



**YELLOWKNIFE EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 1
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

May 12, 2026 – 6:30 PM
In-person and online via Google Meet
(in camera 6:30 - 7:00 PM)

Trustees Present: Allan Shortt, Barbara Bell, David Wasylciw, Jason Snaggs,
Terry Brookes (online) and Tina Drew (online)

Regrets: Michelle Peters

Administration Present: Shirley Zouboules, Lisa Vass, Graham Arts,
Jordan Martin and Pat Thagard

Regrets: Landon Kowalzik

Guests present: none

Meeting Chairperson: Barbara Bell

Meeting Minutes by: Pat Thagard

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 PM.

Six (6) Trustees were present. Quorum was met.

Motion #: 01/05-12/25-26

I move that the Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) Board of Trustees move into in-camera at 6:37 PM.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs **Carried**

Motion #: 02/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees move out of in-camera at 6:42 PM because of the arrival of Trustee Wasylciw.

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs Seconded by: Trustee Shortt **Carried**

Motion #: 03/05-12/25-26

I move that the Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) Board of Trustees move back into in-camera at 6:42 PM.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs **Carried**

Motion #: 04/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees move out of in camera at 6:57 PM.

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs Seconded by: Trustee Shortt **Carried**

A brief recess was called.

The Board meeting was called back to order at 7:01 PM

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chairperson Bell respectfully acknowledged that we live, work and learn on Chief Drygeese Territory in the Akaitcho region, the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

3. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

Chairperson Bell extended a welcome to all attendees and expressed gratitude to those who assisted with the Trade Show, also thanking Ms. Brookes for her contribution of balloon flowers, which are always popular.

She requested that trustees inform her and Superintendent Zouboules of any planned attendance at upcoming school spring shows.

Additionally, a volunteer sign-up sheet has been circulated for an École Sir John Franklin High School (SJF) event scheduled for the 30th, as well as the upcoming May 13th Music for Mental Health event, also being held at SJF.

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None declared.

5. Adoption of Agenda

Motion #: 05/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees adopt the May 12, 2026, Regular Board Meeting agenda, as amended.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs

Motion #: 06/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees amend the May 12, 2026, Regular Board Meeting agenda, by adding the following to New Business: item 11.3 - YK1 Year in Review/Annual Report to New Business, item 11.4 - Advocacy for Election Amendments, item 11.5 - Approval of 2026-2027 Budget, and item 11.6 - Approval of City of Yellowknife Tax Requisition letter.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs

Carried

Main motion **05/05-12/25-26**, as amended

Carried

6. Delegations & Presentations - Antje Rilk (aka Whoopi Cushion): School Clowning

Information is included in the agenda package.

Ms. Rilk detailed the scope of her role as a school clown, her specialized training, and the rationale for the necessity of school clowns. This justification encompasses addressing classroom complexities, a high incidence of student dysregulation, and various other contributing factors. She further elaborated on the benefits of laughter, emphasizing its positive impact on the human nervous system.

Trustees expressed gratitude to Antje for her presentation and for sharing information regarding the program.

7. Review and Approval of Minutes

7.1. April 14, 2026 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Motion #: 07/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees approve the April 14, 2026, Regular Board Meeting minutes, as presented.

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs Seconded by: Trustee Brookes **Carried**

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

9. Trustee Statements

Per By-Laws: *Trustee Statements are individual opinions and are not intended to represent the views of the Board.*

Trustee statements are not debatable and there will be no opportunity for rebuttal or questions.

9.1 No trustee statements were received by the Secretary Treasurer for this meeting.

10. Unfinished Business

None

11. New Business

11.1 Financial Administration Manual (FAM) Letter (Chairperson Bell)

It was suggested that both Ministers (Department of Finance & Education, Culture and Employment be included in the addressee field and that the section titles be underlined or highlighted.

Motion #: 08/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees approve the draft FAM letter and authorize the Chairperson to send it to the Ministers, as presented.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Brookes **Carried**

11.2 DRAFT 2026-2027 Operating Plan (Assist. Supt. Arts)

Assistant Superintendent Arts reviewed the current draft of the Plan. The document is included for trustee information.

