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Yukon External Independent Review (YEIR) Panel
Interim Report

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Basic Information and Executive Summary

Project Name: Yukon External Independent Review – Department of Education

Reporting Period: This interim report provides an update on the Yukon External Independent Review Panel's work from June 30 to October 31, 2026. It highlights findings from Phase Two and emerging themes, as well as priorities for the remaining work leading to the final report, which is expected in late December 2026.

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Executive Summary

Phase Two of the Yukon External Independent Review reinforced the findings the Review Panel (the Panel) presented in the Status Report, completed this past summer, and the need for immediate action to improve support for schools and learners. Further engagement, public survey responses and research continued to identify concerns about departmental accountability, staffing, equitable access to services and trust in the Department of Education. The findings support the Panel's call for an overhaul of the education system, with resources and decisions more closely aligned with learners' needs.

The Panel's work continued to be organized into four interconnected focus areas: norms and culture, relationships and communication, structures, and accountability. During Phase Two, the Panel continued to analyze information, insights and lived experience shared by participants, as well as current research on best practices related to the four areas of focus. The Panel further refined the policy framework developed by Bruce S. Cooper, Lance D. Fusarelli, and E. Vance Randall (2004), which was adapted in the first phase of this work to align with the Yukon context. The current adapted framework in Appendix A, reflects the interconnected relationships among the four focus areas highlighted in Phase One and emphasizes the importance of keeping learners at the centre of all decision-making. This framework emphasizes ethics and social justice which the Panel believes will be integral to the work of the Department moving forward.

During Phase Two, the Panel engaged with new and returning participants, including First Nations leadership, councils, committees, school councils, schools, rural and urban communities, partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Sessions in Phase Two explored challenges and opportunities in greater depth and led to deeper and more thorough discussions in areas of particular concern to participants.

First Nations participants raised concerns about racism and low expectations, graduation rates and the need for academic upgrading after graduation. They described how upgrading costs draw on funding intended for post-secondary studies. Participants also identified inequities in the recognition and engagement of First Nations governments, the need for meaningful government-to-government negotiation, implementation of the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) and changes to the Education Act. The Panel recommends that the Department fund upgrading for graduates who lack the preparation or prerequisites needed to pursue their educational goals and establish oversight to monitor and support each high school student's pathway to graduation.

The public survey received 585 submissions. More respondents were dissatisfied with the Department's support for learners (50.9%) than satisfied (35.6%). Responses highlighted concerns about listening, follow-through, transparency and student preparation for life beyond graduation. Engagement sessions also identified persistent staffing challenges, including hiring delays, payment wait times, inadequate rural housing and the need for stronger onboarding, supervision and professional learning. Together, these findings reinforce the need for more responsive services and clearer accountability for the support reaching schools and learners.

The Department has not responded to the Panel's calls for immediate action on the four recommendations in the Status Report, reproduced here in Appendix B. All four remain in effect and require immediate action. Given the concerns about trust and implementation, the Panel proposes the creation of an Education Advisory Committee involving Yukon First Nations representatives, school principals, external educators and people with change management expertise. This committee's mandate would be to review recommendations from the earlier Status Report and this Interim Report and work with the Department to develop a full implementation plan. Further to this, a communication plan should explain to the residents of the Yukon the steps being taken and how progress will be reported.

During the final phase, the Panel will complete its survey analysis, continue examining post-secondary education and trades, and further consider departmental structure, inclusive education, student learning, human resources, data and facilities. The educator survey findings and recommendations arising from this remaining work will be included in the final report, expected in late December 2026. The Panel will also continue to monitor the Department's response to the recommendations for immediate action.

Themes and Recommendations from Phase Two Sessions

First Nations Perspectives and Recommendations

During Phase Two, First Nations participants described systemic barriers affecting students' learning, graduation and opportunities after high school. They also raised concerns about how little First Nations governments are recognized and engaged in education decisions. These findings draw a connection between student outcomes and the relationships, funding arrangements and accountability needed to support change.

Student learning and pathways after graduation

Participants raised concerns about racism and low expectations within their students' educational experience. They described systemic barriers and expectations that limit First Nations students' opportunities and affect their ability to achieve important learning benchmarks and graduate prepared for their next steps.

Furthermore, some First Nations students require academic upgrading after graduation before they can enter post-secondary programs. First Nations governments described having to use post-secondary education funding to cover these costs, reducing the funding available for students' post-secondary studies and limiting the number of students a Nation can support.

The Panel recommends that the Department of Education fund upgrading for students who graduate without the prerequisites or academic preparation needed to pursue their educational goals. The Panel also recommends that the Department establish an oversight process to monitor and support each high school student's pathway to graduation. The involvement and leadership of First Nations governments would be integral to the development of this process and to its implementation.

