents transmission of culture and language; the eight Yukon First Nations languages are represented by the feathers; and the fourteen stars signify the fourteen Yukon First Nations.

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# “TOGETHER WE WILL LEARN” NEWSLETTER

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## WELCOME TO “TOGETHER WE WILL LEARN”

“Together We Will Learn” is First Nations Programs and Partnerships’ first quarterly newsletter. Our purpose is to inform schools, school councils, and Yukon First Nations on the First Nations educational activities within FNPP and Yukon Education. Each issue will include updates on FNPP initiatives, upcoming events, articles and features from Yukon schools. Please share any updates and pictures from your school so we can feature them in upcoming newsletters. Stories,



photos, FN language greetings and artwork can be sent to [ruby.grant@gov.yk.ca](mailto:ruby.grant@gov.yk.ca). The name of our newsletter came about when we were looking for a Southern Tutchone phrase to represent the “side by side” education that honours both western and indigenous knowledge. When explaining all the current phrases used in education, our Elder Lorraine Allen gave us the phrase “Inläts’än Kenüdüän”, which is Southern Tutchone for “Together we will learn.”

## WALKING WITH OUR SISTERS COMMEMORATIVE ART EXHIBIT

Walking With Our Sisters is a memorial to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada and the United States, to raise awareness and create opportunity for broad community-based dialogue on the issue. This grassroots project is composed of 1800 pairs of vamps (moccasin tops) created and donated to the memorial by individuals from around the country and world. The memorial will be touring Canada and the United States until September 2019.

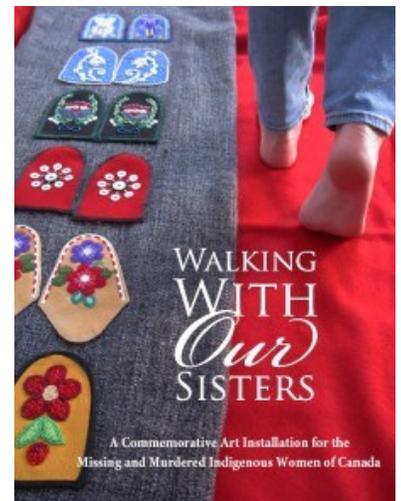
*To book a tour please contact:*

*Jessica Vellenga  
(867) 393 7109  
[jessica.vellenga@yac.ca](mailto:jessica.vellenga@yac.ca)*

*Tours will take place at:  
Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre  
April 11 – 25, 2015*

Youth (First Nations and non-First Nations) involvement is a key aspect of the healing, ceremony and teachings of this commemorative installation. It provides a combination of remembering, honoring, building connections to culture and protocols, healing, opportunities for justice for youth, and building youth leadership.

How can youth be involved? Young people can be involved in a number of meaningful ways, attending the exhibit, sharing the word on social media, having conversations about where violence comes from in their lives and how they’ve been impacted by the loss of family members or friends, being involved in the planning, organizing and installation of the exhibit.



For more info:  
[www.walkingwithoursisters.ca](http://www.walkingwithoursisters.ca)  
[Teacher Information & Activities package](#): First Class - Secondary conference (file folder) and Intermediate conference or YesNet - First Nations Programs & Partnerships.

## FN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE



**Group Photo  
Language Conference**

From February 26 to March 1, teachers, Elders, and staff from Yukon Education participated in the 4th International Conference on Language Documentation and Conservation (ICLDC4). As the largest conference on language revitalization and documentation worldwide, ICLDC4 brought together hundreds of educators, linguists, and Elders at the University of Hawaii. This year's conference featured more than 160 presentations from 31 countries, sharing everything from new approach-

es to Indigenous language education to the latest tools for creating interactive, digital resource materials. Quite the experience, all around! Yukon Education was fortunate to have been represented in two presentations. Kaska language teachers Selena Pye and Linda McDonald (Liarf First Nation/Watson Lake Secondary School), Elder Mida Donnessey (Liard First Nation), and Dr. Patrick Moore (UBC) shared about their work on a 'talking' Kaska dictionary, while Chris Cox (FNPP) gave a presenta-

tion on teaching word patterns in languages with complex words. This group also participated in a field study of the Hawaiian medium school system, where children are educated entirely in the Hawaiian language. Both the conference and the visit to the Hawaiian schools presented wonderful opportunities to connect with Indigenous language educators and supporters from around the globe, and to share the knowledge gained with communities, schools, and teachers here in the Yukon!