Comments & answers to questions:

- Indigenous Language instruction at Range Lake North School (RLN) is integrated into existing classes rather than being offered as a standalone subject.
- Refinement of the Plan is ongoing, contingent upon receipt of feedback from the ECE.
- One substantive difference in the ECE template is the inclusion of a very long checklist. As YK1 is a District Education Authority (DEA), the checklist was responded to in that capacity. Additional explanatory note fields have also been included in the template, if needed.
- Targets are similar to past plans.
- If the Minister has any requests, they will be directed to the Board. To date, no additional information has been requested.

- This report addresses multiple requests for information.
- Trustees were happy to see the inclusion of the shortages in Education Assistant positions, which was provided by the YK1 RISC. The shortage of EAs has resulted in the need for some doubling up (e.g. 2 students:1 EA), depending on the needs of the students.
- Trustees noted there appears to be no reference to the curriculum (BC) change in the template provided.
- Trustees suggested changes are required to the inclusive schooling information because it appears to be out of date.

11.3 YK1 Year in Review/Annual Report to New Business (Public Engagement & Advocacy Standing Committee)

The Committee has discussed the reintroduction of a Year-in-Review document for public engagement. This document could also be used as a marketing tool to showcase accomplishments throughout YK1, to demonstrate to the public that YK1 is active and progressive, to highlight what the Board is doing, and to provide public accountability.

Trustees feel that creating this document would require a lot of work, but it is worthwhile. Trustees further suggested that the adoption of social media usage may have contributed to the prior decision to discontinue this report.

The proposed timeline is to have a draft in August, with a final report ready for approval in the fall. The Committee has suggested items to include in the report; however, does not want the report to create a lot of extra work for staff.

Motion #: 09/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees direct the Public Engagement & Advocacy Standing Committee, working with District administration, to develop a draft public-facing Year-in-Review/Annual Report for the 2025-2026 school year, consistent with the scope and context outlined in this report and that a draft of the report be brought back to the Board in August for review prior to publication.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs

Carried

11.4 Advocacy for Election Amendments (Trustee Wasylciw)

The subject and the recommended change to the *Local Authorities Elections Act* needed for the upcoming fall election were reviewed. Timelines are quite brief.

Motion #: 10/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees amend its previously approved MLA advocacy priorities by substituting one current priority (to be identified by the Board) with the following:

Advocacy for a legislative amendments to the Local Authorities Elections Act that would strike the words "That is a municipality" from sections 52.1(1) and 52.2(1), and strike the word "MUNICIPAL" from the associated section heading, so that alternative voting provisions apply equally to District Education Authorities; and that we request that one or more MLAs consider introducing a Private Member's Bill to give effect to the amendment in the upcoming spring legislative session to have it passed and in effect for the fall election.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs

Carried

Trustees suggest a meeting with the Education Leaders group to indicate what YK1 is looking for and to request that they support it.

The agenda items for the meeting with the Yellowknife Members of the Legislative Assembly (Yellowknife MLAs) were discussed. It was resolved that the Chairperson would compose a letter in an effort to address the delays in responses from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), thereby replacing that topic with the proposed amendment to the *Local Authorities Elections Act* in anticipation of the upcoming fall election. Furthermore, the Jordan's Principle funding topic would remain as a separate topic to highlight that the changes to Jordan's Principle funding constitute a violation by the Federal Government to the rights of Indigenous students.

Trustees were asked to provide feedback for the MLAs meeting in advance of the meeting date.

11.5 Approval of 2026-2027 Budget

Motion #: 11/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees having reviewed the 2026–2027 Budget, approve the budget as presented.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Shortt

Carried

There were no questions or discussion.

11.6 Approval of City of Yellowknife Tax Requisition letter

Motion #: 12/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees direct administration to advise the City of Yellowknife that the District will maintain its current mill rate for the 2026–2027 taxation year, and that the total property tax requisition is set at \$9,217,287.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs

Carried

12. Reports

12.1. Chairperson's Report (Trustee Bell)

The report is included in the agenda package.

