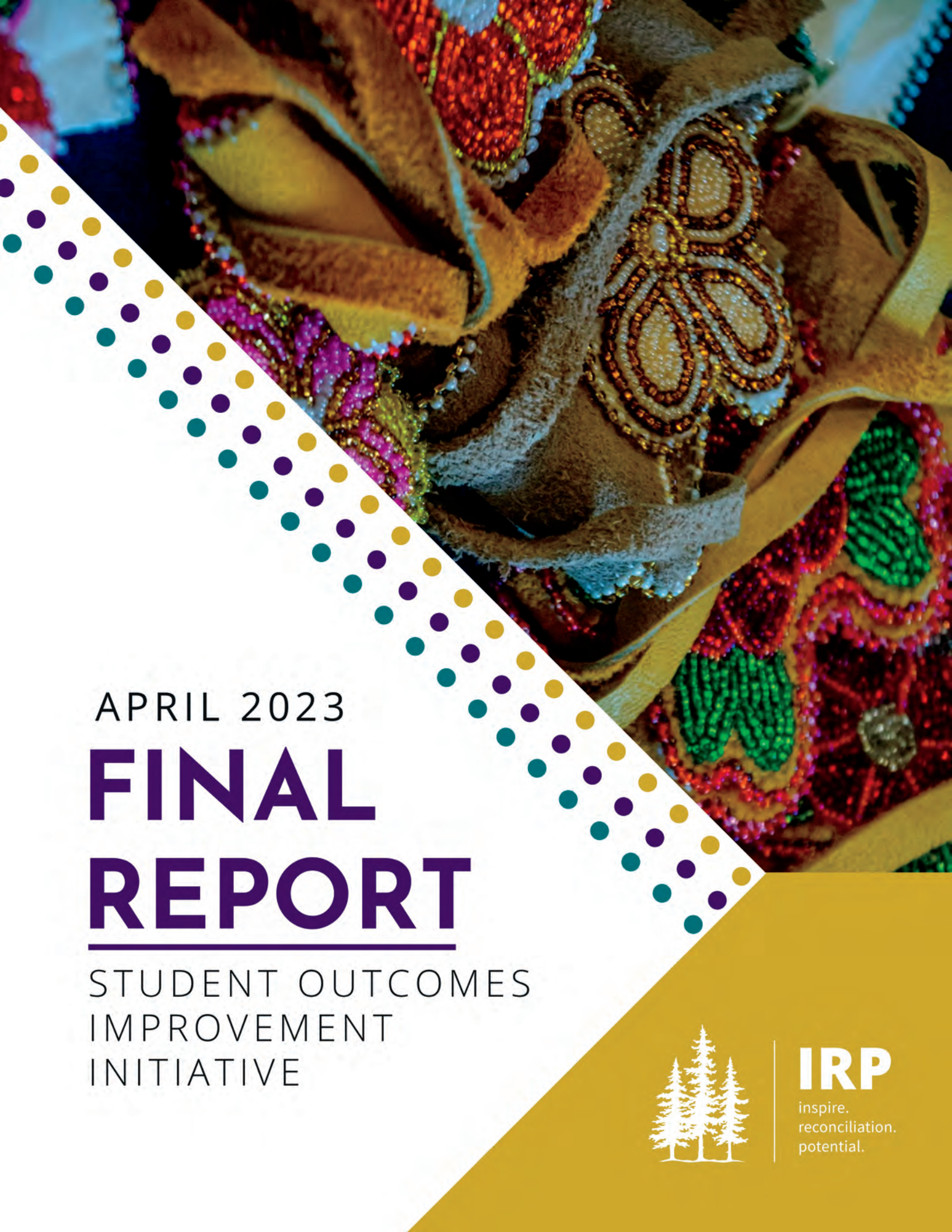




APRIL 2023

FINAL REPORT

STUDENT OUTCOMES
IMPROVEMENT
INITIATIVE



IRP

inspire.
reconciliation.
potential.

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BACKGROUND/ CONTEXT

Despite an increasing gap in levels of educational attainment and participation between Indians and non-Indians in Yukon, effective education reform has not been initiated.

- Kwiya Report, 1987

The Yukon has no shortage of reports highlighting the numerous and complex causes of the continued education gap for First Nation and rural Yukon students. These reports, spanning over 50 years, all point to colonization and marginalization as the genesis and persistence of these long standing gaps. Our intent with this work is to build on the efforts others have made to bring these recurring systemic issues to light. For most who have worked in education in the North these are not unknowns. The piece that remains elusive is how to change course and effectively address them. Co-creating student outcomes with First Nations as partners in education is a step in the right direction.

