

# Yukon First Nation Education Directorate Cradle to Community Member



OUR CHILDREN. OUR EDUCATION. OUR WAY



# Yukon First Nation Education Directorate

## Purpose:

The work of YFNED is dedicated to capacity building, systems and resource development, second level educational programs and services enhancement, and learner supports. The YFNED will also advance First Nations decision making and aspirations for control over education, providing technical support, research and advice for Draft Framework Agreement processes, and advocate for First Nation student success across the system.

## The YFNED:

- Reports directly to it's Board of Directors – Yukon CCOE
- Undertakes the daily work of the CCOE in five key areas: **Accountability, Support and Capacity, Research, Programs and Initiatives and Framework Negotiations Support**

OUR CHILDREN. OUR EDUCATION. OUR WAY





# First Nation Education Journey in Yukon

## THE FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION JOURNEY IN YUKON

1960 – 2021

Yukon First Nations have long been passionate about the value of education for their children and for the future of society in Yukon. In the seminal 1973 document, *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*, their aspiration is succinctly stated:

“We believe that all education must have its two main goals, the stimulation of pride in one's culture and background and the development of those skills and that knowledge which is necessary to compete in today's world.”

1960  
Yukon Committee on Education

**OBSERVATIONS:** Management issues, changes in liability to “transfer” First Nations students effectively, led the federal government to devolve the responsibility for “Indian” education to the provincial/territories, resulting First Nations students to be better incorporated into the local education system.

**IMPACTS:** No change to curriculum, provision of additional resources, or inclusion of culture and language were considered.

1964  
Master Tuition Agreement

**OBSERVATIONS:** The Yukon government was to further integrate First Nations students into local schools and “provide Indian children with the same educational opportunities and incentives as is provided non-Indian children attending territorial schools.”

**IMPACTS:** The Yukon government transferred funds and responsibility to Yukon for the education of “Indian students” without the participation of First Nations governments. Further support determined the Yukon government had failed to meet its obligations. (1987 Yukon Report, 2012 Tsuut'ina AGO, The 2019 Auditor General's Report)

1973  
Together Today for our Children Tomorrow

**OBSERVATIONS:** Mainstream education, mainstreamed, adapted and improved upon its methodologies, but these improvements were not passed on to First Nations students. The *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* report highlighted the need to improve outcomes and bring both the modern and the traditional worlds closer together.

**IMPACTS:** Despite common findings shared by their reports, the federal and territorial governments failed to address or make the necessary improvements, leaving First Nations students further isolated.

1972  
Yukon Native Brotherhood Conference

**OBSERVATIONS:** High dropout rates, significant attendance, few numbers of First Nations teachers, and limited cultural inclusion spoke to the need for systemic improvements. Participants called for the government to improve the communication with stakeholders, review and re-establish language and cultural teachings, and improve both quality and relevance of instruction.

**IMPACTS:** The government's response was limited and there were few documented improvements for First Nations students.

1982  
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

**OBSERVATIONS:** Canadian rights and privileges are formally enshrined within the Canadian Constitution. The need for systemic improvements. Participants called for the government to improve the communication with stakeholders, review and re-establish language and cultural teachings, and improve both quality and relevance of instruction.

**IMPACTS:** The government's response was limited and there were few documented improvements for First Nations students.

1988  
Assembly of First Nations Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction over Education

**OBSERVATIONS:** Based on concerns regarding the federal government's attempts to promote Aboriginal Rights. Explicitly stated that delegating authority for education to provinces or territories is not “acceptable as a substitute for aboriginal First Nations jurisdiction.”

**IMPACTS:** The AFN report reiterated many of the Yukon First Nations' longstanding concerns, highlighting the underlying issue of paternalism and loss of sovereignty.

1991  
MacPherson Report

**OBSERVATIONS:** As community concerns over achievement levels and demand for much needed reform grew, the MacPherson Report recommended that various and substantive talks needed to take place to discuss how First Nations' jurisdiction of education would be recognized.

**IMPACTS:** While the report focused on constitutional amendments, concerns were raised about the ability to find a solution within the Indian Act, given its paternalistic and control-based approach.