These recommendations address preparation for graduation and access to further education. The concerns about racism and low expectations also require consideration in the Panel's final recommendations, alongside the related staff learning and relationship-building needs discussed in the section on support for educators.

Government-to-government relationships

First Nations participants described inequities in how their governments are recognized and engaged in education. Concerns included lack of involvement in decision-making, differences in agreements and funding, and issues with the fulfillment of existing agreements.

Participants emphasized the need for meaningful government-to-government collaboration and negotiation that recognizes each First Nation's circumstances and educational priorities. They called for discussions at a senior level of governance, with decision makers able to address the issues raised. These concerns will inform the Panel's further consideration of government-to-government relationships and its final recommendations.

Implementation of commitments and legislative change

Several First Nations identified the Joint Education Action Plan as an important foundation for improving education outcomes for First Nations learners. Participants called for an implementation plan with clear priorities, dedicated funding, an agreed-upon timeline and accountability for progress. Participants also raised the need to amend the Education Act to reflect commitments to reconciliation and decolonization.

During the final phase of its work, the Panel will continue to consider these concerns, implementation of the JEAP and the recognition and meaningful engagement of First Nations governments from Government leaders.

Public Survey Results

The public survey received 585 submissions about K–12 education in the Yukon. More respondents were dissatisfied with the Department of Education's support for learners (50.9%) than satisfied (35.6%). Negative assessments were particularly evident in respondents' views of the Department's listening and response to public concerns, its transparency in decision-making, and its performance in ensuring graduates are prepared for further education or employment.

Written responses largely echoed concerns raised during engagement sessions, including around sufficient classroom staffing, early intervention and specialized student services, equitable access to courses and specialist services in rural schools, and departmental accountability. Respondents questioned whether departmental decisions and resource allocations, in effect, translate into effective support for schools and learners. These findings reinforce the importance of examining how the Department's structure, services and use of resources contribute to students' experiences and outcomes.

It is important to note that these results describe the views of those who responded and should not be treated as representative of all residents of the Yukon or as direct measures of student achievement. The Panel will consider them accordingly alongside fulsome engagement findings, research and the educator survey as it develops its final recommendations. A detailed public survey analysis is provided in Appendix C. A thorough summary of educator survey findings will be included in the final report.

Recruitment, Training and Support for Educators

During Phase Two, participants in the Panel's engagements continued to raise concerns about the recruitment, hiring and support of educators. They highlighted that administrative delays from the Department of Education or the Public Service Commisstion, staffing shortages and uneven access to training and professional support affect schools' ability to meet learners' needs. The findings reinforce the necessity to connect timely recruitment and reliable employment processes with effective onboarding, supervision and robust ongoing professional learning.

Recruitment and employment processes

Participants described their experience of employment-related administrative backlogs, severe hiring delays and chronic staffing shortages across the territory. In addition, the process for hiring teachers on call was described as cumbersome, lengthy and frustrating, with concerns also raised about timely payment. Hiring challenges were said to extend to school administrators as well.

The Panel feels that the timing of recruitment also requires attention. Many school boards across the country begin recruiting in January to attract the best candidates; delays in recruitment in the Yukon can limit the Department's ability to attract strong, qualified applicants. Extensive empirical evidence has established that highly skilled educators have a profound, long-term impact on both academic metrics and life outcomes, heavily outweighing other institutional variables like funding, facilities, or class size (Opper, 2019). In Canada, the critical need for highly qualified teachers in K–12 classrooms has shifted from a policy ideal to an urgent systemic necessity. While educational research firmly establishes that teacher quality is the most significant school-based determinant of student success, Canada is facing specific, localized crises that intensify the

demand for fully credentialed and specialized educators (Tucker, 2011, contextualized further by Campbell et al., 2017).

The Panel reiterates its Status Report recommendation to refine recruitment, hiring and supervision processes – the latter which seems to have lapsed in recent years – and to design a new onboarding process for school and Department staff in conjunction with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP).

Preparation and ongoing professional support

The Phase Two findings point to a need for more consistent supervision, mentoring, coaching and extensive professional learning across the Yukon's educational workforce. All staff new to the Yukon, especially those new to the profession, need training, support, mentoring and coaching, as well as assistance in building connections with communities where they work. Leadership development should also support teachers moving into administrative roles and principals moving into superintendent positions.

Importantly, recruitment, onboarding and professional learning should prepare educators to work respectfully and effectively with First Nations students, families, governments and communities. This includes learning about First Nations histories, cultures and contemporary realities, recognizing and addressing racism and low expectations, and building relationships with local communities. This work should be developed with First Nations governments and their educational organizations.

The Panel will further examine the supervision, training and coaching available to educators, including teacher and educational assistant evaluation processes. This work will inform the final recommendations on the staffing supports needed to strengthen teaching and learning.