In its 2019 Report on Education, the Auditor General of Canada found that although the Education Act requires the Department of Education to operate an education system that provides Yukon students with opportunities to reach their 'maximum potential', the department had no definition for what 'maximum potential' actually means.

The Auditor General also found that the department had made little effort to understand the root causes of the gaps in student outcomes that exist among Yukon students (particularly between First Nation and non-First Nation students and between rural and urban students), and no performance measurement strategy to set targets and guide its actions to close those gaps and help Yukon students reach their maximum potential.

As a result, the Auditor General recommended that the Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy that includes:

1. analyzing the root causes of poor student outcomes;
2. defining performance targets;
3. developing and implementing actions to reach those targets; and
4. evaluating the effectiveness of those actions in improving student outcomes.

This recommendation dovetailed with one of the four priorities identified by the federal government, the Government of Yukon, and all fourteen Yukon First Nation governments in the Joint Education Action Plan - closing the 'academic achievement gap' between First Nation and non-First Nation students in Yukon so that First Nation students attain and exceed academic requirements.





This recommendation was also consistent with the findings contained in the 'Review of Inclusive and Special Education in the Yukon Final Report', which was commissioned as a result of a separate recommendation from the 2019 Auditor General Report and was published by Nikki Yee in 2021. The primary finding of this review was consistent with the findings contained in the 2019 Auditor General Report - that in many cases students' learning needs were not being met by the Yukon education system.

In response, the Department of Education publicly committed to collaborate with Yukon First Nation governments, with the participation of education partners, to develop and implement a student outcome improvement strategy to improve student outcomes within the Yukon education system, particularly for First Nation and rural students.

The first stage of meeting this commitment was for the department to collaborate with Yukon First Nation governments and then its broader education partners to establish and define the outcomes that Yukon students should achieve over the course of their time in the K-12 education system. These outcomes could then be used to help define what it means for Yukon students to achieve their 'maximum potential', and to inform the development and implementation of a broader student outcome improvement strategy.

We began this work with the intention to apply a reconciliation lens to this initiative, to listen deeply, and to build student outcome statements that are clear, remain relevant over time, and reflect the culture and diversity of the Yukon.



THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Phase One

The goal of the first phase of the engagement process was to create space and listen deeply to Yukon First Nation governments and to gather intensive feedback to be used to create draft student outcomes that: addressed the recommendations of the Auditor General; created inclusive, innovative, and community-based student outcome statements; and formed the foundation of the second phase of a broader engagement with Education partners.

Phase one involved reaching out and connecting with each First Nation government to hear their views and ideas on student outcomes. Using a set of consistent and approved questions, we engaged with the First Nation governments that made themselves available, capturing their thoughts, ideas, hopes, experiences, and even their dreams for the future of their young people through the Yukon education system.

We developed a reasonable number of draft outcomes based on the information gathered from these engagement sessions, and then provided First Nations with the opportunity to provide additional feedback. This included sessions with both the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate and the First Nations Education Commission.

Phase Two

During the second phase of the engagement process, we engaged with the broader education community, additional partners and stakeholders about the draft student outcomes. This included engagement with teachers and school-based staff, school administrators (inclusive of administration from the Yukon Association of Education Professionals), school boards, school councils, students, parents, and the public in order to find out both what they think the key things are that students should know following the completion of their K-12 education in the Yukon, and what students need in order to achieve the draft outcomes.

This report contains our final findings and recommendations with respect to student outcomes for Yukon's education system.

It is important to remember Yukon schools cannot reasonably be expected to bear the sole responsibility for students being able to achieve their 'maximum potential' as defined through the student outcomes contained in this report. As noted by Ms. Yee in her report, in the Yukon context, families, tutors, Yukon First Nations, advocacy groups, and other government departments and programs provide invaluable support to students and to the education system as a whole. To create significant change, serious consideration has to be given to how students' needs can be met by an education system in relationship with different support structures in a way that is more coordinated, generative, and synergistic.

“ —

What matters to Indigenous peoples in education is that children, youth, adults and Elders have the opportunity to develop their gifts in a respectful space... It is about fostering identity, facilitating well-being, connecting to land, honouring language, infusing with teachings and recognizing the inherent right to self-determination.

~ *What Matters in Indigenous Education Report*



Through the engagement process in both phases of outreach the engagement team continued to hear an emerging set of values that provide an anchor to the proposed student outcome statements.

In recognizing these values as foundational to the student outcomes, it is intended that they will inform how Yukon's education system can work through the next stages of implementation and evaluation while honoring these core values.

WE VALUE...





