**Northwest Territories Mentorship Package for New Hires**



Following ERI, it became evident that the Teacher Induction and Mentorship Program also needed reform. It is now delivered through two separate programs housed under the Educator Induction and Mentorship Programs. The Educator Induction Program and the Educator Mentorship Program are still linked in content and purpose: to support a new educator to the territories in developing relationships, enhancing confidence and strengthening instructional practices. Induction and Mentorship were separated into two programs because, although all newly hired NWT Educators will take part in the Induction Program, there may be a small number of new hires that may not participate in the Mentorship Program (i.e. Principals).

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# NWT Mentorship Program

## What is Mentoring?

Mentorship is a dynamic process which builds on the needs of the beginning or new teacher, the strengths of the mentor and the relationship between the two. This relationship must be flexible and provide formal and informal interactions.

|  |
| --- |
| A begi nning t eacher is a teacher who is in the first two years of his/her profession; a new teacher has previous teaching experience but is in his/her first year in the NWT. |

## Why Have a Formal Mentorship Program?

Research has shown that:

* Beginning teachers need support during their transition into professional practice; Teaching is the only profession that requires beginners to do the same work as experienced teachers:
* Through mentoring activities, both the protégé (i.e., new educator) and the mentor gain understandings and concrete skills that will benefit their students and be shared with colleagues;
* Mentoring must be connected to a vision of good teaching, if it is to contribute to positive educational reform;
* Mentors need opportunities to learn to mentor and time to mentor; Mentoring is more than a social role. It is also a professional practice;
* Beginning teachers who are mentored experience success and satisfaction in the profession sooner than those who do not have mentors; and
* Research shows that beginning teachers who are mentored are much more likely to stay in the profession.

Informal mentoring is not enough, because:

* New educators often do not ask for the assistance they need; Experienced teachers do not want to intrude;
* Informal mentoring does not necessarily support improvement over time; Informal mentoring may have a conservative effect on new teachers practice; Informal programs are difficult to identify, support and evaluate.;
* There is a need to identify who is obtaining support and the quantity as well as the quality; and
* New educators need to observe a variety of effective teaching models.

## Mentor s hip Skills

* Listening Observing Coaching Conferencing
* Giving constructive feedback
* Facilitating Counseling Reflective thinking Building partnership Modeling

## Characteristics of a Mentor

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Essential* Willing and available
* A caring person
* Demonstrated competencies as an effective teacher
* Thorough understanding of the school, the NWT curriculum, the community culture
* Experience with culture-based education
* Familiarity with NWT teaching resources
* Respected by fellow teachers and parents
* Continues to grow professionally
* Non-judgmental
 | Desirable* 3-5 years teaching experience in NWT
* Similar teaching assignment as beginning teacher
* Ability to integrate change in the curriculum and school
* An effective team planner
 |

|  |
| --- |
| Release time: If internal arrangement s can be made, the mentor and beginning teacher may be freed from regular duties for ½ day per month in order to achieve the objectives described in the Mentorship Plan. Also if arranged, the mentor can forfeit their half day with the beginning teacher and allow another experienced teacher the half day to work with the protégée (ie. the culture teacher). Other options include: using the half day to job shadowThis release time is intended for co-operative planning, classroom observations, research, cohort meetings and/or professional development in an area specified by the mentorship plan |

Protégés have identified the following areas as their top ranked needs:

* Planning, organizing, and managing instruction
* Assessing and evaluating student progress
* Obtaining resources
* Dealing with individual needs
* Use of effective teaching methods
* Motivating students
* Managing the classroom

## Proposed Timeline for the NWT Mentoring Program

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **April/May:** | Experienced teachers are identified and invited by principals to join the mentorship program for the coming school year. |
| **May - August:** | Newly hired teachers are matched with mentors by principals. Mentors make contact with protégé by phone, email, or letter. |
| **August - Sept:** | Mentor meets beginning teacher and provides support on arrival and during orientation. |
| **August/Sept:** | Department of Education Induction and Mentorship Coordinator and/or Regional Coordinator provide training sessions for mentors and protégés on request from the regions or schools. |
| **By Sept 30:** | The mentor and protégé develop a **Mentorship Plan** that must be approved by the principal. The plan is then sent to the superintendent for final approval. **Mentorship allowance and release time are dependent on this approval** |
| **By October 15:** | A mentorship/protégé participant list is sent to the Department of Education Induction and Mentorship Coordinator to initiate required funding for allowances and release time.* If at any time before October 15th either participant (mentor or protégé) feels that the partnership is not the right fit, they should approach the principal and request a new pairing.
* \*\*\*Both parties should be aware that there is an exit process if required\*\*\*
 |
| **Ongoing:** | Regular formal or informal meetings occur between mentor and protégé. I f internal arrangements can be made , one half day per month is set aside with release time for meetings between mentor and protégé as outlined in their Mentorship Plan, found in this package. Some schools allow their teams to bank the half days for longer PD sessions. This time may be used for classroom visits/observations, co-teaching opportunities, and lesson planning sessions. The intent of this release time is to provide the protégé with the opportunity to learn and grow from interactions with peers. |
| **Nov/Dec and****May/June:** | Mentorship team reviews the mentorship plan and makes any needed changes. Take time to reflect on the mentorship process and plan. Celebrate successes. |

