

Parent Handbook

2018 - 2019



Johnson Elementary School

Box 367, Watson Lake, Yukon Y0A 1C0

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Welcome

Welcome back everyone and a special “*Souga Sinla Neganistan*” and “*Bienvenue*” to all new staff and students. We are looking forward to an exciting and challenging year.

JES Staff 2018-2019

Principal

Kindergarten

Grade 1

Grade 2

Grade 3

Grade 4

Grade 4/5

Grade 6

Grade 7

Learning Assistant – Primary/Reading Recovery

Learning Assistant – Intermediate

Learning Together Centre/French Language/

Intermediate Support

Kaska Language

Educational Assistants

CELC

Administrative Assistant

Library Clerk

Custodians

Ralph Pilz

Kristen Stewart

Amber Smith

Alyshia Van Kannel

Margaret Cournane

Glen Winsor

Gina Alaric

Karalee Smith

Sean Mulhearn

Caolainn Finan and Karen Norman

Anne Wilson

Natalie Sauv 

Kathy Magun

Gary Bauer

Amanda Bennett

Travis Hauser

Bailey Hayes

Trish Lamha

Becky Reams

Joy Reams

Leazel Slager

Vacant

Barbara Millen

Mary Palmer

Flo Molloy

Chester Noseworthy

Helen Scott

Yukon Department of Education

Minister of Education
Deputy Minister
Assistant Deputy Minister
Superintendent of Schools – Area III

Tracy Anne McPhee
Nicole Morgan
Mike Woods
Souhail Soujah

Watson Lake School Council

Members

Richard Durocher
Monique Benoit
Tara McIntyre
Jason Kearns
Keith McLeod
Charlie Crane
Charles Stevens

Denetia School Representative

Fannie Vance

Hours of Operation

School starts	8:35
Announcements	8:40
Opening Exercises	8:40 – 9:00
Period 1	9:00 – 9:40
Period 2	9:40 – 10:21
Recess	10:21 – 10:41
Period 3	10:41 – 11:21
Period 4	11:21 – 12:01
Lunch	12:01 – 12:41
Whole School Reading	12:41 – 1:06
Period 5	1:06 – 1:47
Period 6	1:47 – 2:28
Period 7	2:28 – 3:10
Dismissal	3:10

Primary classes will build into their programs a short break in the afternoon for students to stretch, get a drink, and use the washrooms.

School Calendar 2018-2019

Friday, August 31, 2018	PD Day –School Closed
Monday, September 3, 2018	Labour Day – School Closed
Tuesday, September 4, 2018	First Day of School for Students
Wednesday, September 26 to Friday, September 28, 2018	YTA Conference – School Closed
Monday, October 8, 2018	Thanksgiving Day – School Closed
Tuesday, October 9 and Wednesday, October 10, 2018	PD Days – School Closed
Friday, November 9, 2018	PD Day – School Closed
Monday, November 12, 2018	Remembrance Day– School Closed
Thurs., December 20, 2018	Early Dismissal for Students - dismissal at 1:00 p.m.
Friday, December 21, 2018 – Wednesday, January 2, 2019	Christmas Break – School Closed
Thursday, January 3, 2019	School Resumes
Friday, February 22, 2019	Heritage Day – School Closed
Monday, March 11 to Friday, March 22, 2019	Spring Break – School Closed
Friday, April 19, 2019 Monday, April 22, 2019	Good Friday – School Closed Easter Monday – School Closed
Monday, May 20, 2019	Victoria Day – School Closed
Friday, June 14, 2019	Last Day of School

Important Points for Parents

- Please send your child to school with a back pack, a lunch bag or container, and indoor shoes with non-marking soles to be left at school.
- We usually have outdoor recess so make sure your child has proper footwear, rain or snow pants and extra hats, mitts and warm clothing for winter months.
- If your child is going to be absent, please call the school before 9:00 to let us know. If you know ahead of time that your child will not be attending school, please send a note giving us the dates.
- If you are going to be away for a period of time and another caregiver will be looking after your child, please let the school know, in writing, who is in charge of your child.
- It is very important to give your contact information to the school and keep it current. In case of an emergency, we need to find you!!
- Field trips can be a vital part of the classroom program. We have easy access to nature walks, ski hills, swimming, snowshoeing, and skating. A blanket permission form for local, untransported field trips is sent to all parents and guardians at the beginning of the school year and the signed permission forms are kept on file. A note will be sent home informing parents and guardians of any outing.
- Contact your child's teacher with any concerns about homework, progress or classroom issues as soon as they arise.
- If your child has allergies, requires medication or has a chronic condition, please let us know. Some paperwork may need to be completed.
- The Department of Education has made changes to the way student progress is to be reported to parents. Communication will be sent home periodically giving updates to this process.
- JES promotes healthy eating. Please pack healthy snacks and lunches. Microwave ovens have been removed from all classrooms. Send foods in thermos containers if they need to be kept warm.
- Please come in to the school any time and plan to attend special events, as well. If you are visiting the school, please check in at the office.
- Establish **a regular after school routine** so that your child knows where to go after school (or whether they should take the bus if they are a bus student). Please send a note if the routine changes for any reason.