Successful
Transitions
for Students

Strengths Based
Approach

Safety

Empathy

Reconciliation

Relationships

Options and
Opportunities

History &
Living Culture
of the 14
Yukon First
Nations

Support
For
Teachers

Emotional,
Physical,
Mental,
Spiritual



DRAFT ONE STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Yukon students will...

- know who they are and where they come from, and feel they belong.
- be resilient and emotionally intelligent.
- be able to transition through their educational experience successfully.
- understand and appreciate they are part of the land, part of the water.
- be happy.
- know what they need to be healthy and grounded.
- be financially literate.
- understand Yukon First Nation history culture and protocols, and worldviews.
- meet or exceed literacy, communication and numeracy expectations for each grade level.
- have the ability to access, understand and analyze a wide range of information.
- have the skills, abilities and confidence to develop and achieve their career and life goals.
- actively try to make the world a better place.
- have the skills, ability and confidence to use technology and adapt to the use of new technology.

HIGH LEVEL THEMES

Based on the feedback from phase two engagements, we are suggesting the addition of two value statements and one new outcome statement.

We heard from education partners and stakeholders that safe schools are key to student success. If students don't feel safe at school or in their classroom it will be hard for them to succeed. Therefore we have proposed adding a new value of safety to the core values list.

We also heard clearly that teachers are key to this important work and that they need support to be the best teachers they can be for the success of Yukon students. It is recognized there has been much change in education over the past decade, though that change is likely to continue, effective instruction remains at the core of student success. We want to emphasize the importance of support for teachers as these outcomes are implemented. We believe that consistent, responsive, accessible support is vital and has an important place in the values that underpin the work of educating Yukon students.

While we heard varying feedback on the outcome, Yukon students will be happy, there was as much enthusiastic support as there was ardent objection. We have chosen to include it with some added context to clarify the intent.

We have also included a fourteenth outcome specific to Yukon First Nations Languages; Yukon Students will have increased exposure to, and opportunities for learning Yukon First Nations languages. The intent behind this outcome is to amplify what already exists in the Education Act and to be explicit about the importance of Yukon First Nations languages.

The core values and student outcome statements are intended to provide direction but with the understanding that it will take time to make these important shifts. There will need to be recognition that schools, classrooms, school boards, and the Department need support to achieve these goals and that each schools journey will be unique given their context.

There were overarching concerns brought forward on the broad nature of the outcomes and the ability to measure their delivery and effectiveness. There are some existing tools that can utilize current data to contribute to effective measurement of these student outcomes, but the implementation phase will have to include the development of new tools to fill data and measurement gaps. The appendix of this report includes some preliminary research to support how two of the outcomes deemed "immeasurable" could be effectively evaluated. This research sheds some light on new ways that we can measure success which will be valuable during the implementation phase of the strategy.

YUKON STUDENTS WILL...

BE RESILIENT AND
EMOTIONALLY
INTELLIGENT.



KNOW WHO THEY
ARE AND WHERE
THEY COME
FROM, AND FEEL
THEY BELONG.



BE ABLE TO
TRANSITION
THROUGH THEIR
EDUCATIONAL
EXPERIENCE
SUCCESSFULLY.



UNDERSTAND
AND APPRECIATE
THEY ARE PART
OF THE LAND,
PART OF THE
WATER.



BE HAPPY.



KNOW WHAT
THEY NEED TO BE
HEALTHY AND
GROUNDED.



BE FINANCIALLY
LITERATE.

UNDERSTAND
YUKON FIRST
NATION HISTORY,
CULTURE,
PROTOCOLS, AND
WORLDVIEWS.



MEET OR EXCEED
LITERACY,
COMMUNICATION,
AND NUMERACY
EXPECTATIONS
FOR EACH GRADE
LEVEL.



HAVE THE ABILITY
TO ACCESS,
UNDERSTAND,
AND ANALYZE A
WIDE RANGE OF
INFORMATION.



HAVE THE SKILLS,
ABILITIES, AND
CONFIDENCE TO
DEVELOP AND
ACHIEVE THEIR
CAREER AND LIFE
GOALS.



ACTIVELY TRY
TO MAKE THE
WORLD A
BETTER PLACE.



HAVE THE SKILLS,
ABILITIES, AND
CONFIDENCE TO
USE TECHNOLOGY
AND ADAPT TO THE
USE OF NEW
TECHNOLOGY.