##

## Mentorship Training (Regional or School Level)

Suggested Content Model for Mentor Workshops

1. Mentoring and the Mentoring Role
* What is mentoring and who is a Mentor?
* Roles and Responsibilities of Mentors, Protégés, Administration & others Characteristics of Effective Mentors
* Functions of Mentoring
* Payoffs and Pitfalls of Mentoring
1. Assisting the Beginning Teacher
* Needs of Beginning Teachers
* Concerns of New Teachers
1. Helping Beginning Teachers with Critical Tasks of Teaching Classroom Management
* Arranging the Classroom Setting
* Planning and Teaching Rules and Procedures Managing Student Work
* Establishing a Positive Classroom Climate Supporting Good Student Behavior
* Conducting Instruction and Maintaining the Momentum Getting the Year Off to a Good Start
* Planning for Instruction
1. The Process of Mentoring
* Mentoring vs. Evaluation
* Knowing the Characteristics of the Adult Learner Practicing Empathic Communication Skill Conducting Formal Observations
* Leading Novices to Construct Teaching Knowledge Using Reflective Discovery
1. Developing Action Plans
* Setting Goals and Plans
* The Art of Letting Go

## Mentorship Roles and Responsibilities

Successful mentorship depends upon the clarity of participant roles and responsibilities.

Role of the Mentor

* Make contact with protégé by email, phone or mail as soon as they‘re hired Show your protégé around the community and introduce them to community people.
* Ensure your protégé is oriented to the culture of the community
* Attend the initial training session, if available, as well as any follow up sessions.
* Acquaint the beginning teacher with school routines, procedures, resources and facilities.
* Provide encouragement and time for the beginning teacher to reflect on and discuss his/her practice.
* Understand the typical needs and challenges of beginning teachers; they need time and encouragement to develop their own strategies for teaching.
* Prepare to be especially helpful in areas known to be difficult for novice teachers, e.g. classroom management.
* Prepare for effective one-on-one communication with individual teachers. Develop a variety of strategies to assist the beginning teacher with gaining acceptance and support within the school.
* Discuss NWT curriculum and teaching strategies. Work with the protégé in a collegial fashion.
* Celebrate successes.

Role of the Protégé

* Get to know the mentor personally and professionally.
* Become familiar with school routines, procedures, and resources.
* Work with the mentor in a collegial fashion.
* Discuss NWT curriculum and teaching strategies.
* Work to create a culturally relevant learning environment. Encourage parent and community involvement.
* Celebrate successes.

Role of School Administration

* Inform potential mentors and protégés about the mentorship program.
* Identify teachers as potential mentors in the spring; teachers must be willing to participate. Do not assign teachers as mentors.
* Arrange for mentorship training either through the school or region.
* Match mentors and protégés – careful consideration of location, subject areas and prep time all contribute to successful ongoing mentoring.
* Recommend, assign or approve mentorship teams based on the strengths and needs of the school staff.
* Approve mentorship teams after the mentor and protégé have completed their **Mentorship Plans**. This needs to be completed by **September 30** of the school year.
* Offer encouragement and support for the mentorship process and be interested.
* Support mentorship team orientation to community culture.
* Provide release time for mentorship sessions.
* Do not associate mentorship with evaluation. Intervene if relationship is not working.
* Build a school wide culture among faculty that supports the professional development of beginning teachers
* Provide opportunities for interaction outside the classrooms, grade level meetings, Christmas concert committees, etc.
* Make sure all staff has access to email.