- Make sure you read and sign all the forms at the beginning of the year for media release, dental program, etc. If you have any questions about these forms, please call the school.
- **Students are required to stay on school grounds at all times** and must have parental permission to leave.
- When dropping off or picking up students, **please do not park in front of the main entrance or in the driveway.** This is an emergency route and it blocks others from leaving the parking lot. It also creates blind spots where students cannot be seen by drivers. There are now plenty of parking spots available
- The front entranceway doors will be unlocked by the Principal at 8:00 a.m. He will supervise all students in this area until the bell rings at 8:15. At that time, supervisors will be on duty in the hallways, gym, Foods Room and LAT games room. Students will be allowed to go to their coat hooks and hang up their outdoor clothes and backpacks. They can then proceed to the designated supervised areas in the school. Teachers may keep their classroom doors closed with the exception of Kindergarten. Kindergarten students will remain in the Kindergarten room until school starts at 8:35 a.m.
- Currently, there is no supervision of the outdoor playground area before school starts in the morning. Supervision of this outdoor area is to be discussed in the Spring when the weather improves.
- The use of any electronic communication devices, including electronic games and players, are restricted during school hours. Students may only use these devices prior to 8:00 a.m. or after 3:10 p.m. These devices are best left at home, but if they are brought to school, they must remain turned off and put away during the academic part of the school day. The student will assume all responsibility of loss, damage or theft of any device brought to school.

School Code

“DENE A’NEZEN - RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY”

At Johnson Elementary School, our school code extends to students and staff. We believe we must:

- respect each other and all property
- ensure the safety of each other and the school

JES School Growth Plan

The purpose of the school growth process is to improve the academic achievement of each learner at each school in Yukon. The school growth process has three parts, annual school growth planning, evidence-based conversations at each school throughout the year and school reviews conducted with each school and its community every three years. The school growth process is based on the expectation that staff, school councils, parents, the First Nations community, Elders, and students will work together to make plans, determine appropriate actions, and monitor student progress to achieve improved results for all Yukon students. The school growth process focuses on continuous improvement.

Attendance

Attendance is the key to success. If students miss a lot of school, they tend to miss important lessons in numeracy and literacy skills. These building blocks of learning, delivered on a daily basis, are essential. Your assistance in getting students to school well-rested and on time is important and appreciated. It demonstrates that we are working together to help our students be the best they can be.

Punctuality/Lateness

It is very important to have students arrive on time to minimize classroom disruptions. We must also keep in mind that the first ten minutes of the school day are extremely important to your children. It sets the tone for their day. Important messages are always communicated to students by 8:40 a.m. Furthermore, punctuality is a life-long skill valued by employers, and learning to be responsible starts at a very young age. Students arriving after the first bell must report to the office before going to class. Students are expected to arrive at school in sufficient time to be seated by 8:40 a.m. because classes begin promptly.

Student Conduct

JES CARES –

- C**o-operation
- A**ccountability
- R**espect
- E**xcellence
- S**afety

Positive Citizenship

We recognize and reward good citizenship in individuals and in the class or house teams. At school assemblies we recognize good citizens and generous acts that “Fill Our Buckets”. At the Awards Ceremony at the end of the school year, we recognize citizenship and volunteerism.

Social Skills

As part of the school program, a structured personal development program which emphasizes social skills and conflict resolution is used. Sharing, compromising, negotiating and solving interpersonal problems in a constructive manner is a difficult task. The main purpose of this program is to provide our students with some techniques and different positive approaches to problem solving. These are life-long skills, and they must be taught and learned. Under the Positive Behaviour Intervention Strategies Framework, we use the Second Step Program and Restorative Practices to help develop positive social skills. We have named these behaviour strategies JES CARES.