Responses to questions:

Trustees were asked to email Chairperson Bell with suggestions by or before May 14th, about:

- i. What the GNWT can provide to support trustee onboarding, and
- ii. The letter about Jordan's Principle funding to the CSBA.

The CSBA discussion on Jordan's Principle funding has been delayed until the July CSBA meeting. Trustees are in favour of sending the letter as soon as possible. Administration will reshare the Jordan's Principle funding letter from the CSBA with trustees and will send the letter to the CSBA on Friday, May 15th.

12.2. Trustee Reports

- 12.2.1. No reports were submitted.

12.3 Canadian School Board Association Report (Trustee Brookes)

The report is in the agenda package.

Trustee Brookes also noted the Ontario provincial government's assumption of control over some of that province's school boards.

12.4 Superintendents Report (Shirley Zouboules)

The report is included in the package.

Comments and responses to questions:

- Trustee attention was drawn to the Wellness Mentor data.
- Current and future work on the Strategic Plan was reviewed.
- Trustees like the measures included in the draft Strategic Plan.
- The measures in the Strategic Plan are statements related to the goals.
- The Strategic Plan will be added to the agenda for the June Committee of the Whole meeting.
- The restorative practices session with Pat Lewis was focused on staff, given their day-to-day interactions with both students and adults.
- Backlog issues with teacher certification are not impacting YK1 because we have been able to navigate them without any large impacts.
- "In a meaningful way" refers to the quantification of qualitative data. A narrative in this regard will be provided in the document. Work to incorporate the Calls to Action is also in progress. Administration will be reviewing the timelines included in the document.
- Trustees were asked to send additional questions about the Strategic Plan to Superintendent Zouboules.
- Superintendent Zouboules shared that going forward NWTSA will meet with ECE monthly to work on things like a cell phone use framework.
- Information about the school tours at École Alain St.Cyr & WMS & NJM & RLN, and those who attended was shared.
- The Board discussed the topic of appealing denials of Jordan's Principle funding. It was determined that pursuing such appeals would be very cost-prohibitive. Trustees suggested inquiring about the cost of an appeal and bringing that information to the Board. This could possibly be achieved by talking to legal counsel of the Sahtu Divisional Education Council, which is pursuing an appeal. Consensus was that a board challenging the federal government is not advisable. Instead, trustees feel the Board should continue to focus on advocacy, sharing concerns with the CSBA and ECE and providing moral support at the NWT Education Leader table. There is strength in numbers.
- An overview of VERTTA, which will replace PASI was done. This is a long-overdue update to student information systems.

12.4.1 Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Learning Report (Graham Arts)

The report is included in the agenda package.

Comments & Responses to questions:

- The new Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) program is almost completed; one more session is to be held for staff at schools taking on OHS roles.
- Under the new model, site inspections will be managed at individual schools and will only come to the Board if there is anything glaring that the Board needs to be aware of for budgeting purposes.

- It was noted that through the food funding, all students have access to food.

Motion #: 13/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees move to in camera at 9:13 PM.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs **Carried**

Motion #: 14/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees move out of in camera at 9:14 PM.

Moved by: Trustee Shortt Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs **Carried**

Motion #: 15/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees go back to item 12.4.

Moved by: Trustee Wasylciw Seconded by: Trustee Snaggs **Carried**

12.4.2 Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources & Learning Report (Landon Kowlazik)

The report is included in the agenda package.

There were no questions.

12.4.3 Secretary Treasurer Report (Lisa Vass)

Due to time constraints in the past month, the preparation of a physical report was not possible.

Secretary Treasurer Vass gave a verbal update on OHS. This included that Maintenance staff have a number of OHS courses they need to complete because of the nature of their jobs, and there is signage that needs to be installed.

The flooring contract has been awarded to Elite Flooring.

There are currently two (2) sewage issues at two (2) schools that will require funds for remediation and repairs.

