



# ÉCOLE WILLIAM MCDONALD MIDDLE SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER – SEPTEMBRE 2024

## Principal's Message

We would like to welcome our new and returning students, staff and families to École William McDonald Middle School for 2024-2025! Each of you play a vital role in building a strong WMS community. This is an exciting year for WMS as our student enrolment soared over 300 students!

We take great pride in our school's long-standing culture, which has fostered engaged, active, high-achieving students and a dedicated, innovative staff. This year, we will

continue to build on that strong tradition, creating even more engaging and authentic learning experiences that support all learners to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. WMS promotes middle school educational experiences that are as unique as our adolescent learners. We continue on the path of curriculum renewal with the NWT Adapted Curriculum being implemented in all grade levels for 2024-2025.

Personally, I am overjoyed to be returning to the role of principal at École William McDonald Middle School this year. Much of my career has been spent teaching, supporting and learning with middle school students and educators. I look forward to seeing what 2024-2025 brings!

As we start the year, we also want to send a special thank you and well wishes to Mr. Jeff Seabrook - Wildcat for Life! After 20 years as the ultimate supporter of WMS and middle school learning, Mr. Seabrook retired in June. We wouldn't be where we are today without you, Mr. Seabrook! We will undoubtedly see him at the school throughout the year at various camps and events.

Our September newsletter highlights the start of our journey as a school community. You'll find links to our social media and web pages. Please follow us for the most up to date information. We welcome you to visit and participate in our events throughout the year!

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual WMS Open House on Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00pm in our gymnasium.



Mahsi, Thank You, Merci, Wela'lin,

*Jodi Lee-Lewis*



# DAILY SCHEDULE

Student supervisors greet our students outside at 8:05AM.

When the bell rings, students come inside, drop their backpacks and head to the track with their class.

If a student arrives late for morning wake up, we ask that they drop their bag by the office and meet us outside.

The schedule on the right shows the change of time to our morning wakeup period.



8:20 – 8:40	Morning Wakeup
8:40 – 8:50	Homeroom
8:50 – 9:35	Period 1
9:35 – 10:15	Period 2
10:15 – 10:20	Break
10:20 – 11:00	Period 3
11:00 – 11:40	Period 4
11:40 – 12:05	Activity Period
12:05–12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 1:15	Period 5
1:15 – 1:55	Period 6
1:55 – 2:00	Break
2:00 – 2:40	Period 7
2:40 – 3:20	Period 8

## MORNING mash up WAKEUP

Starting October 28, students will have the option to choose their morning wake up activity from a list of options.

*\*At that time, our breakfast program will also start.*

### Follow us on:

Website: [www.yk1.nt.ca/wms](http://www.yk1.nt.ca/wms)

Facebook: [facebook.com/yk1wms](https://facebook.com/yk1wms)

Instagram: [wms\\_wildcats](https://www.instagram.com/wms_wildcats)



# DRESS CODE

## **Because WMS...**

- is committed to providing students with learning environments that are safe, positive, and inclusive
- respects students' rights to express themselves in the way they dress
- empowers students to make decisions that promote a positive sense of self and contribute to a respectful community

## **WMS will...**

- respect a student's right to fairness, dignity, and respect
- NOT discriminate against students based on race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, socio-economic status or body type

## **WMS expects that student attire will...**

- Be functional (example: indoor gym shoes vs flip flops)
- Be comfortable (example: wearing clothes that allow you to move about freely)
- Be safe (example: wearing warm clothing in the winter)
- Be positive (example: wearing clothes free from discriminating hateful messages or illegal activities)
- Be private (example: wearing clothing that does not show private areas)



# CELL PHONES & WEARABLES

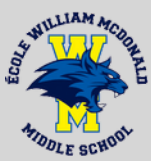


Students are permitted to use their cell phones/electronics while on school grounds before school begins and after school. There will be no cell phone use during the regular school hours. Cell phones must remain in student lockers from 8:20-3:20 each day. Any student who uses a cell phone during class time must hand over the phone to the teacher and will be able to claim the phone at the end of the school day. Should there be repeated instances by the same student, the phone will be submitted to the office and a parent/guardian will be required to claim the phone.

All wearable electronics (ie. smart watches) must be in airplane mode throughout the school day.

The school will not be responsible for any stolen, lost, or damaged mobile devices or wearables.

In the event of an emergency during the school day, parents should call the school's main office at 867-873-5814 in order to speak with their child. Similarly, a child wishing to contact their parents/guardians can do so at the main office by asking to use the student-designated phone.



# SCHOOL SPORTS

WMS Wildcats are off and running!  
The year started with  
cross country running and volleyball.