Role of ECE Induction and Mentorship Coordinator

* Provide support for the mentorship program at the regional and district levels.
* Develop and deliver mentorship training workshops, when requested.
* Provide Induction Package and Mentorship Package.
* Work with administration to provide support for the mentorship program.
* Collect best induction practices from NWT schools.
* Work with new and beginning teachers in the NWT.
* Build connections and partnerships with the Aurora College Teacher Education Program in the NWT.
* Build connections and partnerships within ECE to access resources, research and expertise for new and beginning teachers in the NWT.
* Keep all NWT Teacher Induction materials current and relevant.
* Evaluate the effectiveness of the NWT Mentorship Program

Role of DEA/DEC

* Provide support for the NWT Induction program.
* Plan and deliver an introductory community orientation to new and returning teachers. E.g. the DEA members in Aklavik meet and greet each new teacher on the individual‘s arrival**.**
* Provide opportunities for new teachers to participate in community events. Consider ways to welcome teachers e.g. Adopt a Teacher Program

# Mentorship Focus: How to Implement the NWT Educational Directives into the Classroom

## Indigenous Language and Culture Based Education

### Indigenizing Education in the NWT

Indigenizing education refers to a pedagogical shift that encourages the inclusion of Indigenous content, understandings, and processes into all aspects of the formal education system. Indigenizing education requires viewing, developing, and delivering education through the lens of the Indigenous culture tailored to each individual community.

To accomplish this, NWT teachers must center Indigenous ways and practices in NWT Schools, looking to community Elders, cultural knowledge holders, and leaders for guidance.

NWT Schools are expected to:

* Support culture-based educational experiences for all students;
* Reflect the local culture and environment throughout the school;
* Actively participate in the Elders in School program;
* Provide Indigenous language programming; and
* Provide teachers with professional development, which aims to orient them to the community‘s culture.

NWT Teachers are encouraged to:

* Meet the community and take part in community events, celebrations, and ceremonies;
* Use local materials and community human resources, including Elders and community leaders, in lesson planning and delivery of instruction;
* Open lines of communication with families through introductions, as soon as possible;
* Stay in contact with parents throughout the year regarding student successes and challenges;
* Incorporate the community culture into classrooms and lessons;
* Learn as much of the local language as possible, and use it often in lessons, classrooms and school; and
* Take the time to learn about the community, and community members, to better understand:
	+ the unique history of the community and the NWT;
	+ the current political, cultural and socio-economic environment;
	+ the local history and legacy of the residential school system;
	+ historical and contemporary Elders and heroes;
	+ regional land claims;
	+ political and social structures; and
	+ community protocols and ceremonies.

### Indigenous Language Learning

A Whole School Approach to Model Language Learning

All staff members have a role in helping to maintain and revitalize the language of the community, regardless of their own ability to speak the language fluently. When teachers try to learn an Aboriginal language in the school and community, it shows that there is value in the language. When teachers have troubles remembering words or proper pronunciations, it can model the learning process for students helping them to feel safe to try as well.

Some suggestions on how teachers can incorporate Indigenous languages in the school include:

* Attending and participating in Indigenous language classes with students;
* Greeting students each morning in the language of the community;
* Teaching a school prayer and *O Canada* in the Indigenous language;
* Encouraging Indigenous language use throughout the whole school, as often as possible;
* Integrating Indigenous language into other subject matters; and
* Using Indigenous language signage or labeling throughout classrooms and the school.

## NWT Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling

In accordance with the *NWT Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling (2016)*, education bodies must welcome students within a common learning environment in the community in which the student resides and provide support through School-Based Support Teams to enable teachers to meet the diverse needs of students, including those who experience significant barriers to learning.

The **Inclusive Schooling Vision** is to ensure access to quality education for **all** students by effectively meeting the student’s diverse needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful and supportive.

Educational Programming

*“Education in the Northwest Territories (NWT) is committed to an inclusive philosophy and practice which welcomes all students into its schools. Inclusive Schooling provides all students with learning opportunities appropriate to their diverse strengths and needs, in classrooms with their age peers.*

*The Education Act (1996) mandates access to the education program in a regular instructional setting, support services to give effect to this access, and modifications to the school program if deemed necessary to accommodate the needs or abilities of the student.”*

*- From the Northwest Territories Individual Education Plans: Guidelines for Development and Teacher Resource Kit (2006)*

*Inclusive schooling in the NWT ensures that students have access to the necessary support services to access education within their home community.*

1. Regular Education Program (with or without accommodations)
2. Modified Education Program
3. Individual Education Plan

### Types of Education Programs

1. Regular Education Program (REG) (with or without accommodations)

\*Typically represents 80-85% of students

Instructional Focus:

* Student is following the curricular programming of the grade level
* Instructional practices:
* Consider the range of diversity in a ‘typical’ classroom
* Are based on Universal Design for Learning principles
* Provide flexible options for learning activities and assessment of learning
	+ Accommodations for the needs of students may be provided and documented on the Student Support Plan (SSP) such as:
	+ Extra time
	+ Assistive technology
	+ Materials in alternative forms (braille, auditory, visual, …)
1. Modified Education Program (MEP)