Staffing and support in rural schools

Recruitment and retention challenges require particular attention in rural schools. Inadequate or unavailable staff housing can make it very difficult to attract and retain educators. These conditions affect schools' ability to maintain staffing and provide equitable educational opportunities for learners. Recruiting teachers has become a competitive process across the country, and the lack of guaranteed housing in the Yukon puts the system at a disadvantage.

Financial and housing incentives for rural teachers warrant consideration alongside improvements to rural staff housing overall. The Panel will continue to examine recruitment, retention and support in rural schools before developing its final recommendations. This work will consider how employment conditions and professional support can help schools attract and retain the educators they need.

Emerging Themes

As the Panel continues its work, several themes have emerged that require further discussion and analysis before the final report:

First Nations education and government-to-government relationships

Further consideration is needed on how the education system addresses racism and low expectations, supports graduation and pathways to further education, and recognizes First Nations government leadership in education decisions. This includes implementation of the JEAP, upgrading costs and potential changes to the Education Act.

Department structure, accountability and resources

The Panel will further examine how the Department's structure, staffing, decision-making and allocation of resources support schools and improve outcomes for learners. Outstanding questions include the separation of Ministry and School Authority functions, clarity of responsibilities under the Education Act, and the service levels schools can expect from the Department.

Student learning, inclusion and support

Further work will examine how schools are supported to improve literacy, numeracy, and health outcomes, as well as provide timely assessments, specialized supports and appropriate programming. The Panel will also consider First Nations students' and families' experiences of inclusive education and the role of First Nations governments and education organizations in shaping those services.

Human resources and support for educators

Questions remain about recruitment, hiring, retention, supervision, and professional learning, particularly in rural schools. Further examination will include onboarding, support for teachers on call and school administrators, coaching for classroom teachers, and teacher and educational assistant evaluation processes.

Data, reporting and facilities

The Panel will explore how information about student learning and supports is collected, shared and used. This includes literacy and numeracy targets, benchmarks for departmental initiatives, reporting tools, and school growth planning. Consideration is also needed on how demographic data informs facility planning.

Upcoming Priorities

During the final phase of the review, the Panel will focus on four areas of work

1) **Complete targeted engagement and survey analysis**
   - Continue engagement with Yukon First Nations governments and education organizations, school and Department staff, school councils and boards, partners, families, students and communities, as needed, to address outstanding questions.
   - Complete the analysis of the public and educator surveys and consider the findings alongside engagement sessions, research and previous reports.

2) **Examine unresolved questions and develop options**
   - Further examine the emerging themes identified above and continue its review of post-secondary education and trades, including the connections between K–12 education and students' opportunities after graduation.
   - Develop an Applied Design, Skills and Technologies (ADST)/Trades path to graduation and post-secondary education.
   - Review existing reporting tools and recommend a consistent and coherent reporting mechanism across all schools regarding academic achievement, student support plans, individual education plans (IEPs), behaviour plans, and graduation status.
   - Analyze and review the school growth planning process to ensure it supports student learning, with specific goals and objectives for literacy, numeracy and health outcomes.
   - Continue reviewing the roles and responsibilities of consultants to ensure classroom teachers receive the level of coaching necessary to help them be successful.
   - Gain clarity on the service levels received by schools from the Department to ensure equity of support for each learner.
   - Make suggestions around the development of a facilities plan using demographic data to ensure schools are built to meet the needs of learners within their catchment areas and upgraded to provide a quality learning environment.
   - Continue research and discussions on the separation of Ministry and School Authority functions, including approaches for supported implementation and gradual transition.

3) **Monitor the response to existing recommendations**
   - Monitor the Department's response to the recommendations for immediate action in this summer's Status Report.

<u>All four recommendations for immediate action in the Status Report remain in effect and require immediate action. The remaining review work does not postpone the need to act on those recommendations.</u>

4) **Prepare the final report and recommendations**
   - Bring together the evidence from all phases of the review process – including the educator survey findings – to develop final recommendations for strengthening accountability, supporting schools, and improving outcomes for all learners.

Summary

The second phase of the Yukon External Independent Review reinforced the concerns identified in the Panel's Status Report this past summer. Further engagement and research as well as public survey responses highlighted continuing challenges in departmental accountability, responsiveness and support for schools. Together, the findings point to a central question: How effectively do the Department of Education's structures, decisions and use of resources support teaching and improve learners' experiences and outcomes?

