



# YCS Notes

October 2026

## Superintendent's Message

Dear YCS Families,

Welcome to October! As autumn fully settles into Yellowknife, our schools are bustling with learning, faith formation, and vibrant community life. October is a Month of Hope in our Catholic school district, offering us wonderful opportunities to reflect on our shared mission and celebrate the gifts within our community.

This month, we join together to celebrate Catholic Education Week, a special time to honor the gift of Catholic schooling in the Northwest Territories and across Canada.

Our mission goes beyond academic excellence; it is rooted in nurturing the mind, body, and spirit of every student entrusted to our care. In reflecting on Catholic education, Pope Francis reminds us that authentic Catholic education is an act of love and hope. He calls on educators, families, and communities to walk alongside our young people, helping them discover their God given dignity, foster compassion for others, and become joyful witnesses of the Gospel in our world. Let us use this week to pray for our teachers, support staff, students, and families as we continue to build a faith filled learning environment together

With the arrival of Thanksgiving, we are called to pause and give thanks to God for His abundant blessings. Gratitude is at the very heart of our faith, reminding us to appreciate our health, our loved ones, and our school community. I pray that each of you enjoys a joyful, restful, and peaceful Thanksgiving surrounded by family and friends. May God's grace fill your homes and renew your spirits during this upcoming long weekend.

As members of a Catholic learning community, we are called to active stewardship and civic engagement. On Monday, October 19, our community will participate in the local elections, including the election of our YCS School Board Trustees. Our Trustees play a vital role in shaping the vision, policies, and spiritual leadership of Yellowknife Catholic Schools. I strongly encourage all eligible families, staff, and community members to exercise their privilege to vote and help guide the future of Catholic education in Yellowknife.

Congratulations to our ESPHS Soccer Teams for their outstanding performance at the Aurora Ford Hay River Soccer Tournament! Beyond their skills on the pitch, our student athletes represented YCS with exemplary sportsmanship, teamwork, and respect for their opponents. They truly modeled character and sportsmanship both on and off the field. Thank you to the coaches, staff, and parents who supported the team and made this tournament a success!

May God continue to bless our YCS family throughout October. Thank you for your partnership, your dedication, and your shared commitment to Catholic education. God bless!

## Find Us



[www.ycs.nt.ca](http://www.ycs.nt.ca)



[info@ycs.nt.ca](mailto:info@ycs.nt.ca)



867-766-7400



[@yicsnwt](https://www.instagram.com/yicsnwt)



[Yellowknife  
Catholic  
Schools](https://www.facebook.com/YellowknifeCatholicSchools)



[@yicsnwt](https://www.twitter.com/yicsnwt)

5124 - 49th Street  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2P4



**Adam Murray**  
Superintendent

**Board of Trustees:** Tina Schauerte, Susan Waddell, Christine Lewandowski, Alex Mulooki, Steven Voytilla,  
Gerri Whiteford, Melanie Williams

**Senior Administration:** Adam Murray, Superintendent/CEO; Alicia Larade, Assistant Superintendent of Learning; Angelique Rossouw, Secretary Treasurer



# A Message From Our Board

Dear Parents/Guardians, Staff, Students, and Members of our School Community,

As we enter the month of October, we would like to take a moment to reflect on the important work being done across our Yellowknife Catholic School community and to thank our students, families, educators, staff, and parish partners for their continued dedication and support.

The election for the YCS Board of Trustees will take place on **October 19th**. We encourage all eligible members of our community to participate in this important part of our Catholic education system. Every vote counts! Click [here](#) for more information.

Our Board remains committed to supporting faith-filled learning environments where every student is valued, respected, and encouraged to grow academically, spiritually, socially, and personally. We are grateful for the many individuals who contribute each day to making our Yellowknife Catholic Schools places of learning, belonging, and community.

As we look ahead to the upcoming election and the next chapter for Catholic education, we remain focused on serving our students and families and on working collaboratively with our school communities, staff, parish partners, and one another.

We encourage everyone to stay informed, participate in the election process, and continue to share their voices and perspectives. A strong Catholic school community is built through the collective efforts of all of us.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and commitment to Catholic education. We look forward to continuing this important work together.