**Mon**

3:30PM - 5:00PM  
Grade 7 Girls Volleyball  
Cross Country Running  
3:45PM - 4:45PM  
5:00PM - 6:00PM  
Grade 8 Boys Volleyball

**Tue**

3:30PM - 5:00PM  
Grade 7 Boys Volleyball

**Wed**

7:30AM  
Cross Country Running  
3:30PM - 5:00PM  
Grade 8 Girls Volleyball  
5:00PM - 6:00PM  
Grade 7 Girls Volleyball

**Thu**

7:30AM  
Grade 6 Boys Volleyball  
3:30PM - 5:00PM  
Grade 7 Boys Volleyball

**Fri**

3:30PM - 5:00PM  
Grade 8 Boys Volleyball

**Sat**

10AM - 11:30AM  
Grade 6 Boys Volleyball

**Sun**

10AM - 11:30AM  
Grade 6 Girls Volleyball

*Thank you to all of the Wildcat athletes, WMS staff, community, student coaches, WHIPS and NWT School Sports for making this sport season possible!*

**NWT Cross Country  
Running Championships  
Fort Providence  
Friday, September 27, 2024**

**Spike It Tournament  
October 3-6, 2024**

**NWT.SCHOOLSPO RTS.COM**





# AUTHOR IN RESIDENCE

*Amber Henry* is a Yellowknife-based author and passionate about growing the NWT's literary community. She has published three children's books: *A Ptarmigan in a Birch Tree*, *Northern Princess*, and her latest release, *If You Take Me to the Nutcracker*. Currently, Amber is working on her first graphic novel, *North of Tomorrow*, which explores a future Yellowknife through speculative fiction/sci fi and adventure. This is Amber's third year running the Writer's Workshop at École William Mac, where she enjoys inspiring young writers. She also serves as the Vice President of the NorthWords Literary Festival and co-owns Northern Quill Publishing, a new local publishing company dedicated to supporting Northern voices.



We are thrilled to announce the return of our weekly writing workshop, with Author in Residence, Amber Henry. The workshop is designed for aspiring young writers at École William McDonald Middle School. It offers a unique opportunity for students to explore their creativity, develop storytelling skills, and work toward publishing a piece in a collaborative anthology.

#### Workshop Highlights:

- Duration: 40-minute sessions, held once a week (Group A September-December and Group B January-June)
- Class Size: 10-15 students, ensuring personalized attention and support.

#### Anthology Contribution:

- Each student will produce a piece of writing to be included in a collective anthology at the end of the course. Which will be available in the school library for fellow students to read.

#### What to Expect: The workshop is designed in two semesters:

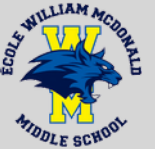
- Students will receive instruction on creative writing fundamentals, genre exploration, storytelling techniques, drafting, and revising.

Throughout the program, students will be encouraged to think outside the box and build confidence in their writing abilities.

Why This Workshop? Creative writing teaches kids how to think critically, articulate ideas, and express themselves in new ways. Our goal is to guide students through the writing process from brainstorming to revision, ultimately helping them develop a deeper understanding of storytelling while honing their personal voices.

Whether you are passionate about fantasy, sci-fi, mystery, or any other genre, this workshop offers the guidance needed to bring ideas to life!

# PARKING



**We thank you for following the traffic & parking signage this year!**

**Please drop students in the lower drop-off zone.**

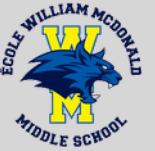
**We encourage WMS parents to drop students off in the drop zone in front of the baseball field.**

**If you need to park your vehicle, there are visitor parking spots available below the bus lane, and accessible parking available near the front door.**

**Please also ensure that you come in the appropriate entrance, the entrance and exit are one-way.**



# **PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)**



**For those caregivers who wish to get more involved, we encourage you to join WMS Parent Advisory Committee (PAC).**

**Our PAC meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm in our Library.**

**All parents are welcome to attend these meetings to learn more about their student's school. PAC meetings are attended by school administration, teachers (as required), and a designated school trustee (2024-2025, Trustee Tina Drew).**

**Past projects and interests of the PAC have included: input into a school coaching philosophy for sports; procuring additional band instruments through fund-raising activities; planning for Grade Eight Farewell ceremonies; providing duty-free lunches for staff; and representing student priorities and needs.**

**There are a variety of ways to become involved if you would like to support and know more about your child's school.**

**Anyone looking for information regarding the PAC is invited to contact the Principal.**

**All are welcome.**

**To contact the Chairperson of the WMS PAC,  
please email: [wmpac@yk1.nt.ca](mailto:wmpac@yk1.nt.ca).**



# STAFF BIOS

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## JOANNE TOWNSEND - "MRS. TOWNSEND"

Hello, wonderful students and families! I'm thrilled to kick off my 8th year teaching middle school here at WMS! 🎉 As a proud mom of three awesome teens, I know a thing or two about navigating the ups and downs of middle school life.