HAVE INCREASED
EXPOSURE TO, AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
LEARNING, YUKON
FIRST NATIONS
LANGUAGES.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on engagement completed to date, the following are the fourteen proposed final student outcome statements, grounded in the values shared earlier. These outcome statements will form the foundation of the Yukon's first student outcome strategy. It is our hope that these statements reflect this place we call home, that they help to shift the education system's expectations to a more holistic approach to education, and finally, that they support all Yukon students to reach their full potential.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS YUKON STUDENTS WILL...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
BE RESILIENT AND EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT.	A person is resilient when they are successfully able to adapt to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility. Resilience is the mental and spiritual reservoir of strength that helps people handle stress and hardship. Resilience is made up of five pillars: • self-awareness • mindfulness • self-care • positive relationships • and purpose. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to effectively manage both one's own emotions and understand the emotions of others. There are already some programs in schools around these themes.	Teach children tools for self-awareness, mindfulness, self care, positive relationships, and purpose. Role model emotional intelligence. Provide students with opportunities for growth in these areas through rich, culturally relevant school programs involving classroom, community and on-the-land learning. Implement successful examples of peer driven programs that provide opportunities for students to build leadership skills and support each other in building these key skills.
ACTIVELY TRY TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.	That each person's choices and actions can have an impact on others and the world. That we each have a responsibility to make the world better and not just to oneself.	Model the behaviour and practices. Create opportunities for global citizenship.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
BE HAPPY.	Happiness is frequent positive feelings accompanied by an overall sense that one's life has meaning. When one's needs are met they can be satisfied and content. Happiness is an overall sense of experiencing more positive emotions than negative ones. <i>**Note: No one can be happy all the time, and that is okay, it is the ability to find happiness, and understand what, who and how you are affected by that.</i>	Schools and teachers create environments and learning opportunities where students understand what their needs are and see themselves as successful learners who belong. Children need connection, it may not be with their teacher, or their peers in the classroom, but happiness in the education system would require positive connections at school. Allowing, assisting and noting connections and overall feelings of well-being, creating spaces, and opportunities for students to see themselves shine and succeed are some of the building blocks to education playing a role in students finding and creating happiness.
BE ABLE TO TRANSITION THROUGH THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE SUCCESSFULLY.	At key points, students are in particular need of extra support so that they understand what the next step is and have the skills, ability and support to meet those requirements. • Daycare to K • K to grade 1 • Grade 5 • Grade 7 • Grade 9 • Grade 12 • Work force • Post Secondary • Community to Whitehorse	Prepare students for successful transitions at key points. Effective communication with families and caregivers so that successful transitions are supported at school and at home. Work in partnership with Yukon First Nations and other partners to provide the strongest opportunities for successful transitions.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
UNDERSTAND YUKON FIRST NATION HISTORY, CULTURE, PROTOCOLS, AND WORLDVIEWS.	No matter where you stand in the Yukon it is someone's traditional territory. The first peoples have a rich, diverse and important history and culture that all students should learn about. It helps all students develop an understanding of cultural differences and respect for diversity. These include worldviews like interconnectedness, respect for all living things, collective responsibilities. First Nations worldviews are just as valid as western worldviews. Neither are "wrong". This is a clear requirement under the Education Act.	Every school must, in consultation with the YFN served by the school, include in the school program activities relevant to the culture, heritage, traditions, and practices of the YFN. Ensure students understand the legacy of colonialism and that First Nations, Metis, & Inuit peoples lived in thriving, independent, self-governing societies before the arrival of the Europeans. Ensure there is a meaningful place for ceremony at school. Create space and opportunities for Elders and knowledge holders to be present and part of the school and classroom teaching and experiences.
HAVE THE ABILITY TO ACCESS, UNDERSTAND, AND ANALYZE A WIDE RANGE OF INFORMATION.	These skills are necessary in a world where there is an overabundance of information that students have to sift through to be able to address the issues/problems that they face. Students need to have the skills to decipher credible information and apply it. This is already included in many aspects of the school curriculum.	Ensure students understand the importance of factual and credible information and have the skills they need to find, analyze and apply.

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EMOTIONALLY
INTELLIGENT.



KNOW WHO THEY
ARE AND WHERE
THEY COME
FROM, AND FEEL
THEY BELONG.



BE ABLE TO
TRANSITION
THROUGH THEIR
EDUCATIONAL
EXPERIENCE
SUCCESSFULLY.



UNDERSTAND
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OF THE LAND,
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BE HAPPY.



KNOW WHAT
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HEALTHY AND
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BE FINANCIALLY
LITERATE.