\*Typically represents 10-15% of students

Instructional Focus:

* Student is following the curricular programming of another grade level(s) in one or more subjects because they have been documented as working significantly above or below grade level
* Instructional practices:
	+ Curriculum content is modified to reflect the student’s current level of performance
	+ Instructional & assessments methods are modified to reflect student strengths, needs & interests
	+ Are based on Universal Design for Learning principles
	+ Provide flexible options for learning activities and assessment of learning
* Modifications for the needs of students will be provided and documented on the
* Student Support Plan (SSP)
* May be done on an ongoing basis
* May be done for a short period of time until the student has reached grade level in a subject area
* Always directed by student need

\*Students in grade level typically span one year of development as students’ birthdates range from Jan 1-Dec 31. The curriculum is scaffolded from one year to the next to encompass this range. Students who are significantly outside of this expected range may qualify for a MEP.

1. Individual Education Plan (IEP)

*\*Typically represents 3-5% of students*

Instructional Focus:

* Is a student-specific program based on the strengths and needs of the student (always growth-oriented & asset based)
* Includes such details as information on interests and aspirations, readiness to learn, learning preferences and other relevant factors
* Includes strategies identified to support the student’s learning
* May include content based on subject matter curriculum outcomes, or may be focused on the personal and unique needs of the student (or a combination thereof)
* Is specific, targeted & measurable
* Is developed through a collaborative process usually involving the teacher(s), the principal, the program support teacher, the parents/guardians and the student when possible
* A student on an IEP usually requires supports, accommodations, facilities, resources and equipment beyond those required by his/her peers

Education bodies are required to support the development, implementation and monitoring of a Student Support Plan (SSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP), for students who require them, by directing principals to ensure that the teacher develops a plan with input from parents/guardians and student, and which is based on the identification of student strengths and challenges.

When a student is identified as a struggling learner, it is the teacher’s responsibility to monitor the student’s progress and provide support when necessary. When best instruction practices are not meeting a student’s needs, it is time to consider whether a SSP or IEP may be necessary, in consultation with the School-based Support Team and parents/guardians.



These plans are evolving documents. Teachers, in collaboration with the School-based Support Team, develop, implement and update the learning goals and instructional strategies whenever significant changes or accommodations are required,

Teachers will actively participate within the School-based Support Team, when the team is meeting about a student in their class, to develop or utilize a number of informal to formal assessment strategies across time periods and situations to determine students’ strengths and challenges. These instruction and assessment strategies must change as circumstances require.

All children bring their own unique strengths, experiences and understanding to the classroom. Society is richer when all children are valued. The teacher has the following supports to help plan programs that meet the student needs:

* At the school level, program support teachers and student/support assistants
* At the board level, board consultants
* At the community level, parent and community involvement in education
* Time to plan with the school-based team
* Professional development in the use of strategies such as multi-level instruction

Everyone benefits from inclusive schooling. Children who may have been excluded in the past, become part of a group and the other learners learn understanding, empathy and tolerance for difference. The greatest obstacle is the way people think. When we shift our thinking from focusing on children‘s problems to recognizing their strengths, we are more apt to see the opportunities inclusive schooling presents. It is critical to identify the children‘s needs, and often that requires specific programs and resources.

### Classroom Practices/Models/Strategies that

### Facilitate inclusion

Here are some of the practices, models and strategies that can help schools to facilitate inclusion. Please refer to the Northwest Territories Program Support Guide and other supporting documents for more information.

1. **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

UDL provides a framework to improve the learning environment for all students. Incorporating UDL principles into the design and development of curriculum and classroom practice, including learning outcomes, activities, assessments, and teaching methods, improves the accessibility of learning for all students.

UDL helps the teacher make instruction more flexible and student-centered. It engages students in the learning process and allows them to make choices in acquiring knowledge and skills, as well in how they demonstrate their learning.

1. Tiered levels of support (i.e.: *Response to Intervention* model)

This is a multi-tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning, social-emotional and behavioral needs that begin with high-quality classroom- wide instruction, universal screening of all students and applying interventions as required.

1. Differentiated Instruction

Differentiation involves adapting instruction to meet individual needs including differentiating content, process, products, or the learning environment. Differentiation may mean teachers respond to learners in the classroom by adjusting teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible.

1. Inquiry-Based Learning

This approach to teaching allows student interests, questions, ideas and observations to guide the learning experience. Students engage in evidence-based reasoning, creative problem-solving, and open-ended investigations, often stemming from their environment and/or experiences.

1. Multiple Intelligences Model

Students learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways. This model outlines nine types of intelligence and encourages educators to plan for reaching students through the use of multiple modalities.