Originally hailing from the beautiful province of Saskatchewan, I've been soaking up the Northern life since '96! 🇨🇦 When I'm not in the classroom, you can find me cheering on my favorite CFL team—Go Riders! 🏈



I'm looking forward to another amazing year filled with laughter, learning, and unforgettable adventures. Let's make this year the best one yet!

#MomLife #CFLFan #TeachingAdventures

## Mr. Francis



**Francis Labelle** is a passionate educator at École William McDonald Middle School in Yellowknife, NWT, with a Bachelor's in History and Education from the University of Ottawa. Over the past five years, he has taught Core French and French Immersion at St. Patrick High School, where he developed a deep passion for creating engaging and impactful learning experiences. Currently, he's excited to guide his Grade 8 students through a new school year filled with creative methods, including roleplaying adventures and interactive projects, while integrating Indigenous perspectives into his teaching.

Family is the most precious thing to Francis. Recently married, he and his wife, who is also a teacher, are raising their two young daughters in Yellowknife, alongside their dog and cat, and their family continues to grow. Outside of the classroom, Francis enjoys video games, history, and geography, all of which inspire his dynamic teaching approach.

## Marie-Eve Raymond - "Mme. Marie-Eve"

With five exciting years of teaching under her belt, Marie-Eve brings passion and creativity to the classroom every day. A true animal lover, she has a special fondness for cows and shares her home with a delightful cat who often provides a bit of comic relief!

When not inspiring students, you can find Marie-Eve cheering on her favorite Formula One drivers or planning her next canoe camping trip and backpacking adventure. She also enjoys crocheting cozy creations and coaching biathlon, sharing her enthusiasm for the great outdoors with aspiring athletes.

Marie-Eve believes in making learning fun and engaging, and she can't wait to embark on another thrilling year with her students!



## Jodi Lee-Lewis - "Mrs Lewis" Principal



With 19 years of experience in the wild world of education, Jodi Lee-Lewis has wrangled more curriculum than most people have socks (and that's saying something!). She made the bold move to Yellowknife in 2008, trading in the sights and sounds of small-town Newfoundland for the northern lights and a whole lot of snow.

When she's not busy inspiring young minds, Jodi is a dedicated to her family. She's married to Mark, who bravely tolerates her knitting obsession, and they have two adventurous sons, Gabriel and Burke, who keep life interesting (and loud). Let's not forget the two dogs, who are probably plotting world domination or at least the next snack time.

Jodi loves to travel, read, and knit—because why not multitask? She's thrilled to return to middle school, where she's convinced the chaos is just part of the charm. After all, that bit of chaos is what makes it her happy place!

So, if you see her with knitting needles in one hand and a stack of books in the other, just know she's crafting the future—one stitch and one story at a time!

Say hello to Ms. Anne, the supermom of three! With two kids navigating the wild halls of high school and one off conquering the universe through chemistry and math in her second year of uni, Anne has officially earned her PhD in multitasking!

After 22 years in Yellowknife, she's become an expert in both snow shoveling and hot chocolate consumption. A die-hard Vancouver Canucks fan, Anne proudly wears her blue and green while cheering on her favorite team, because nothing says "I love my city" quite like a passionate hockey rant!

When she's not busy being a mom or rooting for the Canucks, you can find her getting crafty with beads and glue, creating masterpieces that could rival any holiday decoration. Speaking of holidays, Anne is a Christmas enthusiast who believes every day should be filled with twinkling lights and festive cheer!

As part of the WMS family, she's excited to sprinkle a little silliness and creativity into every classroom!





# STAFF BIOS

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## PAIGE ANDERSON "MISS PAIGE"



With 11 years of teaching experience, Paige has brought her magic up north, where she's discovered that middle school is truly where it's at! A proud mom of twins, she juggles parenting and teaching like a pro—often while dreaming of unicorns, orcas, and sharks (her favorite creatures, of course!).

When she's not solving math problems or diving into social studies, you can find her indulging in her two favourite pastimes: shopping and candy! Nothing makes her happier than chicken fingers and fries, preferably enjoyed after a good CrossFit session (because balance is key, right?).

And let's not forget her love for crochet! Whether it's crafting cozy creations or just keeping her hands busy while she brainstorms her next epic lesson, crochet is always in the mix.

Get ready for a fun year filled with laughter, learning, and maybe even a few unicorn-themed math problems!

Hi everyone!  
I am Ms. Hannah!