UNDERSTAND
YUKON FIRST
NATION HISTORY,
CULTURE,
PROTOCOLS, AND
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MEET OR EXCEED
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HAVE INCREASED
EXPOSURE TO, AND
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LEARNING, YUKON
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INTENTIONALLY BLANK

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
MEET OR EXCEED LITERACY, COMMUNICATION, AND NUMERACY EXPECTATIONS FOR EACH GRADE LEVEL.	These are the more conventional academic skills we expect students to develop. The intent here is to ensure students complete their primary and secondary school experience without needing extensive (3 or more classes) of upgrading or have not achieved the abilities needed to be successful. Providing excellent instruction and assessment practices at each grade level is a key factor influencing improved student outcomes. Teachers need continual support to ensure they know and can apply the best practices.	Provide excellent instruction to students and ongoing assessment of their learning based on best practices. Provide appropriate interventions in a timely manner in partnership with the students education partners. Effective communication with families and caregivers so that student learning is supported at school and at home.
HAVE THE SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND CONFIDENCE TO DEVELOP AND ACHIEVE THEIR CAREER AND LIFE GOALS.	Students must have the ability to set and achieve career/life goals that are meaningful to them. They need to believe they can achieve these goals. Each student has unique strengths. All goals (academic, trades, traditional pursuits etc.) should be celebrated and supported.	Help the students recognize their strengths and build off of them. Provide instruction and learning opportunities that allow students to grow their strengths. Teach students to set goals and achieve them and how to respond when barriers are put in their way. Support students in identifying what success looks like for them and what they wish to achieve.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
BE FINANCIALLY LITERATE.	The ability to understand and use various financial skills, including personal financial management, budgeting, and investing that prepare students for real life situations.	Teach financial literacy skills and competencies to all students, including where to go for information and assistance. Ensure that financial literacy is included in the school curriculum, for every student, across grades.
UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THEY ARE PART OF THE LAND, PART OF THE WATER.	This is an Indigenous perspective and worldview that all students should experience. We are inherently interconnected with the Land, water, animals and all living things. We each have a responsibility to mother earth. Speaks to spiritual centering, peacefulness. Not just physical health but mental and spiritual health. The term Part of the Land Part of the Water stems from the book of the same name, of which Yukon Department of Education was partner to. As captured by the late Virginia Smarch, "the old timers knew the habits of the land, animals and the fish and how the people moved about the country with the seasons..." She then said, "That's why I don't hesitate to say and old native person is part of the land, part of the water..."	Offer opportunities for students to experience being and learning on-the-land. Work with knowledge holders to bring a deeper understanding of these worldviews. Support learning about stewardship and interconnectedness. This understanding can be supported through classroom instruction - poetry and literature selections, teaching local First Nation history, culture, and worldviews.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
KNOW WHO THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY COME FROM, AND FEEL THEY BELONG.	Students will have pride in their culture and community. They will understand they are welcome and belong in the school, and the system as a whole.	Create opportunities to share, talk about culture, family community. They will teach celebration of diversity and of other cultures. Explain there are many worldviews with a strong emphasis on the First Nation's worldviews of this place. Embed First Nation culture throughout the curriculum. Work closely with local Yukon First Nations. School space will have representation of Yukon First Nations.
HAVE THE SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND CONFIDENCE TO USE TECHNOLOGY AND ADAPT TO THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY.	The ability to use technology is critical to support learning, and this includes the ability to quickly adapt to changes and improvements available technology. Technology is a tool, not the solution. This must include the responsible, safe, and ethical use of technology.	Model and use technology as a tool for teaching. Teach students how to use technology to access information and demonstrate their learning. Prepare students for adapting as technology changes. Create opportunities to experiment with various technologies.

STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS Yukon Students will...	EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER/SCHOOL?
KNOW WHAT THEY NEED TO BE HEALTHY AND GROUNDED.	Understanding when your life is in balance, and when you are at your best. That you feel strongly connected to this place and your community and you know what your best self is and how to achieve and maintain this balance. Understanding what a "healthy" person is, mind, body and spirit, from physical to mental to emotional and spiritual health. This includes how and what your body needs to move and be in its best state, to what nutrition you fuel your body with, to ensuring that you understand how to have a clear healthy mind, and to deal with mental health and awareness issues, to understanding what guides you in life in a positive and productive way that is meaningful to each individual.	Offer opportunities for students to experience how to be healthy and grounded (e.g. different forms of physical activity, on-the-land learning, experience with ceremony), so they can learn what does and doesn't help them feel their most balanced and grounded.
HAVE INCREASED EXPOSURE TO, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING, YUKON FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES.	The Education Act requires the Minister to employ aboriginal language teachers to provide aboriginal language instruction in Yukon schools, and it also allows for the provision of an educational program in a Yukon First Nation language.	Aboriginal language teachers provide aboriginal language instruction in Yukon schools. Teachers and school administrators should also ensure their school environment reflects the language of the Yukon First Nation(s) served by the school.