1993–2006  
Umbrella Final Agreement

**OBSERVATIONS:** After protracted negotiations, the UFA was signed and Yukon First Nations assumed a wide array of administrative powers. Sections 17 and 24 enabled Yukon First Nations to direct and manage their local education systems.

**IMPACTS:** A lack of progress and persistently poor educational outcomes led a number of First Nations to resist Section 17 in a search for new solutions. As First Nations had fully “rolled down” their responsibility for education, the Minister is still responsible for First Nations education.

1996  
Royal Commission on Aboriginal People

**OBSERVATIONS:** Indigenous Governors stated the obvious: they wanted their children to be educated in the world they live in, not in a remote facility. At the same time, they wanted to develop an understanding of their cultural traditions.

**IMPACTS:** Its numerous reports and studies have shown the present system accomplished none of these goals. In an effort to end the abuse and discrimination built into the system, indigenous control was put forward as viable solution.

2001  
Assembly of First Nations: Jurisdiction National Background Paper (A Macdonald review from 1972–2000)

**OBSERVATIONS:** Repeated calls for education reform and changes to Aboriginal educational jurisdiction were noted. Canada-wide.

**IMPACTS:** The report noted that it is unlikely that such demands will decrease or go away. A growing sense of frustration at the inaction and mismanagement of First Nations students will have long impacts further afield.

2000  
Auditor General's Report on the State of Yukon First Nations Education

**OBSERVATIONS:** While the performance gap continued to widen and more needed to be done, considerable confidence remained in the responsibility of the federal government, impeding the entire process.

**IMPACTS:** Recommended changes to jurisdictional controls were poorly implemented and a 2006 follow-up found that the federal government had made little progress in the intervening years.

2005  
Federal Action Plan

**OBSERVATIONS:** The federal government implemented an Action Plan that focused on accountability and data management. A First Nations education policy was developed to determine a vision and direction for a federal Indigenous education policy.

**IMPACTS:** The program was felt to be ineffective and little progress was made.

2007  
One Vision Multiple Pathways (Secondary School Reform)

**OBSERVATIONS:** Joining in the secondary school system led to a number of accommodations, such as the development of a student-focused approach that is flexible and adaptable and supports First Nations learners.

**IMPACTS:** While changes to the system were made, many of the recommendations have yet to be fully implemented.

2008  
Helping Students Succeed: Vision, Goals and Priorities for Yukon First Nations Education (Yukon First Nations Education Advisory Committee)

**OBSERVATIONS:** To improve community relationships and educational outcomes, YNNAQ identified five specific goals.

**IMPACTS:** Most First Nations governments were underwhelmed by the Department of Education's ability to implement the goals.

2008  
Education Reform Final Report

**OBSERVATIONS:** A community-based evaluation took over three years to release the Education Act. Of concern was the performance gap in First Nations education. Participants made recommendations for adaptation to both the school system and the Education Act.

**IMPACTS:** The inability to narrow the achievement gap between First Nations and non-First Nations students indicated the approach was not effective.

2008–2009  
Government of Yukon's New Horizons

**OBSERVATIONS:** Government of Yukon began a consultation process, intending to find strategies to support First Nations learners and develop appropriate curriculum.

**IMPACTS:** Yukon First Nations found the process, while with bureaucracy and committee meetings, was the best to improving student outcomes.

2009  
Auditor General's Report on Education in Yukon

**OBSERVATIONS:** The Department of Education was deemed to be significantly underperforming and not meeting the needs of its First Nations students.

**IMPACTS:** Despite a similar finding in the 1987 report 22 years earlier, the Department of Education offered to adjust and improve its approach to Indigenous education – but the achievement gap remained and any recommendations were not addressed.

2008–2009  
Government of Yukon's New Horizons

**OBSERVATIONS:** The AFN, from a national perspective, identified several key components that effective Indigenous education practices should include.

**IMPACTS:** Yukon First Nations felt that the central value of “trust” upon which the program would be based, was not upheld.

2012  
MOU on Education with Yukon First Nations, and Federal and Territorial Governments

**OBSERVATIONS:** The MOU sought to release government education on basic obligations that had been agreed to under the Yukon First Nations self-government agreements.

**IMPACTS:** An implementation plan was required – but not completed until 2014. In the interim, no action was taken by either the federal or territorial governments.