I am a first year teacher who spent last year becoming Ms. Townsend's protege during my student teaching journey. Originally from the great land of Nova Scotia, but raised in the U.S., I now call Yellowknife home after making the move in 2020. If you think you are seeing double, don't stress! My twin sister also lives here.

When I'm not teaching or planning my wedding, you can find me out for walks, especially with golden retrievers (they're my absolute favorite!). And if you spot a Dr. Pepper in my hand, you know I'm in my happy place.

I can't wait to learn and grow alongside all of you this year!

## Tatiana Dufour - Wellness Mentor

Tatiana Dufour is a passionate Wellness Mentor known for her exceptional ability to remember the names of over 400 students. Graduate with distinction in Specialized Education, Tatiana has a rich background as a Specialized Educator and Resource Teacher for ASD classrooms in the South. Her expertise in providing individualized intervention and emotional support has made a significant impact on the middle school students she works with.

Tatiana's professional skills are matched by her vibrant personal interests. An avid Dungeon & Dragons player and skilled beader, she brings creativity and a touch of magic to her role. Affectionately called a "gremlin" for her playful and spirited nature, Tatiana's unique blend of empathy, creativity, and remarkable memory makes her an invaluable asset to both her students and the school community.

Hi everyone, I am an enthusiastic EA who just moved to Yellowknife from Vancouver Island! I am excited to embrace the northern lifestyle and learn how to cross country ski this winter. I have a passion for coaching and playing volleyball, basketball, and hockey, and I am especially excited for the upcoming basketball season, school dances, and track and field.

My favorite subjects to learn about are English, Art, History, and Phys Ed. In my spare time I love reading fiction novels, baking sweet treats, going for hikes and watching all the latest movies. I am thrilled to be part of your school community this year!



Cheyne Cole

#CoachAtHeart

#WinterAdventuresawait

#SportsAndSmiles

# STAFF BIOS

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## Fédéric Sonier - M. Sonier

I'm originally from New Brunswick. Since moving to Yellowknife in 2014, I've fallen in love with the northern lifestyle. I'm the proud father of two daughters, and we spend much of our time enjoying the outdoors, exploring the land with our dog by our side. I've been teaching middle school for nine years, with eight of those years at William McDonald Middle School. One of the highlights of my role is leading a group of Grade 8 students to our annual winter camp, and I'm excited to share that adventure with them again this year. When I'm not teaching or spending time with my family, I'm cheering on my favorite hockey team, the Habs.



## Meet Mr. Cockburn

Hello! I'm Mr. Cockburn, and I'm thrilled to be teaching Grade 7 PIF. This will be my third year at WMS. My goal is to create a positive and safe learning environment where all students feel welcome and encouraged to express themselves.

I'm dedicated to building a positive learning environment and I believe that a fun and dynamic classroom makes all the difference. Outside of teaching, I enjoy spending time outdoors, whether it's hiking or playing sports. I'm also proud to be the futsal coach for our school, where I get to share my love for the game with the students.



Originally from Ontario, I moved to Yellowknife in 2019, and it has been an amazing experience to explore everything this beautiful place has to offer. When I'm not in the classroom or on the field, I'm busy keeping up with my two young children, who always keep me on my toes!

I look forward to a fantastic year ahead and working with the staff and students.

## Meet Yovina Pandoo

We're excited to introduce Yovina, our new Finance and Administrative Assistant at WMS! This is her first year in this role, and she's already bringing fresh energy to our team.

Born and raised in the beautiful island of Mauritius, Yovina moved to Saskatchewan in 2014 and made the leap to Yellowknife just last year. As a dedicated mom of three, including a teenager, she knows how to balance work and family life with grace.

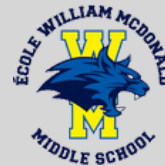
Yovina has a passion for travel and enjoys exploring new destinations with her family. In the kitchen, she loves experimenting with cooking, trying new recipes, and even creating her own culinary masterpieces.

Join us in welcoming Yovina to WMS, where her diverse experiences and enthusiasm will surely make a positive impact!

Want to know more of our staff?

Be sure to check out our October newsletter!

# SEPTEMBER EVENTS



**Ecology North  
at WMS  
September 10**

**National Day for  
Truth &  
Reconciliation  
Sept 30**

**OPEN HOUSE  
September 11  
7PM - 8PM**

**Teacher PD Day  
No Class  
for Students  
Sept 27**

**Save  
THE  
Date**

**Parent Advisory  
Committee  
September 18  
6:30PM - 7:30PM**

**Cross  
Country Running  
Championships  
Sept 27  
Fort Providence**

**Student  
Council  
Elections  
Sept 16 - 20**