Yellowknife Catholic School Board of Trustees



The next Board Meeting will be held on **October 14th at 7:00 pm.**



**INSPIRING THINKING**



**CULTIVATING WELL-BEING**



**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**

**Board of Trustees:** Tina Schauerte, Susan Waddell, Christine Lewandowski, Alex Mulooki, Steven Voytilla, Gerri Whiteford, Melanie Williams

**Senior Administration:** Adam Murray, Superintendent/CEO; Claudia Parker, Associate Assistant Superintendent of Learning; Angelique Rossouw, Secretary Treasurer



# STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Wondering what goes on during Non-Instructional Days? Let's take a peek!

## Collaborative Structures at YCS

*At Yellowknife Catholic Schools, we hold a core belief: Every child deserves a team.*

To put this belief into practice, we have partnered with Jigsaw Learning to implement *Collaborative Response*, a framework that ensures no child falls through the cracks, and every student receives the support they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

On Thursday afternoons, our teachers, support staff, and school administration gather for dedicated collaboration time. During these sessions, staff work as a team to:

- Identify and address key issues around student achievement.
- Share successful teaching strategies and practical classroom interventions.
- Select and apply targeted strategies to address students' academic, emotional, and behavioural needs

This dedicated time on Thursday afternoons allows our teachers to step out of daily classroom routines to focus on professional collaboration. When teachers work together and share best practices, our classrooms become stronger, more responsive learning spaces for our students.





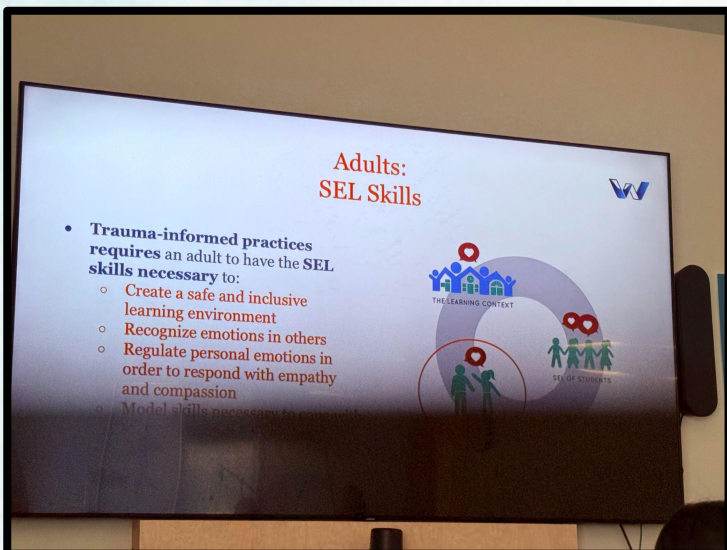
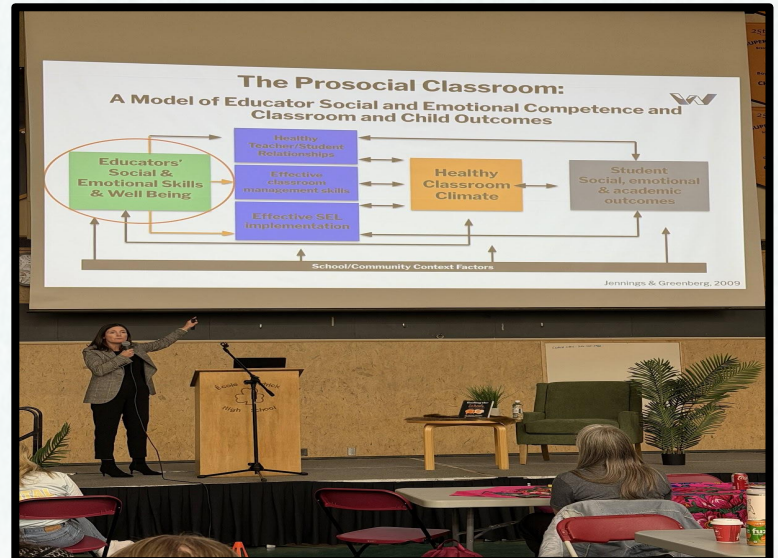


# Open Parachute PD Day



**On September 24, our district focused on social-emotional learning (SEL) and our new JK-12 curriculum, Open Parachute. Staff explored SEL competencies scope and sequences, student peer videos, Communities of Practice, educator self-care, and implementation science, concluding with touching student affirmations.**