1. Cooperative Learning

Students working together in small groups with individual accountability can facilitate better learning outcomes and improve student relationships and the classroom collaborative culture.

1. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS)

PBIS recognizes that behavior is a form of communication through which students express their needs. Consistent, common expectations that are predictable, explicitly taught, and positively reinforced, enables teachers to focus less on classroom management and more on student instruction.

1. Self-Regulation (SR)

Self-Regulation is the ability to manage your own energy states, emotions, behaviors and attention, in ways that are socially acceptable and help achieve positive goals, such as maintaining good relationships, learning and maintaining wellbeing (Shanker, 2012). By applying the principles of SR to the classroom, educators can help students by providing adaptations, strategies, routines, tools and lessons that will enable students to become more aware of their energy states and of how to modulate them to attain the best state for learning.

1. Educator Wellness

Educators must be well in order to care for their students and offer them the best teaching and learning environment. Self-care needs to be a teacher focus, so that they are fully available to their students.

1. Trauma-Informed Practice

Trauma has an enormous effect on education and health outcomes. The impact of the legacy of Residential Schools in NWT communities cannot be underestimated. Educators must be aware of this, and of other possible traumas affecting students’ lives, in order to help student manage their emotions, behaviors, energy levels and attention in order to be able to do their best learning. Teachers need the support of their School-based Support Team to know how and when to connect a student affected by trauma to a trained professional.

1. Collaborative Professional Learning and Teaching

Professional learning and capacity building for school and regional/district staff is a foundation necessary for successful implementation of Inclusive Schooling.

### SELF-REGULATION

Self-regulation (SR) refers to the ability of individuals to recognize and deal with stressors so that energy levels can match the demands of the task or situation they are facing. Data from classrooms around the world (including the NWT) show that when teachers help students assess and respond to their energy level, emotions, behaviors, and attention through self-regulation, a student can approach learning in a calm and focused manner.

Children who are able to do this are much more likely to learn, have healthy relationships, and feel motivated. Stressors can vary significantly. What is a stressor for one child may not be for another; and even for the same child, what may be a stressor in one moment may not be in another when the child is in a different physical or emotional state. Stressors come from five interconnected domains: biological, emotional, cognitive, social, and pro-social.

Babies are first co-regulated through relationships with adults who help soothe them when they cry.  As adults continue to co-regulate with children and model self-regulation in their own lives, children become more aware of themselves, their bodies and their needs. Research shows that children in school need to be able to self-regulate to pay attention and do their best learning.

### IDEAL NORTHERN SELF-REGULATION ENVIRONMENT

CLASSROOM

*Noise reduction*

Why?

* Ambient noise affects health, social behavior, and productivity
* Ambient sound affects us physiologically, psychologically, cognitively, behaviorally
* Interference – communication requires sending & receiving (and conscious listening) – if the space you are sending the signal is in effective so is the communication
* Students have to work very hard to process what the teacher is saying – affected by reverberation time
* Acoustic/noise levels have increased over the years: 1.2 seconds reverb is the standard (sounds terrible)/ if you use the acoustic panels to reduce the reverb to 0.4 seconds for accurate signal, the sound improves incredibly
* Acute groups who are very sensitive to this: hearing impaired (16%), ESL (10%), introverts (33%)
* Average noise level in classrooms is 65 decibels – stress on those teaching in the environment
* Essex study showed that behavior & results improves when the classroom is at 0.4 seconds reverberation

What can we do about it?

* Hush ups on chairs and other furniture
* Soft carpeting/rug areas
* Acoustic panels (cheap: fabric on bulletin boards, egg cartons on the wall, carpet on back of bookshelves)
* Awareness of noise from lights, ventilation, technology, pipes, etc.
* Bells and school intercom
* Infrastructure to support FM systems
* Sound proofing between classroom walls and especially gym/classroom walls
* Noise-cancelling or reduction headphones

*Lighting for learning options and natural light*

Why?

* Recent research has examined lighting variables of color temperature, and illumination for affecting sleep, mood, focus, motivation, concentration, and work and school performance.
* Studies have shown that static lighting affects physical, psychological and performance outcomes of children, such as dental health, physical growth and development, attendance, alertness and academic achievement.
* Dynamic lighting can be used to support both mental alertness and relaxation in order to help students be best able to learn. Dynamic lighting has been found to improve both pupils’ performance as assessed by increased reading speed, and pupils’ behavior in terms of restlessness and aggressive behavior.

What can we do about it?