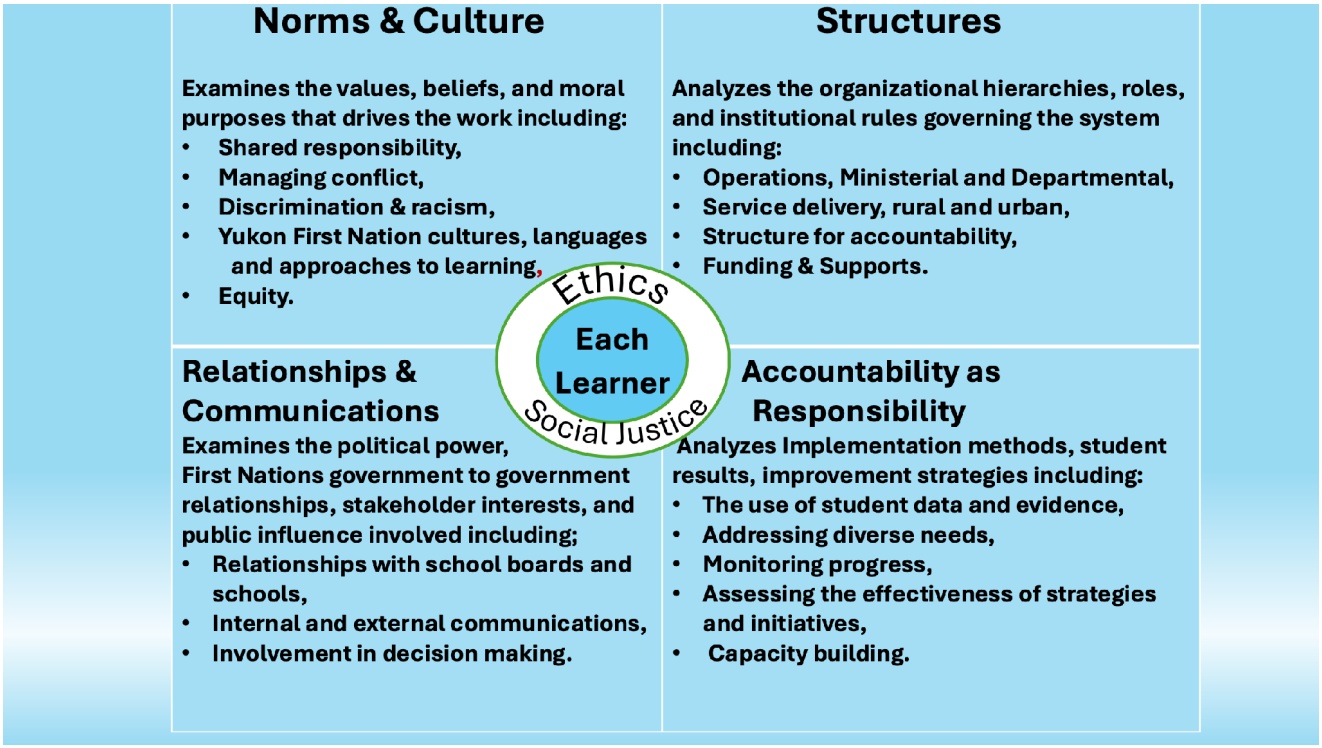
Public and community engagement has reinforced many of the findings in the summer report and adds further urgency to the need for government action. What has become clear through this phase is that many Yukon residents believe the education system needs more than further reviews that leave the existing system largely unchanged. They are looking for a government willing to examine the Department's structure, direct resources toward classrooms and hold the system accountable for student outcomes.

Meaningful system renewal requires more than new policies, organizational charts or promises of better communication. It requires a careful examination of how human and financial resources are allocated, a commitment to directing support where it is needed most, and clear accountability for departmental leadership. Success should be measured by how effectively the Department supports the teachers and schools responsible for educating Yukon students and by whether those efforts ultimately lead to improved experiences and outcomes for learners.

The Panel recognizes the commitment of educators, school and Department staff, First Nations governments, families and community partners who support Yukon learners. Their knowledge and experience will remain essential as the Panel completes its analysis and develops its final recommendations.

During the last phase, the Panel will bring together engagement findings, public and educator survey results, research and previous reports. It will complete its examination of outstanding questions, including post-secondary education and trades, and develop recommendations for a more responsive, equitable, student-centered and accountable education system. This final leg of the Panel's work will also continue to monitor the Department's response to the recommendations already made and will include steps needed to put the Panel's final recommendations into action.

Appendix A: Policy Framework



Note. Adapted from *Better Policies, Better Schools: Theories and Applications*, by B. S. Cooper, L. D. Fusarelli, and E. V. Randall, 2004, Allyn and Bacon. Copyright 2004 by Allyn and Bacon.