2013  
Assembly of First Nations: Jurisdiction Principles in First Nations Education

**OBSERVATIONS:** AFN noted that trust and collaboration would be key factors in any effective partnership.

**IMPACTS:** Yukon First Nations felt that the central value of “trust” upon which the program would be based, was not upheld.

2014  
Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) Tripartite Education Partnership agreement between Government of Yukon, Government of Canada, Council of Yukon First Nations, and all 14 Yukon First Nations.

**OBSERVATIONS:** With a common thread of community, family, and student engagement, the priorities in the plan were to support First Nations in their work on more authority, control and responsibility for education. This included a focus on improving culture and language, sustainability, and support and success, as well as closing the achievement gap.

**IMPACTS:** A 2015 review noted several significant concerns, most specifically:

- Limited funding
- Outdated data collection
- Top-down implementation by Yukon government with limited consultation
- Few real changes in the responsibility and accountability sought by Yukon First Nations
- Two-year meeting hiatus (2016–2018)

2014  
Yukon First Nations: A 360° Perspective

**OBSERVATIONS:** Participants highlighted the need for a holistic approach to the social, health, economic, and political challenges facing Yukon schools. Particular attention was paid to the concept of the “whole child” and their readiness to participate in society.

**IMPACTS:** The ongoing issues of attendance, poor government performance, and poor secondary participation highlighted the need for a government support.

2015  
Truth and Reconciliation Final Report

**OBSERVATIONS:** It noted that wide-ranging partnerships, a indication of healing, and a fundamental shift in mindset are needed to begin repairing the damage of colonization and the residential school system.

**IMPACTS:** The report highlighted historical and longstanding concerns. It is unclear what actions Yukon government had taken or will take, or intend effectiveness to address the report findings.

2018  
APN Yukon Indigenous Language Discussion Paper

**OBSERVATIONS:** Both Yukon First Nations and Yukon government recognized that language preservation and instruction are vital, but were unable to agree on what steps were necessary.

**IMPACTS:** Despite the Department of Education's offering of language revitalization programs since 1981, effective measures indicate there had been little improvement in language fluency. Changes in the status quo needed to be made.

2019  
Auditor General's Report on Education in Yukon

**OBSERVATIONS:** In a follow-up to the 2008 Auditor General's report, the Yukon Department of Education is found to have made few improvements or structural changes to the outcomes of First Nations students.

**IMPACTS:** Despite concerns with systemic inequality being first identified 11 years ago, a failure to act continued to devastate generations of First Nations youth.

2020  
Yukon Government Definition of Consultation with First Nations

**OBSERVATIONS:** Yukon government's results will be better in working relationships with Yukon First Nations.

**IMPACTS:** Consultation, while much more formalized and well-planned, has been found to be hesitant and sporadic. The concept of consultation, as defined by the government, did not support progress and did not represent a government's government obligation.