**We thank Dr. Hayley Watson and her Open Parachute team, the Calgary Werklund Institute of Social Emotional Intelligence team for their expertise and support in assisting us build a strong foundation for student well-being and success.**





# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

## ÉCOLE ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL





# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

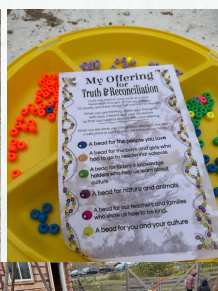
## WELEDEH CATHOLIC SCHOOL



RCMP Grey Cup Tour



Berry picking



Mrs. O'Neill's Kindergarten class



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation





# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

## ÉCOLE ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL + KIMBERLITE CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTRE



Grade 8 Retreat



Club Fair



What are you willing to do



CIBC Mud Run



The Club



Beyblade Tournament



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation





# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

## FLYING IRISH

Our Flying Irish Cohort passed their flight tests in Medicine Hat and all three students are currently working for Summit Air! They continue to work and study towards their commercial pilot training. Fly high!

We are excited for our Flying Irish Flight School to grow and take more students to the sky.





# Naòwo Nàtso, Enḡtt'èkq`Nàtso

## STRONG CULTURE, STRONG SCHOOLS

### National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

All three schools honoured National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Many classes participated in activities prior to the day to learn what Truth and Reconciliation means, and to understand the significance of Orange Shirt Day. St. Joe's and Weledeh held a liturgy where Elder Verna Crapeau shared her experiences and thoughts on Residential School. St. Pat's gathered for an assembly where Elder Verna spoke, as well as Chief Bertha Rabesca-Zoe from Behchoko. Students from Weledeh and St. Pat's also participated in a healing walk, and provided an offering to the land.



John White with his DQ Edàizheh students holding the offerings.



Ira Shannon shakes Elder Verna's hand after the Liturgy.



Kelaiah Perez and Crisea Puspos carry a sign during the walk.



RILE Betsy Lucko showing Elder Verna a map of Residential Schools that ESPHS was working on.



Sidney Liske leads the Healing Walk.



Baya Huck-Rivet shows her artwork on their class Orange T-shirt outside of ESJS.





# Naòwo Nàtso, Enht'èkq`Nàtso

## STRONG CULTURE, STRONG SCHOOLS

### Plants and Traditional Medicine Camp

Grade 4/5 Wishart and 5 Pole from Weledeh and Grade 5 Matous as well and Grade 5/6 de Grasse got to attend plants and traditional medicine camp. They were able to pick cranberries, listen to stories by our Elder Verna Crapeau, and make soap, lip balm and bath salts out of traditional plants. Thank you to Laughing Lichen for hosting us!



### Upcoming Events

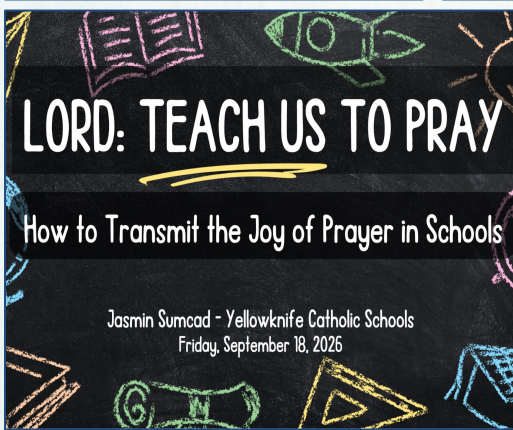
- Fish Camp Oct. 5 - 9 for Gr. 7 students
- Fish Camp On-The-Land JK Gaudet Oct 8
- Moose Hide Camp at WCS Oct 13-16

### Ezhòdzè Zà

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# LIVING OUR FAITH



Our Religious Education Coordinator, Jasmin Sumcad, presented to the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith pastoral team on the joy of prayer and how we grow a prayer life with our students. Thank you, Jasmin, for your commitment to the St. Patrick's Parish and supporting Professional Development of our Spiritual Faith leadership team.