* Dimmer switches
* Multi-blinds that allow for light diffusion and darkness, dependent on needs
* As much natural light option as possible
* Area lighting
* Full spectrum light bulbs
* Doors with windows must have blinds to allow for open/close

*Reduce visual noise:*

* bulletin boards that can be covered (blinds, etc.)
* storage that allows clutter to disappear
* colors of classroom walls and floors should be neutral & natural (be careful about primary colors)
* Space for students to store jackets, boots, bags out of sight (clutter-free)
* Size and placement of windows – be aware of what’s happening outside the windows (distraction sources) – allow for options – ensure blinds

*Furniture considerations:*

* Neutral & natural materials
* Hush ups
* Ability to easily modify them to sit or to stand
* Ability to easily modify to enable working alone or in groups
* Ability to move them easily around the classroom
* Variety of textures
* Must fit the students
* A variety of different types of seating options – to allow movement, etc.
* Options for storage – cubbies, containers, bookshelves, carts
* Dividers that move and store
* Spin bikes with ledges to hold work materials
* Potential to create break spaces with the furniture

*Nutrition*

* Fridge/area for classroom snacks
* Space to store dry items
* Space for snack centre
* Counter to prepare snacks
* Sink for cleaning fruits/veg and clean up

*Cultural considerations:*

* Have important cultural artifacts available
* Physical space to do cultural activities to self-regulate (both inside and outside)

*Bring the outside inside:*

* plants
* natural features
* windows that feature outdoor spaces
* natural light
* water features
* vertical gardens

*Space for tools for up & down regulation which may include:*

* Bikes
* Pedals for under desks or at stand up desks
* Movement/stretching space (storing mats and materials)
* Tent or teepee or crawl away space
* Ball chairs
* T-stools
* Circle time seats
* Space for your sensory tools (easy to access)
* Mini trampoline

*Tools for calming/soothing which may include:*

* Quiet boxes
* Music listening/ headphone centre
* Sand, water tables
* Lego, Knex, building centers
* Painting, art centers
* Playdoh, Gak centers
* Sleeping mats

*Create microenvironments:*

* Spaces for calming
* Different learning areas
* Spaces for up & down regulating in the classroom
* Window seats, nooks, crannies

*Flow space:*

* Can you get around the classroom easily?
* How does the classroom feel?
* Is this a space you would want to be in?
* Adequate space for each student

**\*Remember\***

There is no “front’ of the classroom. Enable all areas to be the teaching center

### Trauma Informed Schools/Trauma Sensitive Schools

Every day, students enter their classrooms bringing backpacks, pencils, paper- and their unique views of the world. Every student has his or her own expectations and insights, formed from experiences at home, in the community, and at the school. When students witness violence between their adult caregivers or experience abuse or neglect, they can enter the classroom believing that the world is an unpredictable and threatening place. The GNWT’s goal is to create Trauma sensitive schools- schools that help ALL students to feel safe to learn.

Trauma-Informed Perspectives

* **When memories are stored as trauma it means they were too overwhelming to be processed and resolved at the time they occurred**. As a result the mind and body may perceive the need to engage fight/flight/freeze survival responses more frequently than they might otherwise. This affects a person’s physiology, neural processing, thoughts, emotions, behavior, and overall feeling of safety in the world. Unresolved trauma is prevalent in the world today. Fortunately, it can be resolved in the present moment with support and safety. The body and mind have an inherent ability to integrate experiences and move towards health. The trauma-informed lens asks “What happened in this student’s life?” instead of “What’s wrong with this student?” It asks, “What barriers are preventing this student from growth?” and “What supports are needed to help this student move forward?”
* **Trauma-informed teachers and classrooms prioritize safety and belonging.** They understand that traumatic experiences separate us from these qualities and that they are a key to forward progress. Trauma-informed approaches never force people to do or be anything. Rather, they give choices and allow people to set their own boundaries, limits, and goals. When we allow students to act from an internal locus of control, we build safety and trust. We give students an experience of being seen and valued. This way of relating avoids subtle boundary violations. This approach allows students to access a sense of adequacy and agency as opposed to inadequacy and powerlessness.
* **Healthy, positive relationships with students are a key factor in their path to trauma resolution.** At the end of the day, when a student feels accepted by an adult just as they are and trusts that adult to respect their self-determined boundaries, they will move forward in the company of that adult and beyond. This doesn’t mean we can’t set limits or hold high expectations for students with trauma histories. It simply means that we can rely on the power of relationship if ever we are unsure how to proceed.
* **Trauma-informed approaches help all students grow and learn.** Part of recovery from complex trauma can include building trust in our ability to deal with difficult sensations/emotions through repeated and supported practice over time. Other important components of trauma integration include developing self-awareness, self-compassion, and the ability to identify and appropriately establish inter-personal boundaries. These skills aren’t just helpful to people who have experienced significant trauma – they are essential tools for managing the challenges of life. In fact, the more developed these skills are, the more we free up our mind to learn new things.
* **Sometimes students, whether they carry a significant trauma history or not, will express emotion when they feel safe and supported**. If a child is tearful, crying, or expressing other emotion, this can be an indication that they feel comfortable processing feelings with your support and this is positive. In addition, children who have experienced trauma may have been threatened or wounded for showing emotion in their past. In addition, and for various reasons, many cultures send the message that emotions should be hidden or denied. It is common for adults to feel some tension when children express strong emotion. Your acceptance and normalization of emotion can teach all students in the classroom that emotions are a natural, healthy part of life.

### Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

The goal of UDL is to use a variety of teaching methods to remove any barriers to learning and give all students equal opportunities to succeed. UDL doesn’t specifically target kids with learning and attention issues. It’s about building in flexibility that can be adjusted for *every* student’s strengths and needs.

The aim of UDL is to present school subjects so that all learners can access the information, and to give learners different ways to demonstrate their knowledge. It is based on three main principles:

* **Representation:** UDL offers information in more than one format. For example, textbooks are primarily visual. But providing text, audio, video and hands-on learning gives all kids a chance to access the material in whichever way is best suited to their learning strengths.
* **Action and Expression:** UDL gives kids more than one way to interact with the material and to show what they’ve learned. For example, teachers can assess students using pencil-and-paper tests, oral presentations or group projects.
* **Engagement:** UDL looks for different ways to motivate students. Letting kids make choices and giving them assignments that feel relevant to their lives are some examples of how teachers can sustain students’ interest. Other common strategies include making skill-building feel like a game and creating opportunities for students to get up and move and around the classroom.

### Differentiated Instruction (DI)

Differentiating instruction is a strategy that teachers use to meet the diversity of student needs found in today‘s classrooms. Curriculum may be differentiated by content, process or product. As well, other factors include student interest, learning style and readiness.

Differentiating content

* Exempt students from material they already know or arrange for them to move more quickly through materials they can do on their own
* Teach by concept more than by fact
* Help students relate a concept to several disciplines
* Add a study of the people behind the ideas

Differentiating process

* Use higher-level questions
* Make sure students spend most of their time applying key concepts and ideas – not just repeating them
* Stress both left and right brain thinking

Differentiating products

* Have students solve real problems as often as possible
* Ensure that students present their products to real audiences whenever possible Ensure that students work with the teacher to establish criteria for a quality product both before and during the product creation and those products are assessed according to those criteria.

In a class with differentiated learning, all students learn key concepts. Multiple approaches to content, process and product are used to adapt curriculum and provide students with support and choice. Differentiated instruction is dynamic and includes a blend of whole-class, group and individual instruction.

Implications of differentiating instruction

* Creation of a collaborative climate and culture in the classroom Students demonstrate their learning in a wide variety of ways Teachers use multiple instructional approaches
* Student assessment is on-going and uses a wide range of tools
* Classrooms are configured in a way that facilitates students working individually, with a partner, in groups or as a whole class

Principles of a differentiated classroom

* Learning experiences are based on diagnosis of student readiness, interest and/or learning profile
* Content, activities and products are developed in response to varying needs of varied learners
* Teaching and learning are focused on key concepts, understandings and skills All students participate in respectful work
* Teacher and students work together to ensure continual engagement and challenge for each learner
* The teacher coordinates use of time, space and activities
* Flexible grouping ensures consistent fluid working arrangements, including whole- class learning, pairs, triads and quads, student-selected groups, teacher selected groups and random groups
* Time use is flexible in response to student needs
* Variety of management strategies such as learning centres, interest centres, compacting, contract, independent study, collegial partnerships, tiered assignments, learning buddies, etc. are used to help target instruction to student needs
* Clearly established individual and group criteria provide guidance toward success
* Students are assessed in a variety of ways appropriate to demonstrate their own thought and growth

## Student Assessment, Evaluating and Reporting (SAER)

**Student Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in the Northwest Territories**

It is essential that all teachers in the Northwest Territories clearly understand the integral role of assessment in the teaching and learning process, and that student progress be consistently evaluated and reported in relation to NWT curricular outcomes.

Currently, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) provides two reference documents to guide student assessment, evaluation, and reporting in NWT schools.