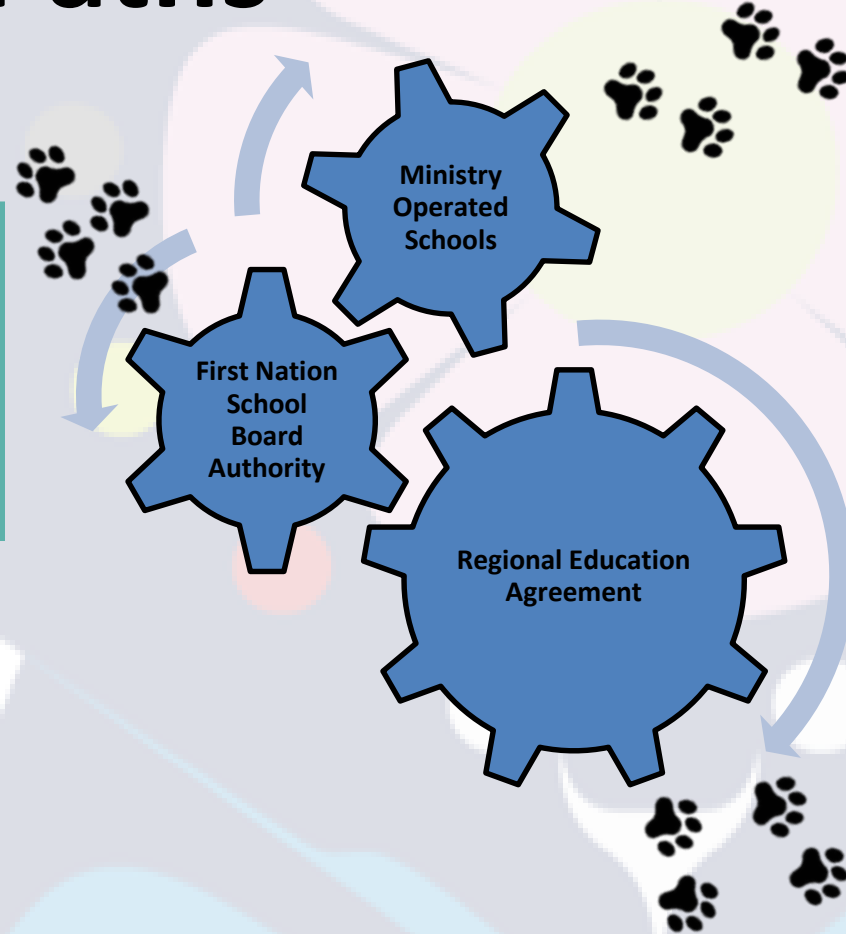


# 3 Paths

2.

## First Nation School Board Authority

Would allow full control of school programming, collaborative control of budgeting, increased control of school staffing and specific adaptations for each Yukon First Nation. As part of the Framework Agreement negotiations process, the FNSB could be an interim step or not.



1.

## Status Quo

Maintain the current relationship with Yukon government with only elected school councils, guaranteeing Yukon First Nations reps and no real decision-making power. Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP) and FNEC.

3.