School Rules

To be respectful and take responsibility for our actions we:

- do our work in classes, do homework, ask for help and listen to teachers
- take care of all things, including the school building, furniture, books, our own and each other’s property
- are kind and helpful
- are safe, use problem solving and self regulation
- look but don’t touch the art or the bulletin boards
- walk, for safety reasons
- care for each other and share
- remain on school grounds unless we have permission to leave

Discipline

Discipline Philosophy

We believe that students need a safe place where they can be themselves, learn to know themselves, self-regulate and take important steps toward assuming responsibilities.

Students are encouraged to solve problems in a constructive fashion that enables them to own both the problem and the solution. Respect of self, peers, adults and environment are key elements.

Classroom Rules

Early in the year, each classroom teacher should develop classroom rules with his/her students. These rules align with the Positive Behaviour Intervention Strategies Framework (PBIS) which we have named JES CARES.

School Bus Conduct

For students' safety, when riding on the school bus, they should:

- promptly follow the directions of the driver
- not eat on the bus
- stay in an assigned seat
- avoid noise that will distract the driver
- keep books, knapsacks and items out of the aisle
- use "inside" voices
- get permission from the driver before opening windows
- keep hands, arms, feet and head inside the bus.

Consequences for inappropriate or dangerous bus behaviours will mean a loss of bus riding privileges.

French and Kaska

Kaska Language classes are offered from Kindergarten to Grade 7. French Language instruction is offered from Grades 4 to 7.

Student Accidents

If accidents occur while students are in the care of the school, they will receive First Aid. If the injury is deemed serious enough, the parent will be contacted so that students can be taken to the hospital or health centre. It is therefore important to **keep your emergency contact numbers current** with the school.

Allergies

Because we have staff and students with allergies, we cannot allow the following:

- peanuts or nut products
- latex (eg. balloons)
- pets or other animals
- scented products

Dental Program

The Dental Program comes to Watson Lake for a week or two at various times throughout the year. The therapists and dentists inform us when they plan to visit. We will let you know through the school newsletter.

Dennis Ball Memorial Pool

Usually in the spring, we are invited by the pool staff to use the pool for physical education classes. A note will be sent home when the pool is ready for use. Students will require swim suits and towels. They should also be dressed for the weather because they walk to and from the pool.

Watson Lake Ski Club School Program

Every winter, the ski hill facility at Mount Maichen is made available to the Intermediate students for a 4-week period.

There is a cost associated with this activity and each student needs to pay \$5.00 per visit for a lift ticket. If skiing or snowboarding equipment is needed, an additional \$5.00 is to be paid per visit. These fees help cover the operating cost of the T-bar, and the electricity and water costs associated with use of the chalet. Ski Patrol members generously volunteer their time for this activity and give pointers and tips to students so they are skiing and snowboarding in a safe manner.

These amounts will need to be paid even if the student has a season's pass. The season's pass is for use during public hours and does not cover this special activity.

Recycling

JES participates in a school-wide recycling program introduced by the Dept. of Education and Raven Recycling. Special bins are set up throughout the school to sort paper, juice boxes and other recyclables. All funds collected are used toward the Gr. 7 Year End Trip.

If you have any recycling items that you would like to donate to this class, please call the school. We will gladly make arrangements to pick up these items from your home or for you drop them off at school.

JES also participates in the territory-wide Raven Recycling Program which awards points to the school. JES redeems these points for gift certificates at Mac's Fireweed and books are purchased for use in the classrooms.

Learning Together

Learning Together is a pre-school program that runs from 1:00 – 3:10 p.m., Monday to Friday. It is a positive, play-based learning environment for parents/caregivers and their children to enhance children's skills in all areas of development. It is a program that targets 3 – 5 year old children, although ages 0 – 5 are welcome. A snack is served as part of the program. Play centers, gymnasium time, storytelling, games, crafts and so much more!

Special Education Program

The program is designed to identify the special needs of learners and to provide assistance for children with learning difficulties and, when possible, opportunities for those in need of enrichment. In such instances, strengths and weaknesses are identified through formal and/or informal assessment in close collaboration with the teacher, the school administration and the parents.

