



March 2, 2023

Jeanie McLean
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate

Dear Minister McLean:

Thank you for renewing your commitment to the people of the Yukon by accepting the role of *Deputy Premier*; and continuing in the roles of *Minister of Education* and *Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate*. Your dedication and effort have made it possible for our government to make significant improvements in the lives of Yukoners.

We have achieved many of the commitments made to Yukoners in the 2021 election and we remain focused on advancing many more that are underway through the second half of our mandate. Looking forward, we will continue to prioritize improvements to our health and education systems, increase access to housing, and support a sustainable economic future that benefits all Yukoners.

The territory is facing many challenges that come with a changing global economic reality as we transition through the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our government remained steadfast in our responsibility to balance the health and wellbeing of Yukoners with the need to keep our economy going. In doing so, the Yukon's economy has remained strong, and our population has continued to grow. Going forward, our cabinet will make decisions to implement policies that ensure the private sector is supported – you are the backbone of our community and vital to growing a strong, resilient economy for the benefit of all Yukoners.

Our team has consistently demonstrated our commitment to working collectively with Yukon First Nations. As we mark the 50th Anniversary of *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*, we will continue to prioritize our efforts to see true reconciliation upheld through our work. We honour the spirit and intent of self-governing agreements

and respect First Nation governments as partners in our work. Working in collaboration has been key to ensuring the initiatives we are undertaking to serve Yukoners are benefitting everyone in the territory. Fulfilling the commitments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and implementing *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-spirit+ People Strategy* are important as we strive to heal and move forward together as a territory. Our work on reconciliation has established the Yukon as leaders in our nation. We will continue to work respectfully with First Nations understanding that Yukon's self government agreements are for all Yukoners.

We will continue to implement the foundational strategies that were developed by our government in consultation with Yukoners. Our team recognizes that many of our friends, family and neighbours are facing a variety of challenges – whether it be loss in our community, struggles with mental health or their own personal struggles. We will work alongside the public service to undertake our work with the upmost empathy and compassion in our daily interactions with the public. In declaring a Substance Use Health Emergency, our government acknowledged that there are many in the Yukon who are struggling and in need of support. We have committed to working closely with our partners to advance a range of treatment, harm reduction, prevention, and awareness initiatives in response to the emergency. The health and wellness of Yukoners is key to the success of our territory. The *Putting People First* plan is shaping our government's transformation of the Yukon's health and social services system. It is the road map we are following to build a people-centred healthcare system that provides wraparound supports for all Yukoners.

Our Clean Future is the blueprint that is guiding the Yukon's approach to addressing climate change. Through partnerships and collaboration, we will ensure the work of our government contemplates the goals laid out in this strategy: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; ensuring Yukoners have access to reliable, affordable, and renewable energy; adapting to the impacts of climate change; and building a green economy. The work that we are undertaking is no small feat and is not to be left to one department to execute alone. We will work collectively as a government to ensure the priorities we have laid out are implemented effectively using a common-sense approach.

Our Liberal government has renewed a Confidence and Supply Agreement which is allowing this team to lead the territory through these challenging times. We are committed to upholding the agreement and to continue working together on shared priorities that will benefit the Yukon.

As the Deputy Premier, you will represent the Government of Yukon as the Premier as required and will provide guidance when the Premier is unavailable.

As the Minister of Education, you will work to create successful learning outcomes for all Yukon learners by:

- Advancing efforts to improve the education system in the Yukon in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and education partners. This work will include but is not limited to:
 - Implementing the desired outcomes of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.
 - Finalizing the development of a Student Outcome Strategy for implementation to address the long-standing gaps in student performance and improve outcomes for students in the Yukon, including First Nations students, rural students, and students with diverse learning needs.
 - Working with school communities to determine the unique requirements of the students in their school.
 - Beginning work to update the Joint Education Action Plan
 - Establishing and implementing the Yukon First Nation Collaboration Framework
 - Supporting the First Nation School Board as it embarks on the process of overseeing education outcomes for select Yukon schools.
- Continuing to work government to government with Yukon First Nations to advance mutual educational priorities.
- Improving access to education for all Yukoners by building new, modern learning facilities, including the completion of the new school in Whistle Bend, the construction of Kêts'ádań Kù in Burwash Landing, and a new Whitehorse elementary school. This will be led by the Department of Education with support from the Department of Highways and Public Works.
- Working to increase student safety by developing and implementing school safety and transportation plans.
- Collaborate with the Yukon University to help achieve the commitments outlined in their strategic plan and support Yukon University to:
 - Continue to identify the unique opportunities that exist to build a thriving learning and research community drawing on our northern strengths and expertise as Canada's first university north of 60.

- Ensure that the demand for early childhood educators and licensed practical nursing is met.
- Continuing to support the Yukon's early learning and child care initiative and continue work to review the *Child Care Act*.
- Continue to review the feasibility of a varsity sports program at Yukon University.

As the Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate, you will continue to advocate for Yukoners of all genders and sexual orientations by:

- Modernizing the *Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act* to broaden the scope of this council, increase inclusivity and clarify the mandate.
- Championing the work needed across government departments to properly implement *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy*.
- Continuing to lead the implementation of Gender Inclusive Diversity Analysis (GIDA) on key initiatives across government by providing training, research support and analysis. The Women and Gender Equity Directorate will lead this file with support from the Public Service Commission.
- Implementing the Yukon Government's LGBTQ2S+ Action Plan to ensure programs and services are LGBTQ2S+ inclusive and responsive, including a specific commitment to work with Queer Yukon to establish a Yukon Pride Centre.
- Continue to expand the services of Yukon's Sexualized Assault Response Team to Yukon communities beyond Whitehorse. This will be led by the Department of Justice with support from the Women and Gender Equity Directorate and the Department of Health and Social Services.
- Work with stakeholders to identify opportunities to deliver age-appropriate gender-based violence programming to young men and boys.

As a Cabinet, we are expected to serve all Yukoners with empathy and transparency. Yukoners expect their elected officials to work together and so it is expected that they will remain at the centre of our work. We will foster a respectful, inclusive, collaborative working relationship within our government and with the many stakeholders, partner governments and organizations who advocate on behalf of Yukoners. We will support the public service with the understanding that the work they do is vital and important.

As your Premier, I support and encourage you to take bold, decisive action to support all Yukoners as we work collectively to build a strong future for generations to come in the Yukon.

Thank you for bringing your full focus to this work and for dedicating your efforts to upholding the commitments we made to Yukoners.

I look forward to what we will achieve in the remainder of our mandate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "R. Pillai". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a period at the end.

Ranj Pillai
Premier