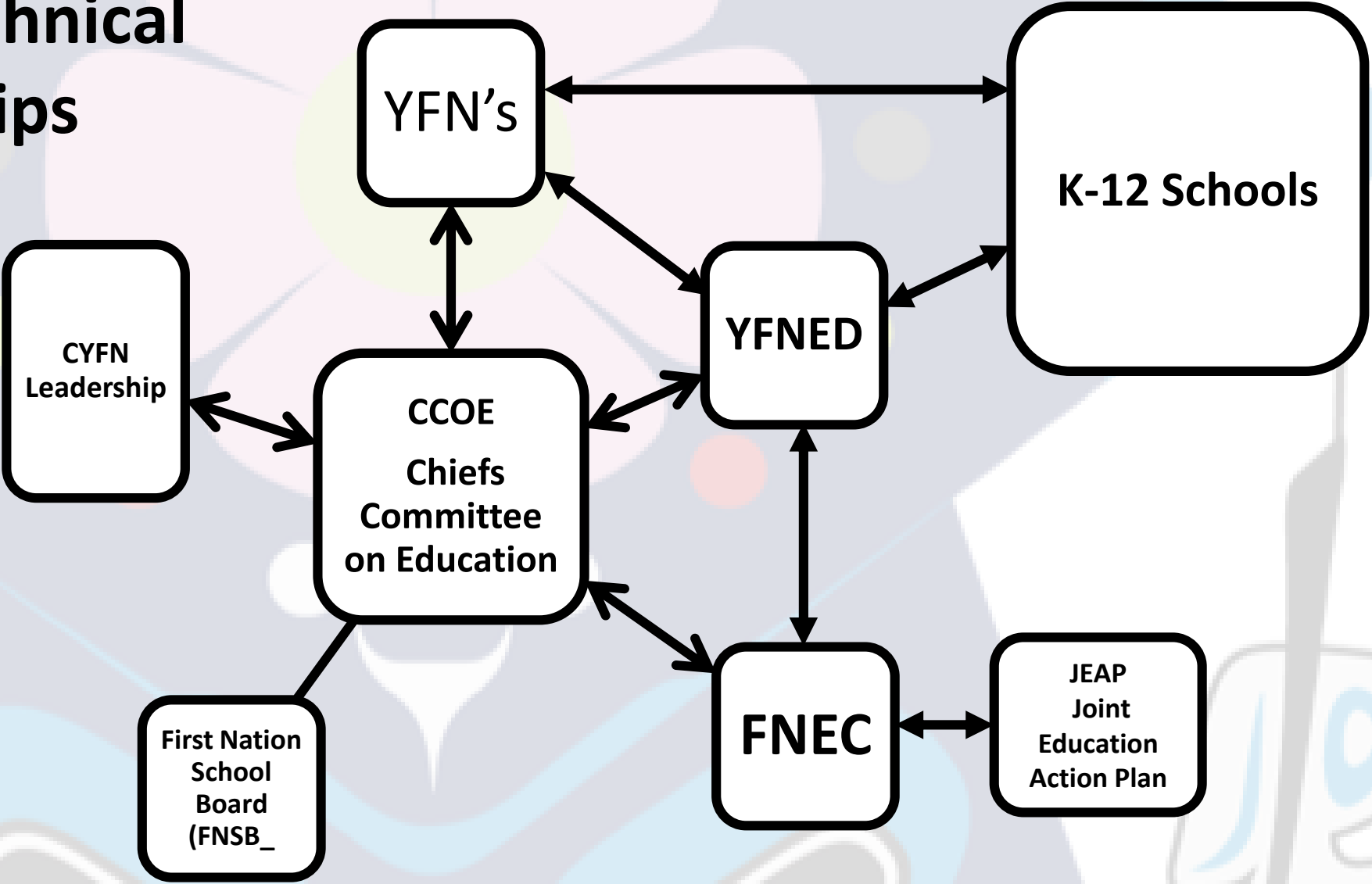
## Regional Education Agreement

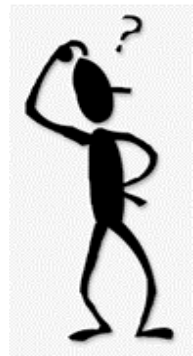
Full control where all decisions are made by Yukon First Nations, including staffing and budget. This