Fencing quotes came in lower than expected. Finance will be talking to the contractor to ensure they understand the scope of the project to ensure accurate quotes are received.

Maintenance is in talks with two (2) accessibility contractors and will soon be making a decision on which one will be awarded the contract.

Comments & responses to questions:

- Trustees referenced historical information that indicated YK1 receives maintenance funds for SJF as well as the other 5 YK1 schools.
- Trustees suggested getting clarification on the carryover of funds for projects that were not begun due to weather.
- École It̓'q̓ has not yet been turned over to YK1.
- Trustees recommended the implementation of fans and dehumidifiers at the Northern Arts and Cultural Centre (NACC) to mitigate the potential for mold development.

12.4.3.1 Director of Operations Report (Jordan Martin)

The report is included in the agenda package.

Comments & responses to questions:

- The proposed changes to the staff parking exit at NJ Macpherson School were discussed.
- The origin of the lead detected in school water sources remains undetermined. Routine monitoring will be implemented.
- An investigation into the ability of the new phone systems to be used as public address (PA) systems is underway.
- The Maintenance department is currently uncertain whether any schools other than Mildred Hall School (MHS) have a sewer vault. Trustees recommended determining if other schools have sewage vaults. Maintenance will be implementing regular inspections of sewer lines.

13. Standing Committee Reports

13.1 Audit Committee (Chairperson: Trustee Peters)

No meeting has been held.

13.2 Committee of the Whole (COW) (Chairperson: Trustee Shortt)

The agenda package for yesterday's COW meeting and the April meeting minutes are included in the agenda package.

No questions.

13.3 Finance Committee (Chairperson: Trustee Brookes)

The report is included in the agenda package.

No questions.

13.4 Facilities Committee (Chairperson: TBD)

The Committee has not met.

13.5 NWTTA Teach-Board Committee (Chairperson: Trustee TBD)

There is no update at this time. The next meeting will be held on May 13th at 3:45 PM.

13.6 Policy & Governance Committee, Chairperson: Trustee Drew

Committee meeting information is included in the agenda package. Policy 32 - Trustee Development was shared with trustees for comments. No comments were received.

Motion #: 16/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees accept 1st reading of Policy 32 - Trustee Development, for posting online for comments.

Moved by: Trustee Drew

Seconded by: Trustee Brookes

Carried

13.7 Public Engagement & Advocacy Committee (Chairperson: Trustee Wasylciw)

Notes provided on the day of the meeting. Work has been done on the reintroduction of a Year-in-Review document.

The Sacred Feather Indigenous Student Awards were reviewed. Doreen Cleary, who championed the creation of the awards, has been invited to join the Committee to review the 2026 nominations. Nominations will be brought forward for approval at the June Board meeting.

13.8 USW Board Advisory Committee, Chairperson: Trustee TBD

The USW is planning to hold an event for its members in August. YK1 has been invited to participate.

13.9 Action Items

Action Item lists are included in the agenda package.

Motion #: 17/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees accept the updates to the action items as discussed.

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs

Seconded by: Trustee Shortt

Carried

14. Announcements - events calendar attached

The MLA meeting on May 21st and the Board Retreat with Chris Smeaton were added to the May calendar.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

May 21, 2026	6:30 PM	Yellowknife MLA Meeting
May 23, 2026	1:00 - 5:00 PM	Board Retreat
May 24, 2026	9:00 AM - noon	
June 8, 2026	12:10 PM	Committee of the Whole Meeting
June 9, 2026	6:30 PM	Executive Session (In camera)
June 9, 2026	7:00 PM	Regular Board Meeting

16. Chairperson's Closing Remarks

Chairperson Bell thanked everyone for attending and for making this a very productive meeting.

17. Adjournment

Motion #: 18/05-12/25-26

I move that the YK1 Board of Trustees, May 12, 2026, Board meeting be adjourned.

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs

Seconded by: Trustee Shortt

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 PM

Chairperson Bell

Secretary Treasurer Vass