*March 31 was  
National Aboriginal  
Languages Day.*

*We celebrated by  
offering stew & bannock  
at the Department of  
Education building.*

*Daniel Tlen  
entertained staff in  
Southern Tutchone.*

*"It was great!"*

## YFN EDUCATION SUMMIT 2015

As of January 2015, 13 Yukon First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon and Canada signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on Education Partnerships. Under the MOU, all parties "share a common vision wherein Yukon First Nations' students achieve or succeed the full educational outcomes, levels and successes, to the

highest standards within Yukon and Canada." The outcome of last year's summit was the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) which flows from the MOU. The focus of the March 2015 Yukon First Nation Education Summit was to report back on initiatives under the JEAP and to provide participants opportunities to share ideas for action in Yukon First Nation

education. The following topics were discussed: culturally inclusive councils, staff and schools; First Nations teachers; K-12 YFN language programs; community priorities; YFN jurisdiction and implementation; funding support and resources; policy and protocol framework; family, community engagement and supports; and student supports.

## 20 YEARS OF SELF GOVERNMENT



**Group Photo  
20th Year Celebration**

This year marked 20 years of self-government for four Yukon First Nations. A celebration was held on March 19, 2015, at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. On February 14, 1995, the first of Yukon's First Nation Final Agreements and Self-Government Agreements came into effect, launching the modern era of governance in Yukon. These four First Nations led the way for self-government in Yukon and

Canada: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun, Teslin Tlingit Council and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. The agreements were signed by chiefs Paul Birckel (CAFN), Robert Hager (NND), David Keenan (TTC) and Robert Bruce, Jr. (VGFN) and by Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Tom Siddon and Government of Yukon Leader John Ostashek. The chiefs who signed the

agreements years ago were in attendance at the celebration with the leaders of today. The agreements provide a foundation on which to work together to build capacity, strengthen our economy and find innovative solutions to shared issues. Today, 11 Yukon First Nations have signed comprehensive Final and Self-Government Agreements. Yukon is a leader in land claim implementation and self-government, both in Canada and internationally.

# CULTURAL INCLUSION FUNDING

Since 2006, First Nations Programs and Partnerships (FNPP) has administered three funding programs to Yukon Schools on an annual basis: Cultural Inclusion, Elder in the School and Community Based Orientation. To ensure success for each learner, applications must connect to the goals and objectives outlined in the School Growth Plan. The Cultural Inclusion fund is available to all Yukon schools to support language and cul-

tural initiatives and programs that reflect the school community with an emphasis on Yukon First Nations culture. The Elder in the School fund is only available for rural schools and is a 50/50 cost-shared initiative that is jointly sponsored by FNPP and participating Yukon First Nations. A letter of agreement from the local First Nations must be attached to the proposal; failing to do so can delay the distribution of funds. The Community Based Orientation fund

is only available for rural schools and is used to host up to three events in the spring or fall to bring new or existing school staff, School Council members and the local First Nation community together. All school applications must be submitted to Danielle Sheldon, Partnerships Coordinator by **May 30**. If you have any questions please call Danielle at 667-8479.

# INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL UNIT

Learning about the history and impact of Indian residential schools is important for all Canadians. We have heard this message from students, parents, First Nations and other groups in Yukon and across Canada. In response, Yukon Education's First Nations Programs and Partnerships Unit has been working with many partners to develop new, balanced resources for Social Studies 10 to help teach about Canadian and Yukon residential schools. Students will learn who attended residential schools in Canada and Yukon; impacts of residential schools on students, families and communities; different values and attitudes of the government, set-

tlers and First Nations; government policies and actions that established the residential school system; role of the churches in residential schools; and the journey towards reconciliation (events and activities across Canada and in Yukon).