Appendix B: Recommendations from the Status Report

1. Addressing Political Interference

This recommendation is meant to support the Minister and ensure credibility and equity at all levels of governance. The Panel recommends:

- Creating a Quality Assurance Structure/Committee to oversee and address educational operational issues as they arise.
- In the interim, communicating a clear process for concerns to be heard. The interim process should start with concerns being raised to the classroom teacher, and then moved up to the school administration, school council/board, the superintendent, and eventually to the Assistant Deputy Minister and Deputy Minister level if necessary.
- On a longer-term basis, changing policy or amending the *Education Act* to ensure the Minister of Education does not interfere or dictate day-to-day operational decisions.

  While the Minister could establish overarching policies or issue certain directives to the Ministry, the Minister should not overrule or dictate the day-to-day operations or decisions made by the various levels of governance within the education system.

2. Separating the Dual Roles of the Department of Education

- The Panel recommends a physical and operational division of roles to a Ministry and School Authority structure. The Ministry and the School Authority will need to have clearly defined roles, adequate staffing, and well-defined service levels.
- A funding formula must be developed to ensure transparency, equity, and accountability. Considering block funding may assist in this work.

3. Strengthening Inclusive Education Supports

Inclusion in education needs to be defined, understood, appropriately supported, and legislated. The Panel's recommendations to strengthen inclusive education supports are to:

- Create and offer a structure like the one at the Child Development Center (CDC) for students and families through Grade 3.
- Develop and maintain an inventory of shared resource programs, specialized programs, and school programs, and use it to inform a strategic planning process that establishes a coherent and consistent service delivery approach, with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Establish a therapeutic model for all students and schools. In developing this model, the Department should consider the various models used elsewhere in Canada, as well as the model developed by the First Nations Education Directorate.

4. Create a Robust Accountability System

The Panel recommends:

- Creating a robust accountability system using relevant research to lead the work of improving student achievement. This should include a process for new initiatives that are built collaboratively by Department and school staff as well as First Nations and partners.
- Assessing the credibility and validity of the data used is an important strategy and alternative data sets should be explored to ensure usefulness for schools and the

Department. The Panel will do further work with Department staff to understand whether the data currently collected helps schools and the Department make informed and actionable decisions. Data collection and analysis create information that is actionable by schools and the Department.

- Designing a new onboarding process, in conjunction with the Association of Education Professionals (YAEP), for new school and Department staff, and refining recruiting, hiring, and supervision processes.

Appendix C: Public Survey Analysis

Snapshot Analysis

The 2026 Yukon K–12 public survey reveals substantial dissatisfaction with the Department of Education's support for Yukon learners. More respondents were dissatisfied with the Department of Education's support for learners (50.9%) than satisfied (35.6%). Concerns are particularly evident in responses about listening, follow-through, transparency and preparation for life beyond graduation.

These findings point to a need for clearer accountability, more responsive services and visible improvements in the support reaching schools and learners. Written responses connect departmental decisions to classroom staffing, academic learning, inclusion, equitable access to courses and specialist services in rural schools, and student well-being. Restoring confidence will require both meaningful action and clear evidence that it is improving students' experiences and outcomes.

Public Survey

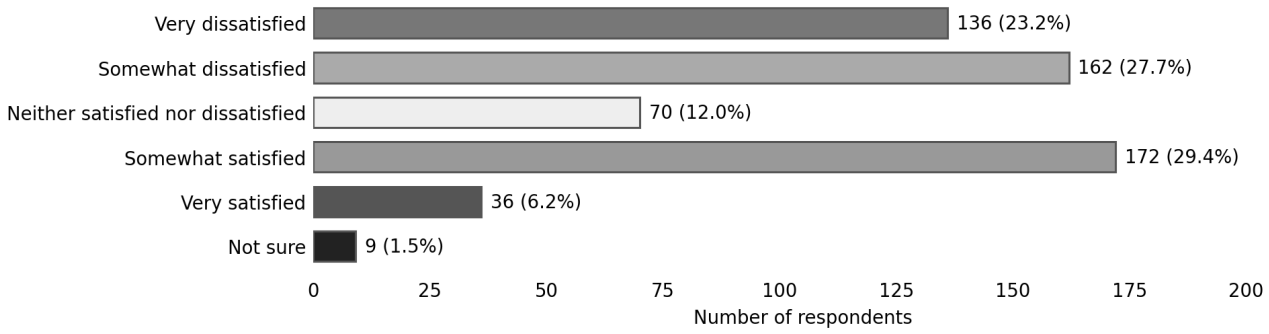
The public survey received 585 submissions: 569 in English and 16 in French. All respondents completed the 15 closed-ended questions. Most also provided written feedback, with 499 respondents (85.3%) answering at least one of the two optional open-ended questions. Of these, 494 identified priorities for education over the next five years, and 461 recommended the single most important change needed to improve education.