**Jasmin Sumcad**  
**Religious Education Coordinator**  
**Yellowknife Catholic Schools**  
**(867) 766-7400**  
[jasmin.sumcad@ycs.nt.ca](mailto:jasmin.sumcad@ycs.nt.ca)

## First Reconciliation & First Communion Preparation

St. Patrick's Parish runs preparation classes for First Reconciliation and First Communion beginning **October 2026**. Registration is available through the school or parish offices. There will be 12 classes, meeting every **Sunday from 2-3 pm** from October to November (6 classes), and again from January to March (6 classes). Classes take place at St. Patrick's Parish. Parents are expected to attend with their children, as their child's first and primary faith teachers at home.

## St. Patrick Co-Cathedral Parish

**St. Patrick's Co-Cathedral Parish**  
**5206 - 52 Street**  
**Yellowknife NT X1A 1T9**  
**Phone: 867-873-4880**

[stpatrickchurchyk@gmail.com](mailto:stpatrickchurchyk@gmail.com)  
[www.stpatrickchurchyk.com](http://www.stpatrickchurchyk.com)

### Mass Times

**Saturdays: 5:00pm**  
**Sundays: 9:00 am and 11:00 am**

**Weekday Masses: 5:30pm**





# INCLUSIVE INSIGHTS

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

Advancing inclusion and equity requires a multifaceted approach. While YCS has long-established, responsive practices, prioritizing prevention and skill-building honours each student's unique assets and needs to ensure meaningful, purposeful learning experiences.

Over the past year, our team has been working behind the scenes to launch a social-emotional curriculum that will motivate students and teachers to develop emotional regulation, belonging, and healthy relationship skills. We are thrilled our Sept. 24 Inclusive School Day made an impact.

This month, we also ignite our usual student support services cycles: language and literacy support, early screenings, program planning, and consultations with disability and health specialists.

We thank district leaders and school staff for their continued trust and commitment in fostering all our students as capable people. A SPECIAL MAHSI CHO to Seana and Carrie Lynn for all their hard work and passion each and everyday.



**Liz Baile**

**Director of Student Services**

**Seana Stewart**

**Principal of Student Services**

**Carrie-Lynn Allan**

**Regional Inclusive Schooling Coordinator**



# STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH

## École St. Joseph School

**Makayla Lane** - She is flexible, hard working and amazing. Nominated by Lujain Yaseen

## Weledeh Catholic School

**Melinda Pedersen** - She is really here for us and always with a smile. Ask her for the moon she will do her best to give you something not far. Nominated by Nicole Atsain

## École St. Patrick High School

**John Roche** - John works hard in class to ensure that his students enjoy math and develop their math skills. He always has a positive attitude. He is often involved in extracurricular activities and spent much of his own time coaching the Grade 9 students for the Hay River Soccer tournaments. He also often selflessly empties out the staffroom dishwasher in the morning. Nominated by Christopher Wong

## Central Services

**Lee Hopkins** - I would like to nominate Lee Hopkins. He is willing to listen to an idea, help work through a challenge, and think creatively about how we can improve and make our Cultural Program more effective and efficient. What I appreciate most about Lee is his kindness, patience, and understanding. He recognizes the complexity of the work we do and the many moving pieces involved in supporting culture, students, staff, and our school community. I am very grateful to have Lee as a colleague, mentor, and someone I can always count on. He truly deserves to be recognized for the positive difference he makes every day. Nominated by Betsy Lucko

## Tundra Tots Program

**Maricel Aguinaldo** - I would like to nominate Ms. Maricel for Staff of the Month in recognition of the extra effort, initiative, and support she has shown during our classroom's recent transition and with our new group of children. I truly appreciate the many things she does each day that help keep our room running smoothly. Whether it is making sure our classroom floors and bathroom are clean, consistently supporting our children with their many potty routines, taking initiative when accidents happen, or even coming in early to organize the toy bins, Ms. Maricel continues to step up wherever she is needed. These tasks may sometimes seem like little things, but together they make a significant difference in the flow of our day and the overall environment we provide for our children. Her willingness to take initiative and support the classroom does not go unnoticed. Nominated by Malachi Ibarra





# SAVE THE DATE

Lifetouch.