**The purpose of
education is to turn
mirrors into windows.**

~ Sydney J. Harris



ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

As the engagement team gathered information and feedback in both phases of outreach, there were important education related themes that continually arose that, while valuable and important, did not necessarily fit into the student outcomes framework. The team thought it prudent to ensure that the information was not lost and was captured in this document to be passed on to the Department of Education and other education partners.

Below is a list of high level points for future consideration.

- Working to and with students abilities.
 - There is a deep connection between the student outcomes strategy and inclusive and special education in the Yukon.
 - There were concerns around 'pushing students through' because of age vs. ability and readiness.
- Ensuring that all school staff has an understanding of Yukon and Yukon First Nations.
 - As much as the proposed student success measures speak to this for students, the communities felt strongly that school staff also need to have a solid understanding of Yukon First Nations history, culture, protocols and worldviews.
- There are continued concerns regarding access to quality educational programming - need to raise the bar for rural students.
 - There needs to be continued consideration for increasing opportunities for rural students to ensure they are not missing out on a quality education experience because of their physical location.
- Staffing processes and staff housing.
 - Policies regarding Yukon First Nation participation in hiring are unevenly applied across the territory.
 - Staffing in communities remains a challenge and one that is exasperated by lack of quality housing options for staff.
- Parent and community involvement.
 - There was continued dialogue that the success of the students is not the sole responsibility of the school and its staff. There is a clear desire to continue to grow the work that encourages parent and community involvement within the school and students' education.

- Having supports available for students including counselling, tutoring, and wellness
 - Dedicated supports are needed, with an emphasis on mental health and wellbeing.
 - These supports need to be in addition to existing resources - teachers can not take on this role.
- More opportunities for hands-on, experiential, and alternative programming.
 - There were strong feelings around the difficulty in planning for outdoor, experiential, and land based learning opportunities for students, both in urban and rural settings across the territory.
 - There is concern that programs initially created in part with at-risk youth in mind have become elitist and there are now numerous barriers for youth who need these alternative programs the most.
 - There are also concerns about barriers for community students to participate in these programs.
- Ensuring that inclusive special education is given the focus that is needed.
- Technology in schools.
 - There were concerns raised about the ability of schools to keep pace with technology for learning.
 - There needs to be a strategy built to support not only the infrastructure and purchases needed for this to be effective but also the expertise that is needed to properly implement and teach.
- Building proper supports in schools.
 - There was significant feedback from teachers that they need additional supports in the classrooms. We feel strongly that these supports need to be co-created and designed in partnership with the Yukon First Nations and that they be innovative and inclusive of Yukon First Nations worldviews.
- Multi-grade/split classrooms.
 - Multi-grade/split classrooms are the norm in community schools.
 - There needs to be an examination of the impact of many schools having to go to multi-grade/split classrooms due to budget constraints. Is this effective? What impact does it have on teaching load, students' success, supports and learning?





The whole Yukon is our school.

*~ Together Today for our
Children Tomorrow*

CONCLUSION

After 18 months of engagement we are turning over these recommendations to the department of education and the education partners in the Yukon to form the basis of the student outcomes strategy development and implementation.

This work has meant a great deal to our team and we are humble to be a part of this important shift in Yukon Education. We can hold our heads high that we applied a reconciliation lens, worked to hear from a broad array of education partners, listened deeply, and focused on the future for all Yukon students.



APPENDIX

MEASURING STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES **Culturally Responsive K-12 Assessment Practices** **R.Klein, Rhiannon Klein Consulting**

Assessment practices in K-12 schools in Canada and the United States, inclusive of the Yukon, have often defaulted to measurement tools based on the dominant culture, which centres Eurocentric approaches such as academic test scores and standardized testing (Johnston and Claypool 2010; Trumbull and Nelson-Barber 2019; Stoffer 2017). This form of assessment often leaves large groups of students behind and is often not an accurate reflection of a students' success in school, particularly Indigenous and BIPOC students (Johnston and Claypool 2010; Trumbull and Nelson-Barber 2019; Stoffer 2017). Further, these assessment tools are not reflective of a wholistic perspective of "success" and "can ignore real, meaningful differences in

students' abilities, interests and goals" (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020, p.1). Discussing the importance of cultural validity in the assessment of Indigenous students in the United States, Trumbull and Nelson-Barber (2019) argued, "achieving cultural validity in assessments means, first, recognizing that tests and assessments are cultural artifacts and that the ways in which students respond to them are affected by their cultural knowledge and experiences" (p.40). This needs to be taken into consideration throughout the development and implementation of K-12 assessments.