is the final stage in the Framework Agreement process, meaning it could be a trilateral or bilateral agreement.

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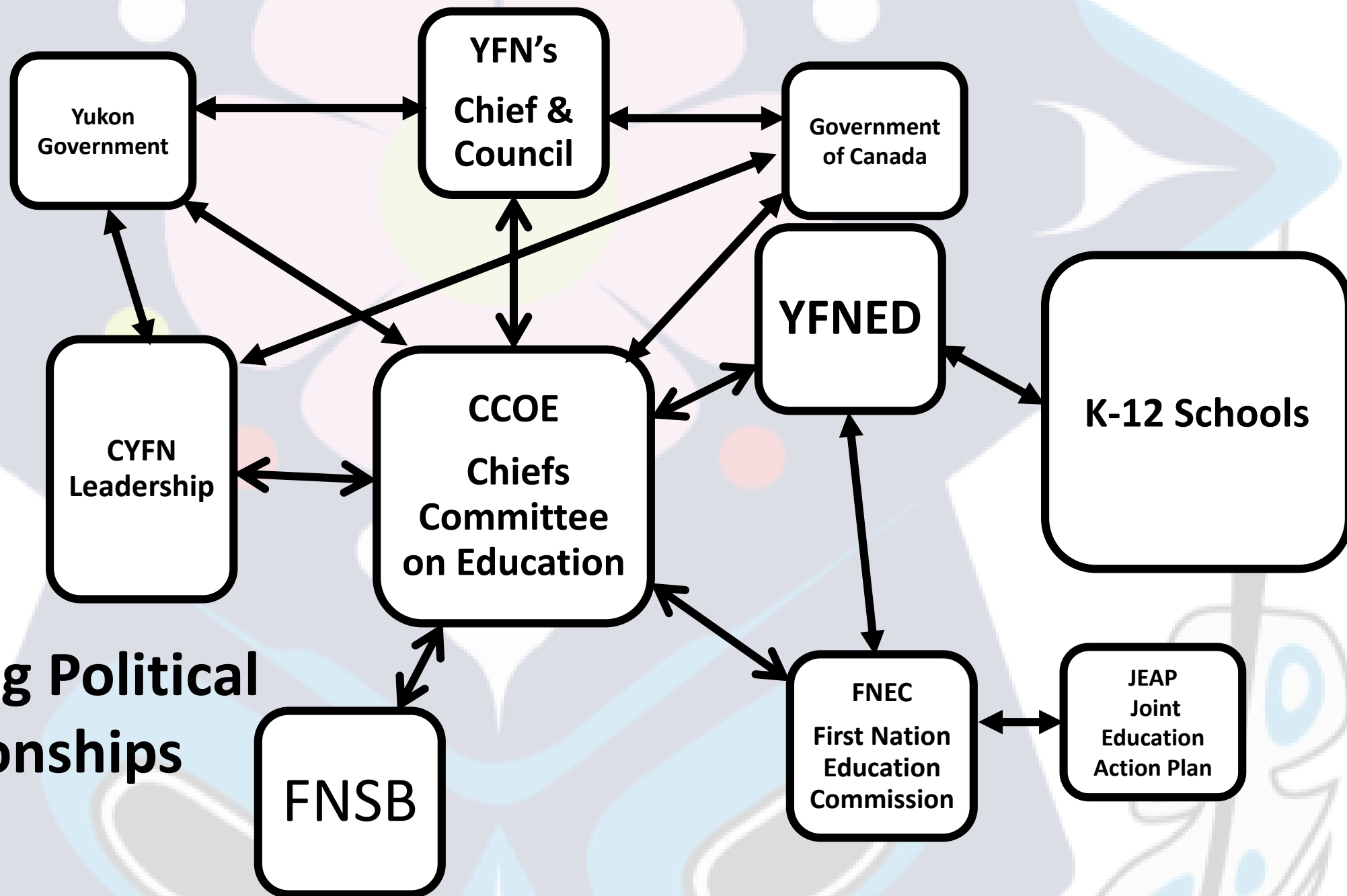