Generally, the primary and intermediate staff meet once a month to discuss Student Learning Plans, Student Behaviour Plans and Individual Education Plans. As well, we present teacher or parent concerns about a student's progress and decide whether we should refer the student to the Student Support Services team from the Department of Education. We have a Physiotherapist, an Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support Teacher and hearing and vision specialists also who are assigned to work with our school.

Parents are also expected to be part of the team for their child and may be the ones bringing the concerns forward. The meetings will be arranged at a mutually agreeable time to discuss concerns and referrals.

Tutoring Program

Johnson Elementary School offers a tutoring program after school which helps individual students complete homework, practice skills including math and reading, and to get extra help with difficult concepts.

Parents and/or teachers may refer students for tutoring support. Please contact your child's teacher or the office if you would like your child to participate in the program.

Study Skills and Homework

Homework may include incomplete class work, a review of skills already learned, a time for drill and practice of basic facts in Math and spelling in Language Arts; a time for Kaska or French reading and completion of Kaska or French assignments; a time for reading ahead in Social Studies and Science; a time for reading novels and other recreational reading; a time to refine printing and handwriting skills; and/or a time to practice painting and drawing skills.

Reporting Student Learning

Parents want to be involved in their child’s education and to know more about how their child is progressing in school. The changes to assessment and reporting will involve students and parents as users of classroom assessment in order to support the learning process. Communicating student learning involves both formal and informal processes and will be timely, ongoing and inclusive of teachers, students and parents. Classroom assessment is the systematic gathering of information about what the students know, are able to do, and are working toward. At JES, there are six guiding strategies that teachers utilize to practice Assessment for Learning. They include making learning intentions clear to students, co-constructing criteria with students, giving descriptive feedback: what’s working? what’s not? what’s next?, questioning: who’s asking the questions? are the questions open? and increasing peer and self-assessment ownership: involve learners in showing and talking about their own work.

Research confirms that if teachers evaluate too early in the learning cycle, they limit descriptive feedback and risk interrupting learning. Assessment during the learning and evaluation at the end of the learning gives students time to practice and improve before teachers evaluate.

Informal communication of learning is used by students, teacher and parents to access information about students’ learning and to highlight students’ strengths, interests and areas for further development. It empowers students to personally monitor their own learning, making adjustments and changes that enable growth.

Formal communication of learning occurs at or near the end of a period of learning. It serves to document the achievement levels of the students at a set point in time relative to age/grade expectations.

Due to the implementation of the curriculum redesign, Yukon schools are undergoing the above changes in student reporting. The traditional three report cards a year model is being modified to incorporate more frequent updates on student learning and growth. The format in which we share learning has changed where students will now be participating more in their assessment and reporting. This will include students monitoring and sharing their own growth in relation to the curricular competencies and core competencies of communication, thinking and personal and social with the support of teachers. Our students’ evidence of learning will be shared throughout the school year in a variety of forms including conferences, digital communications, student’s learning portfolios and the interim and final report cards.

Report Card dates for this school year are as follows:

Interim Written Report – February 8

Final Summative Report – June 14

While we have discussed means of student learning and communication, we also encourage parents/guardians to communicate with teachers and school staff at any time during the year to discuss your child’s progress.

Shoes and School Dress Code

Students require a pair of *indoor shoes*, with non-marking soles, which are to be worn at all times. Runners are required for physical education and sports activities.

Students are expected to maintain a high standard of personal appearance and grooming. Modest clothing is required and laces are to be tied for safety reasons.

Hoodies are not permitted to be worn with the hood up in the school. This helps us to identify and to address each student as well as to ensure their field of vision is not compromised while in school.

And, wheelie shoes are also not permitted at school. This includes any footwear that includes roller balls or roller blades. This will help keep our students safe while playing at school and reduce any chance of injury.

Before school commences, parents and guardians should help label boots, shoes, lunch boxes, and school bags with an indelible pen or marker. Many items of clothing look alike, so mark your belongings. This will help identify missing items.

Inclement Weather Policy

The doors to the school are open at 8:00 a.m. every morning to allow students to come into the school. Students will be supervised by the Principal and are expected to wait patiently in the front entrance of the school until 8:15 a.m. At 8:15 a.m., the bell rings and students may proceed to their coat hooks to hang up their outdoor clothing and backpacks. The gymnasium, foods room, Library and games room are supervised and available to students from 8:15 – 8:35 a.m. Supervision is also scheduled in the hallways.

Currently, there is no outdoor supervision for the outdoor playground before school starts in the morning.