When developing culturally responsive assessments, much of the research emphasizes the importance of developing multi-method assessments or authentic assessments. Authentic assessments can be defined as "multiple forms of assessment that reflect students learning, achievement, perspectives and ideologies" (Coles-Ritche and Charles 2011, p.36). Johnston and Claypool (2010) argued that standardized testing can have a place in K-12 assessments but needs to be combined with other authentic measurement tools. They developed a multi-method assessment model, which "combines data sources, assessment methods, and areas assessed in a unique and sometimes personalized manner to provide results that lead directly to data-based conclusions and recommendations" (Johnston and Claypool 2010). This model combines the four pillars of assessment: (1) Norm-referenced measures; (2) Interviews; (3) Behavioural Observations; and Informal assessment procedures (Johnston and Claypool 2010, p. 127) and incorporates the seven redefined learning objectives introduced in the Canadian Council on Learning report, *Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Learning*.

Table 1. Multi-Method Assessment Model

Sources of Data	Assessment Methods	Areas Assessed
Child, parent(s), sibling(s)	Curriculum-based	Cognitive ⁴
Extended family	Norm-referenced	Emotional ⁵
Elders, community members	Portfolio ¹	Physical
Peers, teachers, administrators	Observation ²	Spiritual
Other professionals	Rubrics ³	

¹ Examination of diverse forms of knowledge and student strengths.

² Observation of students participating in local place-based cultural and linguistic practices.

³ Use of rubrics to assess holistic learning (e.g. Circle of Courage).

⁴ Equal balance between Western and indigenous knowledge, including knowledge of language and culture.

⁵ Includes social-emotional personality functioning

(Table modified from Johnston and Claypool 2010, p. 128).

Using a variety of culturally responsive measurement tools can increase students' confidence and sense of belonging as they see their own worldviews and lived experiences incorporated into their learning and assessment across their time in school (Johnston and Claypool 2010).

There is a great deal of research done around the importance of sociocultural approaches to pedagogy and assessment (sometimes referred to as "relational

pedagogy”), which places emphasis on the importance of- and connection to- family, community, place and the environment (Trumbull and Nelson-Barber 2019; Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020). It also highlights the importance of mutual respect and cooperation (Trumbull and Nelson-Barber 2019). Leading Indigenous education scholar, Marie Batiste (2005) wrote: “Parental involvement in education is a critical component in the success of First Nations students. Schools need to be an extension of the community” (p.11). Elders, parents and community members can play a key participative role in observations and identifying checklists and/or key indicators for measuring success outcomes (Government of Saskatchewan 2022; Johnston and Claypool 2010).

Another key component of measuring success is having students engaged in measuring and understanding their own learning (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020). An example from Natick Public Schools in the USA involved high school students completing an annual self-reflection and assessment to gauge their strengths, abilities, interests and future plans. This included participating in a series of surveys and developing a vision statement for the next 1-5 years that students could then come back to each year to evaluate and reassess their progress and goals (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020).

Success Outcomes: Measuring Happiness and Being Part of the Land and the Water[1]

Students will be happy

One of the student success outcomes is that “students will be happy”. Happiness is tied strongly to relationships and mental health and well-being. Social-emotional learning has also been widely linked with happiness and student success (Zarkzewski and Brunn 2015; Kasikci and Ozhan 2021). The OECD conducts the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA), a triennial survey of 15-year old students around the world. A key focus of the survey and results is students’ well-being. Well-being is considered to be a result of interactions of the following four domains:

1. Psychological dimension: students’ self-awareness, emotional strength, and sense of purpose
2. Social dimension: quality of students’ social lives. This includes relationships inside and outside of school with family, peers and teachers
3. Cognitive dimension: critical thinking skills
4. Physical dimension: adopting a healthy lifestyle (OECD 2017, p.62-63).

There are clear linkages between the interactions of these four dimensions, and Johnston and Claypool’s (2010) multi-method assessment model shown above (see Table 1). A key component of assessing students’ happiness will need to include

[1] This section is focused on two of the success outcomes; however, it should be noted that there are many ways the outcomes overlap and support each other. The assessment tools identified here could be used to measure a number of the outcomes.



connections to community. For example, involving Elders, parents and/or caregivers in observations and talking/sharing circles.

Being part of the land, part of the water

We are inherently interconnected with the land, water, animals and all living things. We each have a responsibility to mother earth. A second student success outcome is that students will understand and appreciate they are part of the land, part of the water. One recommendation would be to convene a committee of Elders and community members who could identify some key indicators that students should meet throughout their time in school when it comes to the Being Part of the Land, Part of the Water. Drawing on the four quadrants of the medicine wheel, a question to guide this discussion would be, 'what spiritual activities, behaviours, and knowledges do you feel are most important?' This would help frame out what is being measured through observation, peer and self-reflection, rubrics, portfolios, etc.