# Navigating Technical Relationships

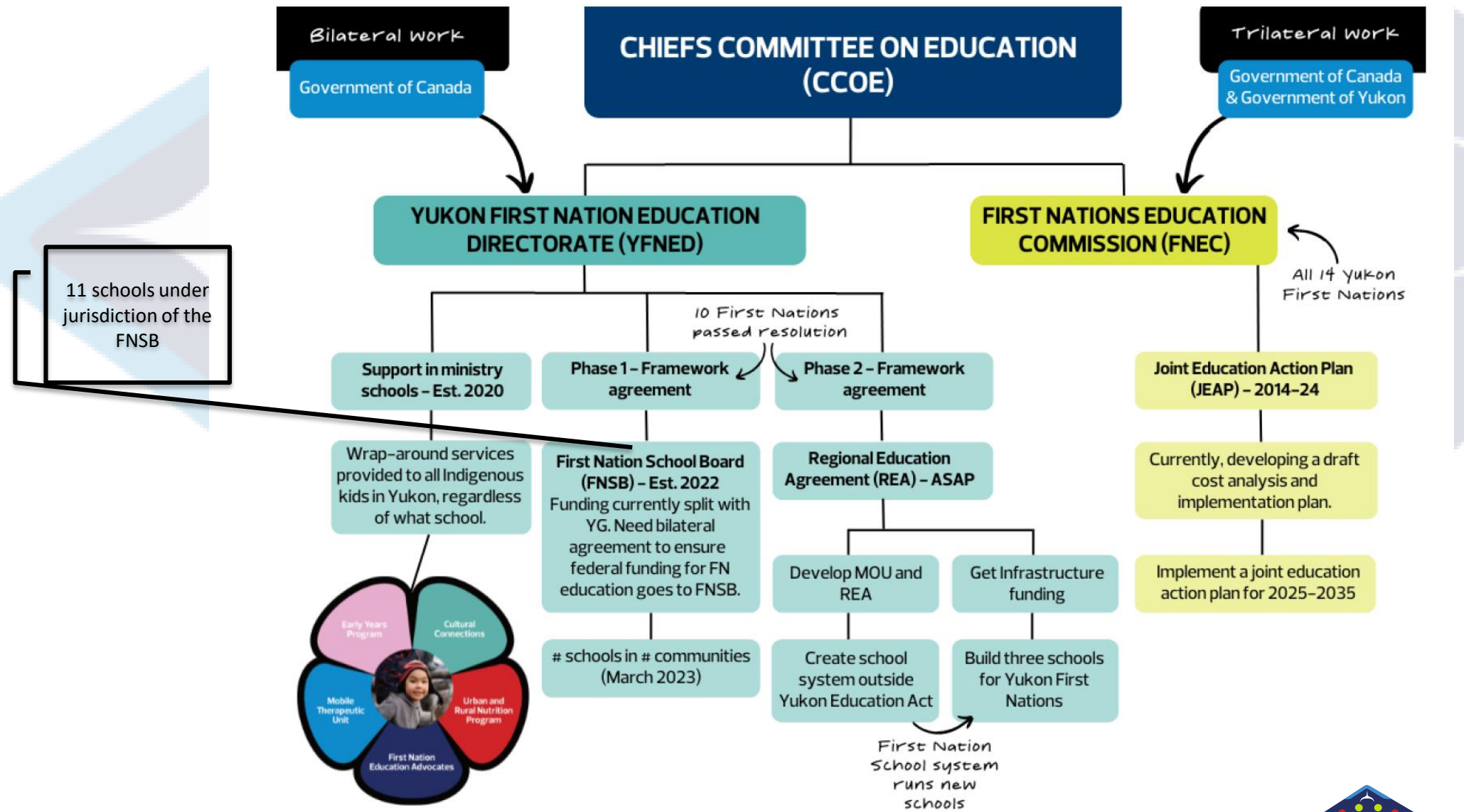




## Navigating Political Relationships

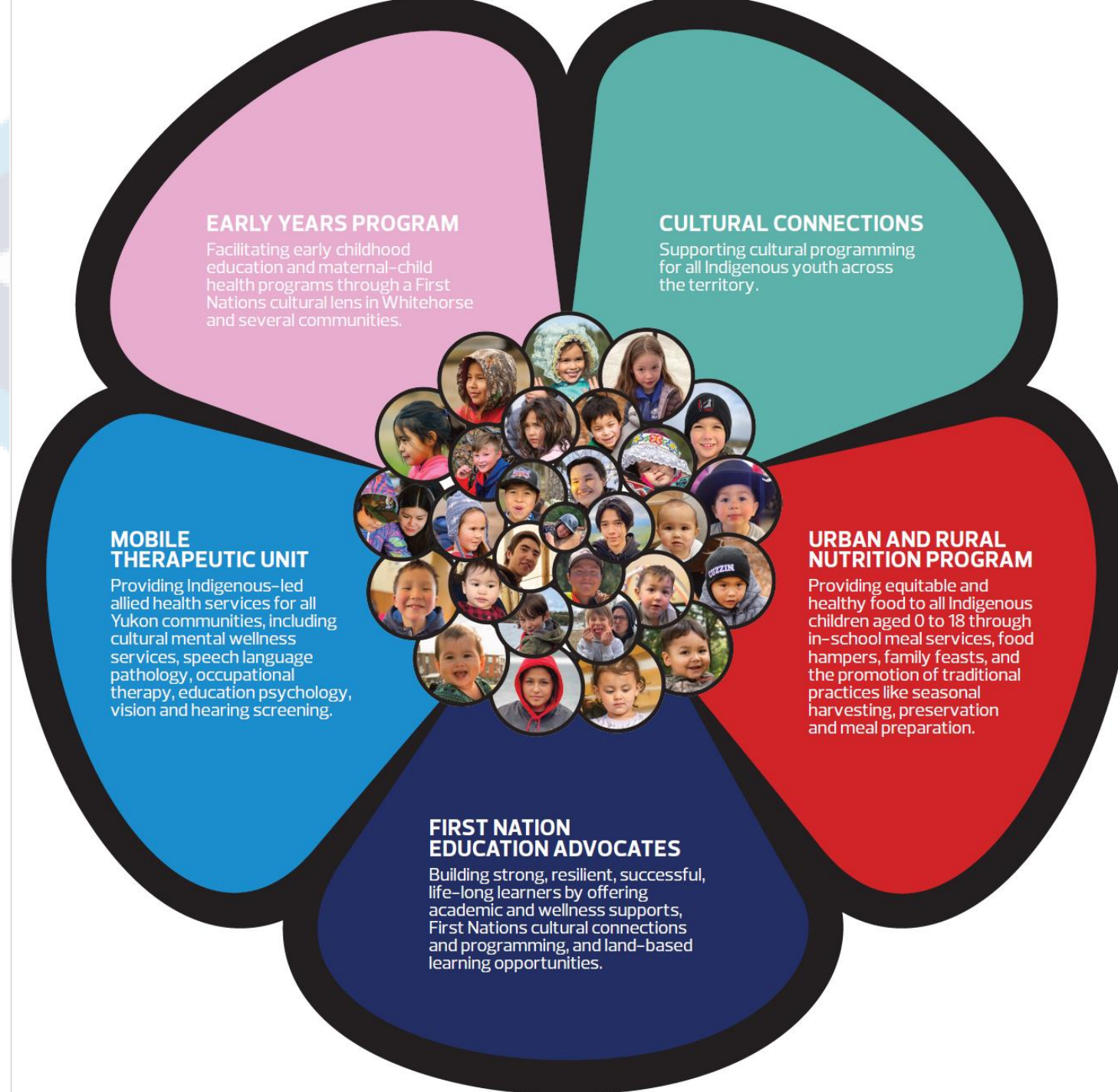






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## First Nation Education Advocates

20 FN Ed Advocate – 1  
advocate per school,  
1560 individual  
students

- Improve attendance and academic outcomes
- Help students to feel safe and welcome in schools
- Re-connect young to old
- Help students find their path, a sense of purpose, and empowerment
- Through land-based learning activities
- Advocate for voice of indigenous students and families
- Rebuilding lost connections between youth and the land, the language, our knowledge-keepers





**6 YFNED-SPONSORED LAND-BASED LEARNING CAMPUSES  
built with the Juniors and attached to SPECIALIZED  
INSTRUCTORS**

**BRINGING TOGETHER ACADEMIC & CULTURAL TEACHINGS**



# 6 DEDICATED CULTURAL SPACES IN MINISTRY OPERATED SCHOOLS

ACADEMIC SUPPORTS IN A COMFORTING ENVIRONMENT, WITH  
TRADITIONAL FOOD, KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS, AND TUTORS





KEEP REBUILDING THOSE PRECIOUS CONNECTIONS,  
BETWEEN OUR ELDERS AND YOUTH





# TRADES

Mentorship  
Relationship  
Community





# FINDING YOUR PATH

custodian  
maintenance worker  
delivery driver  
sales person  
server  
**ON-THE-JOB TRAINING**  
nanny  
cashier  