The findings are organized into seven themes:

Area	Focus of the analysis
Overall satisfaction	Respondents' satisfaction with the Department's support for Yukon learners.
Departmental priorities and respect	Whether the Department focuses on learner success, treats students and families respectfully, and listens to their concerns.
First Nations cultures and perspectives	Whether the Department respects Yukon First Nations cultures and reflects First Nations perspectives in education decisions.
Communication and public engagement	How effectively the Department provides information, seeks public input and responds to feedback and concerns.
Trust, transparency and accountability	Whether the Department communicates openly and honestly and explains major decisions using evidence of student achievement.
Student outcomes and graduate preparedness	Respondents' perceptions of how effectively the Department ensures graduates are prepared for further education and employment.
Priorities for educational improvement	Concerns, priorities and proposed changes identified in written responses.

Overall Satisfaction

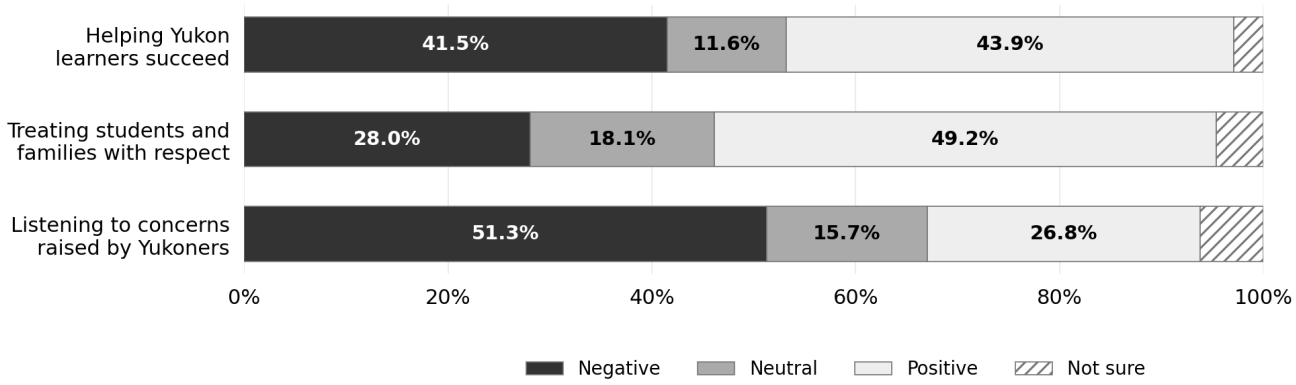
More than half of respondents (50.9%) expressed dissatisfaction with the Department of Education's support for Yukon learners, compared the 35.6% who expressed satisfaction. This gap of 15.3 percentage points indicates a substantial challenge in public confidence among those who responded.



Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: What changes in the Department's support for learners would address the dissatisfaction expressed by respondents, and how will it demonstrate that those changes are making a difference?

Departmental Priorities and Respect

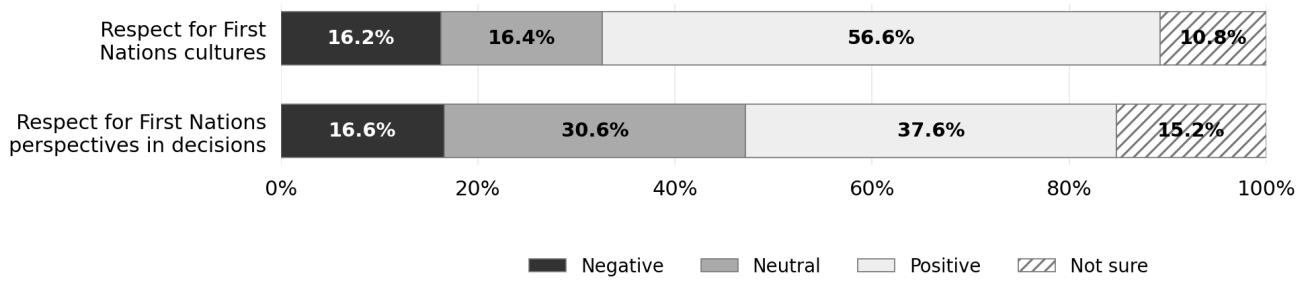
Responses reveal divided views on whether the Department is focused on helping learners succeed: 43.9% agreed and 41.5% disagreed. Views were more favourable on whether it treats students and families with respect with 49.2% agreement and 28.0% disagreement. However, more than half (51.3%) disagreed that the Department listens to concerns raised by Yukon residents, compared with 26.8% who agreed.



Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: Is the Department organized to provide the practical support schools need, or are administrative demands drawing time and resources away from teaching and learning?

First Nations Cultures and Perspectives

Most respondents (56.6%) agreed that the Department respects Yukon First Nations cultures. A smaller share (37.6%) gave a positive assessment of its respect for First Nations perspectives in educational decision making. Negative responses were similar on both measures, at 16.2% and 16.6%. The most significant difference in responses to these two questions was in higher *neutral* and *unsure* responses on the decision-making question.