## PICTURE DAY IS COMING!

Monday October 5, 2026  
Weledeh Catholic School



### What to Expect:



Students are  
photographed on  
Picture Day



Proofs are sent home  
with your student



Order packages  
and more on  
[mylifetouch.ca](https://mylifetouch.ca)

Questions? Contact our Help Center at [lifetouch.com/support-ca](https://lifetouch.com/support-ca). Select K-12 School Photography for assistance.

Lifetouch.

**REMINDER:**

**PHOTO DAY –  
OCT 2**

**BRING YOUR  
BEST SMILE!**



## Picture Day!

### WHAT'S NEXT:



Your student is photographed  
on Picture Day\*



Proofs are sent home with  
your student



Order packages and more on  
[mylifetouch.ca](https://mylifetouch.ca)



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Ecole St Joseph  
**Monday, October 05, 2026**

\*All students will be photographed. Please notify your student's teacher if you do not want an individual picture taken of your student. Your student may be included in a class picture if requested by the school.

Questions? Contact our Help Center at [lifetouch.com/support-ca](https://lifetouch.com/support-ca).  
Select K-12 School Photography for assistance.

Lifetouch.

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# CHECK THIS OUT

We are pleased to announce that the YCS Board of Trustees has approved a new policy:  
**Policy #18 *Safe, Caring, Respectful, Inclusive Working and Learning Environments.***





# OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

## We're Hiring OSC Leads!

YCS Out-of-School Care is looking for **Leads available Thursdays from 12:00–5:30 PM.**

Our program provides safe, engaging after-school care for children from **JK to Grade 5**, with opportunities for indoor/outdoor play, creative activities, and social development.

### Program Hours:

Mon/Tues/Wed/Fri: **3:30–5:30 PM**

Thursdays: **12:00–5:30 PM**

### Lead Requirements:

- ELCC Certificate/Diploma **OR** free online **ELCC Essentials Course**
- Experience working in a daycare/child care setting

**Thursday availability is especially needed!**

[ycs.care@ycs.nt.ca](mailto:ycs.care@ycs.nt.ca)



# TUNDRA TOTS

September was a busy and exciting month for our Tots, as we welcomed so many new faces into our program :)! We're still making the most of the fall weather with plenty of playground fun and nature walks. As we head into October, our staff will continue to support and encourage our littles ones' development through fun, engaging, and age-appropriate activities. We're looking forward to another wonderful month of learning, exploring, and growing together!





# School PAC Meetings

Please contact the schools for Parent Advisory Council meeting dates and times.

**ESJS:** [esjs@yics.nt.ca](mailto:esjs@yics.nt.ca)

**WCS:** [weledehcatholicsschool@yics.nt.ca](mailto:weledehcatholicsschool@yics.nt.ca)

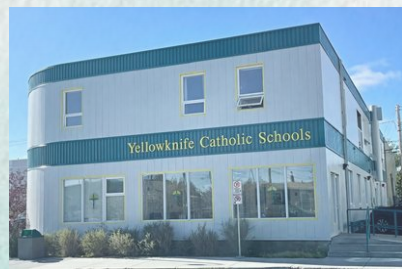
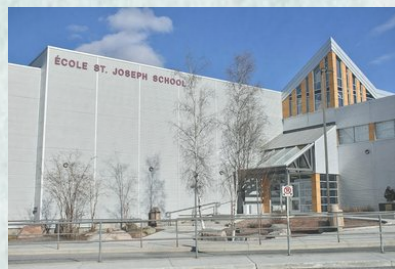
**ESPHS:** [esphs@yics.nt.ca](mailto:esphs@yics.nt.ca)

**Parent  
Advisory  
Council**

## Important Dates

**OCTOBER 12** - Thanksgiving NO SCHOOL

**OCTOBER 29** - PD Day NO SCHOOL



### DISTRICT WEBSITES

[yics.nt.ca](http://yics.nt.ca)

[esjs.nt.ca](http://esjs.nt.ca)

[weledeh.nt.ca](http://weledeh.nt.ca)

[esphs.nt.ca](http://esphs.nt.ca) / [thekctc.ca](http://thekctc.ca)

### PHONE CONTACTS

Central Services - 867-766-7400

ESJS - 867-920-2112

WCS - 867-873-5591

ESPHS - 867-873-4888



You can also follow all three schools and the district on social media for the latest events, reminders and updates!