Along with our First Nations, community, school and federal health services partners, we have made it a priority to ensure that support services are in place before, during and after this unit is taught in schools for our students, their families and their communities. In the first semester of 2014/2015, four schools implemented the unit: Porter Creek Secondary, Vanier Catholic Secondary, Robert Service, and



**Social Studies 10 - Teacher Resource Kit**

Tantalus. In the spring semester, 2015, at least four more schools will implement the unit.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YUKON SCHOOLS

"I definitely understand First Nations people now...and why they may be in poverty", "I now understand how much the residential schools impacted First Nations people", "the Canadian government's attempts to assimilate caused lasting damage to First Nations culture", "massive amounts of the First Nations population died off upon arrival of Europeans", "this activity made me really think about how people feel"... These are some comments by students who participated in the Blanket Exercise in Sean Wilkinson's class at F.H. Collins Secondary School. This historical awareness

activity is a walk in Indigenous peoples' shoes, back to the first meetings with Europeans. It experientially teaches a history of Canada that most people never learn. It raises awareness and understanding of federal policies and programs that impacted, and still impact, the lives of Aboriginal peoples, and identifies positive changes now happening across the country. Understanding our shared history helps us to know our students and our Yukon communities. Meaningfully integrating First Nations knowledge, worldviews and pedagogies in classrooms often requires changing our ideas. This activity provides a way

to have a dialogue about the past and helps move us towards better understanding and relationships. The activity has been adapted with Yukon content for high schools, particularly Social Studies 10/11 and Yukon First Nations Studies 12 and is available from FNPP. The original version and grade 4-8 versions are available from KAIROS (the social justice organization that developed the activity). <http://www.kairoscanada.org/order/blanket-exercise-3rd-ed-download/> FNPP would be happy to facilitate the Blanket Exercise with students or staff.

*"Understanding can lead to compassion. Understanding can lead past stereotypes to real people who have much to offer. Understanding can help us to deal with the past and move into the future."*  
Quoted from the KAIROS website.



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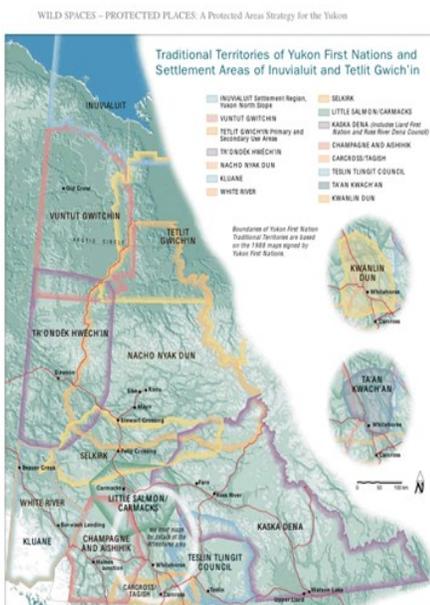
The First Nations Programs and Partnerships Unit was created by the Public Schools Branch of the Department of Education in August 2006. FNPP is dedicated to four goals:

- building productive relationships with First Nations communities;
- increasing the amount of First Nations perspectives in Yukon schools;
- improving the academic results of First Nations students in the K-12 system;
- providing support to and enhancing First Nations' efforts to revitalize their languages.

This must be accomplished through meaningful and productive working relationships with Yukon First Nations governments and CYFN. The unit has four main responsibilities:

- First Nations education programs in Yukon schools;
- First Nations language programs in Yukon schools;
- Development of First Nations curriculum and resource materials;
- Development and maintenance of partnerships with all stakeholders involved in Yukon First Nations education issues.

## DID YOU KNOW...



- The Yukon has a total land mass of 483,450 square kilometers
- Of this land mass 41,439 square kilometers is Yukon First Nations settlement land.
- “Settlement land” is defined as category A, category B, or fee simple settlement land.
- “Yukon First Nation” means one of the following: Carcross/Tagish First Nation; Champagne and Aishihik First Nation; Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in First Nation; Kluane First Nation; Kwanlin Dün First Nation; Liard First Nation; Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation; First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun; Ross River Dena Council; Selkirk First Nation; Ta’an Kwach’an Council; Teslin Tlingit Council; Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation; or White River First Nation.
- 11 of the 14 Yukon First Nations have Final and Self-Government Agreements in effect. These agreements are signed by the Government of Canada, Government of

Yukon and the First Nation and include **land called Settlement Land, which First Nations own and manage.**

- Settlement Land can be designated developed or undeveloped. The general right of access applies on undeveloped land only. **It is your responsibility to determine the status of the land you wish to access.** You have the right to enter, cross and stay for a reasonable period of time on undeveloped lands for non-commercial recreation, including camping and fishing, subject to the responsibilities described below.
- When using undeveloped lands, you must **NOT:** Damage the land or structures, interfere with the use and enjoyment of the land by the First Nation, or commit acts of mischief. A person who does any of these things is considered to be a trespasser.

For further information contact your local First Nations office, or Environment Yukon.