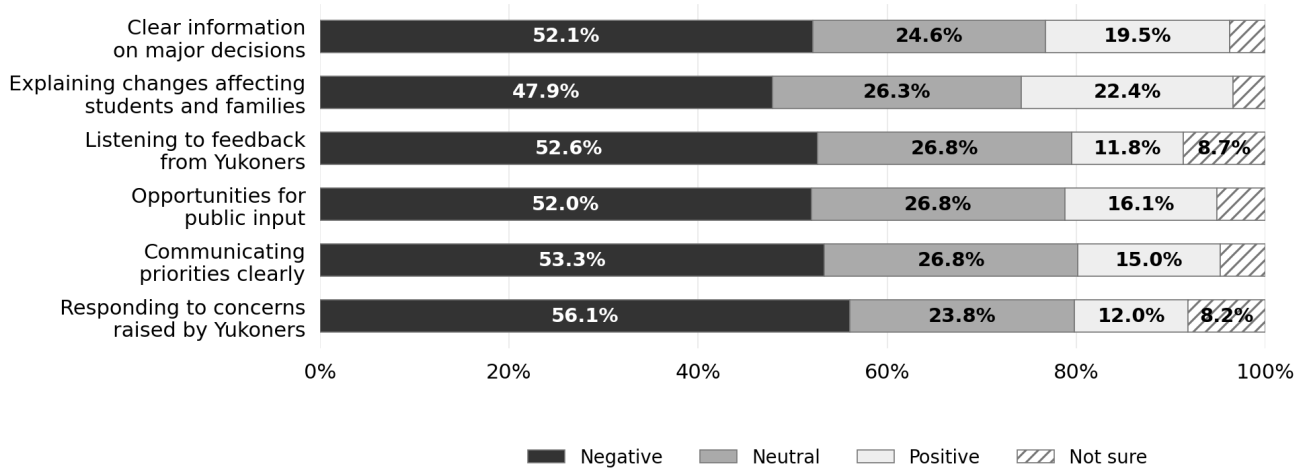


The findings suggest that cultural recognition and respect for First Nations perspectives in decision-making need distinct attention. It is noteworthy that these are the views of all survey respondents, rather than a separate assessment by Yukon First Nations governments or First Nations respondents.

Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: How can the Department demonstrate that respect for Yukon First Nations cultures is reflected in the role First Nations perspectives play in educational decisions?

Communication and Public Engagement

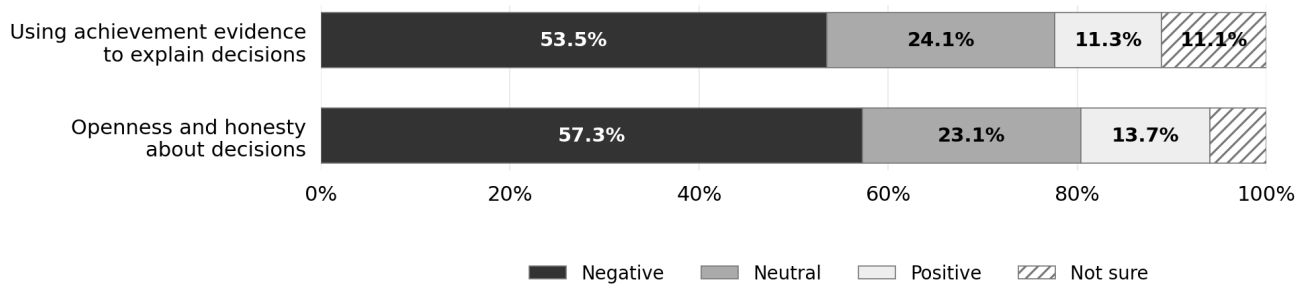
Across all six measures, negative assessments outnumber positive ones. More than half of respondents gave negative assessments on five of the six measures. Departmental response to concerns was weakest, at 56.1% negative and 12.0% positive assessments. Listening to feedback was also rated poorly, at 52.6% negative and 11.8% positive. Clearly, public engagement needs to include a visible response to what people say, alongside opportunities to provide input.



Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: How will the Department ensure that concerns raised by families, educators and communities receive a clear response and lead to visible follow-through?