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Appendix: Additional Examples

1. Success-based assessment tool for mental health and wellbeing

One example of a success-based assessment tool that focuses on student wellbeing is a mental health screening that is conducted in grades 5-12 at the Methuen Comprehensive School in Massachusetts, USA. This is an opt-out based screening, where students are asked to fill out an online questionnaire that assess risk factors for depression and anxiety (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020). The data from the questionnaire is only shared with a small mental health team of staff, although permission can be sought from parents/guardians to share data with teachers when there is reason to believe it could be helpful for assisting the student. The mental health team follows-up on any immediate crisis situations and intervenes as needed in other cases. The 2017-2018 Accountability Report on the Methuen Comprehensive School Mental Health System found that after engaging in this questionnaire, 73% of students improved in terms of social-emotional development (Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy 2020).

2. The Government of Saskatchewan (2022) developed a Fair Assessment Checklist for Teachers that might be a good reference tool.

FAIR ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS		
1	I ensure the learning and assessment space of my class community is ethically and culturally safe.	
2	I consider my own biases when engaging in the assessment process.	
3	I place the outcomes in a context of the students' worldviews and communicate them with students in student-friendly language.	
4	My students and I co-construct success criteria that are inclusive, transparent, affirming and align with curricular outcomes.	
5	I consider representing a diverse range of learning in the assessment tasks.	
6	I provide multiple and varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning.	
7	My students and I compare their work to the pre-set success criteria (i.e., a rubric).	
8	I use student practice work formatively to provide feedback or feed-forward to students to further their learning.	
9	I incorporate the Adaptive Dimensions and provide differentiated or equitable assessment support based on individual needs.	
10	I use language that is appropriate and non-discriminatory in my assessment practices.	
11	I strongly consider both validity and reliability in the assessment process.	
12	I do not penalize students for late or non-submitted demonstrations of learning.	
13	I communicate non-academic behaviours separately from curricular outcomes.	
14	I communicate results of groupwork only on individual achievement rather than providing a single grade for all group members.	
15	I gather students' perspectives in an open and anonymous way to improve future assessment practices.	

INFOGRAPHIC ONE

Shared with Yukon First Nations during phase one engagement.

STUDENT OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

Education has committed to collaborate with Yukon First Nation governments to codevelop and implement a student outcome improvement initiative for the Yukon education system, as recommended by the Auditor General. The initiative will be aimed at improving Yukon student outcomes, particularly for rural and First Nation students.

WHAT ARE STUDENT OUTCOMES?

Student outcomes are what we want students to achieve during their time in the education system. For example, 'we want all of our students to successfully complete high school with the ability to enter post-secondary education without requiring upgrading'.



63% of First Nations students who started grade 8 in the 2011-12 school year completed high school in six years compared to **86% of non First Nations** students*

* Auditor General Report on Yukon Education, 2019

Data about what students have actually achieved during their time in the education system can then be used to assess whether the education system is meeting those outcomes.

Student outcomes should:

- be clear and remain relevant over time;
- be based on students rising to their maximum potential;
- reflect the culture and diversity of the student population.

Current student outcome: Tracking high school completion rates.

Possible new outcome: Measure how many graduates are eligible to enter post secondary programming without requiring upgrading.



WHY GET INVOLVED?

**THIS IS A CHANCE TO ENSURE
SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE WAY
THE SYSTEM DEFINES SUCCESS**



For the first time in Yukon, First Nations have the opportunity to participate deeply in student outcome development



This government-to-government process aims to ensure the voice of all Yukon First Nations is heard



Culturally reflective outcomes will shape an education experience that leads to higher achievement for Yukon First Nation students



These outcomes will drive the direction of education in Yukon for years to come

TIMELINE

JAN '22 Launch initiative with community reach out

FEB '22 Start community engagement

JUL '22 Draft outcomes presented to education community

AUG '22 Final outcomes presented to YG

Education has hired Tosh Southwick and Davida Wood of IRP Consulting to work with all Yukon First Nations to codevelop draft education outcomes.

Your input is vital and we will be reaching out soon to schedule your engagement.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO ENGAGE?

- Community visit
- Virtual meeting
- Phone call
- Other?

Let us know what works best for you!



IRP
inspire.
reconciliation.
potential.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
THIS INITIATIVE PLEASE CONTACT:**

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INFOGRAPHIC TWO

Shared with educators during phase two engagement.



Photo credit: **Minnie Clark**
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