If it is necessary to have an indoor recess during the morning and at lunch recess, students will remain in their classrooms or go to designated activities. The supervising teachers and Principal will determine when it is necessary to have an indoor recess.

iPods, Cell Phones & other Electronic Items

Please ensure that personal electronic items such as video games, cell phones and iPods are left at home. They can get lost or stolen and often disrupt the classroom. Personal electronic items being used or seen on school grounds will be taken from the student and will be available for pick up by the parent or guardian at the end of the school day.

Head Lice

If lice are suspected and a preliminary check confirms that head lice may be present, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted by the office. We ask that all parents and guardians of children who have been treated for head lice to continue to check for nits. Parents and guardians should be vigilant about removing nits until the children are nit-free.

We have always had great understanding and co-operation from parents and guardians while treating head lice and monitoring their child(ren).

However, this continues to be a community and social problem and often appears in school-age children. A handout from Public Health provides more information and advice about helping to prevent the spread of head lice. They will also provide special shampoo if the presence of nits or lice is confirmed.

Complaint Process

If you have a concern, please speak directly to the teacher involved. If the situation is not resolved to your satisfaction, please call or come in to talk to the Principal. If, after your discussion with the Administrator, you are still not satisfied or feel the situation is unresolved, you may contact the Watson Lake School Council chair to seek resolution. If you have not spoken first to the teacher, you will be directed to do so as direct communication is required.

JES School Dance Rules

- **Two weeks notice** of the intention to hold a school dance is required by the administration to allow for adequate preparation. *School Dance rules are to be posted at the entrance.*
- The doors are to open for one hour after the dance has begun and then the doors are closed. Usually the doors are locked at 7:00 p.m. Once a student leaves the dance, he/she cannot return.
- A School Dance contract must be completed and submitted to the Principal. Chaperones are to be arranged for by the sponsor group and their names given to the Principal two days prior to the dance. At least one staff person must be available at all times. **FOUR chaperones** are necessary (at least one male and one female to facilitate washroom checks).
- Refreshments and snacks may be sold. They must be eaten outside the gym. **Students may not bring their own refreshments.**
- It is the sponsor's responsibility to arrange for collecting tickets at the door, selling snacks, etc. and cleaning up. Only the washrooms closest to the gym will be used.
- All dances **must** end by 9:00 p.m. at the latest. They may end at 8:00 p.m. or earlier depending upon the circumstances and start time.
- To attend the dance, students must have been in school that day. This is a school event and school rules apply. Students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. With reasonable cause, chaperones may refuse admittance or remove students from the dance.

Emergency Drill Procedures

There will be a number of emergency drills throughout the year to train the children in evacuation procedures. The drills will be for fire, earthquake and lockdown procedures.

Students will be instructed on the first day about emergency procedures. Because the Yukon is located in an earthquake-prone area, and other emergencies can occur which may require us to evacuate the school, we want to remind you that the following procedures will be followed.

- The school will remain responsible for all students for the hours designated in a normal school day, unless directed to dismiss students by an Emergency Measures authority.
- If we are directed to dismiss students, no student will be allowed to leave the school unless a parent or designated guardian comes for him or her. Students will not be allowed to walk or bike home alone unless consent has been obtained from a parent or guardian.
- No child will be allowed to leave with another person, even a relative or babysitter, unless we have written or verbal permission to that effect or that particular person is listed as the student's emergency contact. With this in mind, if your child's information is not up-to-date, please call the office as soon as possible.
- All parents or designated guardians who come to pick up students, must sign the student out with the classroom teacher or the designated marshal at the alternate site Student Release station. This is critical so that we can ensure all students are accounted for and remain safe.

In case of an emergency and we need to evacuate Johnson Elementary School, our alternate gathering places are the Recreation Center or, if so directed by the Administration, the Hospital.

We are prepared to care for children in the event of a critical situation, or if parents or guardians are not able to reach the school. We have a number of people with first aid certifications, and we will be in communication with local emergency services, as required. We do ask for your help in the following areas:

- DO turn on your radio to CBC (570) or CKRW (610) on the AM dial, or CHON (98.1) on the FM dial. Information and directions will be given over the radio.
- DO NOT call the school please. We must have the lines open for emergency calls.
- DO NOT immediately drive to the school following an earthquake or other city-wide emergency. Streets and access to our school may be cluttered with debris. The school access routes and street entrance areas must remain clear for emergency vehicles.