Trust Transparency and Accountability

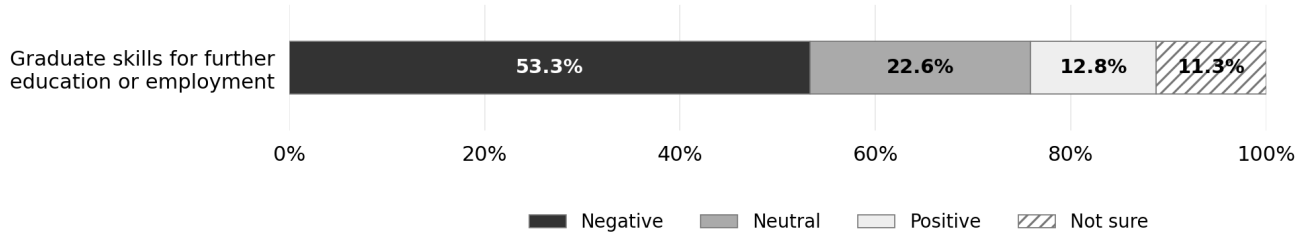
More than half of respondents gave negative assessments of both the Department's use of student achievement evidence to explain major decisions (53.5%) and its openness and honesty about decisions affecting learners and families (57.3%). Positive assessments on these questions were 11.3% and 13.7%, respectively. The results point to a need for better clarity in departmental decision-making and better access to the reasons and data driving those decisions.



Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: How can the Department be held accountable for its decisions, staffing and use of public resources when the reasons and data behind those decisions is not clearly communicated to schools, families and communities?

Student Outcomes and Graduate Preparedness

More than half of respondents (53.3%) gave a negative assessment of the Department's performance in ensuring graduates have the skills needed for post-secondary education or employment, compared with the 12.8% who gave a positive assessment. Another 22.6% were neutral and 11.3% were unsure.



These responses identify concern about one of the education system's most fundamental responsibilities: preparing students for life beyond graduation. They are perceptions of performance and should be considered alongside direct evidence of student achievement and transitions after school.

Question for the Panel's consideration arising from the findings: If the Department's primary responsibility is to support student learning and achievement, how does its current organizational structure, staffing, and allocation of resources directly contribute to better outcomes for Yukon students?

Open Ended Questions on Educational Improvement

Written responses repeatedly identify classroom learning, departmental organization, resources, and student supports as areas requiring attention. Together, these concerns point toward a central challenge for government: ensuring that the education system's resources, administrative structures, and decision-making processes translate into meaningful support for schools and better outcomes for students.

Further Analysis of Open-Ended Questions

The themes below describe concerns and proposals raised in the comments. They overlap and are not ranked by frequency. Views differ on governance, inclusion and curriculum.

1. Learning, Curriculum and Achievement: Respondents described students advancing through grades without mastering basic reading, writing and mathematics. They questioned inconsistent curriculum delivery

and called for stronger assessment of actual learning. Comments also called for practical skills, trades, enrichment and experiential learning.

2. Department Structure and Accountability: Respondents called for fewer layers of central administration and less bureaucracy which creates additional work for schools. Some proposed separating the Department's ministry functions from school operations through a school board model. Comments also called for clearer responsibilities and better coordination across education authorities.

3. Facilities, Funding and Class Sizes: Comments identified overcrowded classrooms, inadequate facilities and funding decisions that leave schools without sufficient resources. Respondents wanted spending directed toward conditions that improve classroom learning, with transparent allocations reflecting learner needs and community realities.

4. **Classroom Staffing and Learner Supports:** Respondents described teachers struggling to meet diverse learning needs without enough educational assistants, learning assistance teachers, counsellors or specialist services. Some described intensive needs absorbing classroom capacity and affecting other students' learning. They called for timely assessments, early intervention, and appropriate support and programming.

5. Recruitment, Retention and Training: Comments described difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, particularly in rural communities. Respondents also raised concerns about hiring practices, housing, mentorship, staff well-being, and access to meaningful professional development.

6. Student Behaviour, Safety and Well-being: Respondents described disruptive or aggressive behaviour affecting the safety and learning of other students and the well-being of staff. They called for practical behaviour supports, clearer expectations, consistent follow-through and appropriate services for students with complex needs.

7. First Nations and Culturally Grounded Education: Comments called for stronger Yukon First Nations curriculum content, language programs, land-based learning and partnerships with First Nations governments and educational organizations. Respondents sought culturally grounded approaches that translate into everyday classroom practice and meaningful First Nations leadership in education.

8. Rural Access and Equitable Services: Respondents described rural schools struggling to access specialist services, qualified teachers and the range of courses available in Whitehorse. They proposed more direct school-based support, better recruitment incentives and alternative approaches to rural secondary education.

Question raised based on survey results: Will education reform reorganize departmental responsibilities, staffing and resources around the needs identified by schools and learners, and how will government demonstrate that those changes improve classroom support and student outcomes?

Conclusion

The 585 survey submissions identify substantial concerns about accountability, responsiveness and support for student learning. The findings make departmental structure, staffing and resource allocation central questions for the review. A meaningful government response must address how administrative functions support schools, how resources reach classrooms, and how results are measured and reported. Changes should be judged by whether they strengthen teaching, meet learners' needs, and improve outcomes for Yukon students.

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