barber

baker  
auto technician  
dental assistant  
massage therapist  
welder  
plumber  
electrician  
pilot  
cook  
**POST SECONDARY CAREERS/TRADES**  
hair stylist  
EMR tech

cinematographer  
jewellery/gem design  
bookbinder  
tattoo artist  
teacher  
counselor  
musician  
actor  
graphic designer  
**POST SECONDARY ARTS/HUMANITIES**

agriculturist  
doctor  
biologist  
veterinarian  
mathematician  
nurse  
**POST SECONDARY SCIENCE/ENGINEERING**  
geologist

EVERGREEN  
GRADE COMPLETION  
CERTIFICATE

EVERGREEN  
THIRD WATER CERTIFICATE

SECONDARY SCHOOL

FIND YOUR PATH  
AND KNOW YOU CAN ALWAYS CHANGE YOUR PATH

DOGWOOD  
CERTIFICATE OF  
ENLIGHTENMENT  
20 MONTHS

CHIEF

DEPARTURE

3RD GRADE  
COMPLETION  
CERTIFICATE

GRAD  
(DOGWOOD  
CERTIFICATE)

INTERMEDIATE  
DIPLOMA

1ST GRADE

ARTS HUMANITIES

STEM ELECTIVE

GRAD  
(EVERGREEN  
CERTIFICATE)

POST SECONDARY

GRAD  
(DOGWOOD  
CERTIFICATE)



FNEC  
FINDING YOUR PATH







Yukon First Nations  
**GRAD PLANNER**

FOR  
ADMINISTRATORS  
COUNSELLORS  
TEACHERS AND  
FIRST NATION  
EDUCATORS



**FNEC**  
"Holding up our dreams"

FIRST EDITION  
**2021**



Yukon First Nations  
**GRAD PLANNER** FOR  
STUDENTS



**FNEC**  
"Holding up our dreams"

FIRST EDITION  
**2021**



YUKON FIRST NATIONS  
**GRAD APP**



## Contact Us

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