These two documents are:

[Educating All Our Children: Departmental Directive on Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (2010)](https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/sites/www.ece.gov.nt.ca/files/resources/ministerial_directive_-_educating_all_our_children_departmental_directive_on_student_assessment_evaluation_and_reporting_2010.pdf)

[Educating All Our Children: Procedures, Roles and Responsibilities for Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (2011-2012)](https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/sites/www.ece.gov.nt.ca/files/resources/student_assessment_evaluation_and_reporting_saer_procedures.pdf)

The Northwest Territories promotes a policy of inclusive schooling for all learners and uses differentiation of instruction based on assessment information to plan for each student‘s learning progress and goals. This assessment process complements a culturally defined model of inclusive education where the goal of assessment is not diagnosed difference but rather an opportunity to creatively enhance learning through adapted instruction that facilitates individual success. (*Philpot, Nesbit, Cahill & Jeffrey. (2004) Cultural Diversity and Education: Interface Issues. Memorial University, Newfoundland. p77)*

Through Education Renewal, ECE has committed to ensuring that assessment approaches are comprehensive, growth oriented, and individualized. This commitment involves the provision of tools and supports that seek to enhance classroom assessment practice, encouraging and extending existing teacher collaboration, and working to increase consistency throughout the NWT.

Definitions (As defined in the Directive)

Assessment is the process of collecting information on student achievement and performance that includes a variety of assessment tasks designed to monitor and improve student learning.

**Evaluation** is the process of making judgments and decisions, based on interpretation of the evidence gathered through assessment, as to what extent students have attained the prescribed outcomes and standards in the course curriculum and identifying what knowledge and skills still need to be learned. Evaluation also involves the making of decisions about the quality, value or work of a response for the purpose of providing descriptive feedback (formative) and marks (summative).

**Reporting** is the process of summarizing and clearly communicating student progress on curricular outcomes to various client groups, including students, parents, administrators and the Department. Reporting also includes the recording of student data into the student record for each student and submitting data requested by the department.

Classroom Based Assessment

Assessment activities are based on curricular outcomes and may be used to serve a variety of purposes, including:

Assessment for Learning (Formative):

* Provides students and their parents/guardians ongoing feedback on a student‘s progress;
* Provides information to better differentiate future learning experiences which build on the student‘s strengths.

Assessment of Learning (Summative):

* Provides information that can be used to evaluate and confirm student achievement in relation to learning outcomes;
* Provides information that can be used to understand the effectiveness of instruction in order to improve student learning.

Assessment as Learning

* A power assessment process that focuses upon the role of the student in the learning process;
* Occurs when students monitor their own learning and use feedback to make changes in what they understand.

Diagnostic Assessment

* To diagnose individual student strengths and needs;
* To collaborate with others to improve the student‘s learning;
* And, if necessary, to develop and implement a plan of intervention for the student.

Classroom Assessment Approaches

Students may show their learning in many different ways, so teachers in the NWT are encouraged to use a variety of assessment tasks in their classrooms. Choosing an appropriate method of assessment largely depends upon the curricular learning outcome(s) being assessed, why the learning is being assessed, and how the information it provides is intended to be used.

Informed professional judgment is central to effective classroom assessment. To support NWT teachers as they make decisions about their approach to classroom assessment, ECE recommends teachers refer to [*Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*](https://www.wncp.ca/media/40539/rethink.pdf) *(2006),* which was developed by the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP).

Although not exhaustive, the following tables provide some examples of methods and tools that teachers can choose in their classrooms.

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| **Assessment For Learning** |
| **Method/Tool** | **Description** |
| Effective Feedback | Teacher provided feedback on student learning should be timely, growth oriented, specific to the learning task, and clear. |
| Questioning | Strategic, focused, and probing questioning to monitor understanding. |
| Observation | Systematic observations of students as they process ideas |
| Learning conversations | Investigative discussions with students about their understanding and conclusions |
| Quizzes and Tests | Opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning during a teaching unit in order to assess student readiness about moving onto another activity or concept. |
| Simulations | Simulated or role-playing tasks that encourage students to show connections that they are making among concepts that they are learning. |
| Graphic Organizers (KWL, Placemats, etc.) | Graphic organizers encourage student to organize what they know, think, and understand while assisting them in considering what they want to learn and understand. |
| Exit slips | Students write a response to a specific prompt before they leave a lesson, providing teachers with information about what is and is not clear about student understanding. |

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| **Assessment As Learning** |
| **Method/Tool** | **Description** |
| Self-assessment | Process in which students reflect on their own performance and use defined criteria for determining the status of their learning. (ex. Journals or learning logs) |
| Using Rubrics with students | Co-construction of rubric criteria, allowing students the opportunity to deeply consider what the expectations of the learning are. |
| Using exemplars with students | Process Exemplars – to provide students with information about the thinking process that leads to understanding.Writing Continuums - Providing student with a number of different samples of writing along a continuum at different developmental levels. |
| Peer assessment and feedback | Process in which students reflect on the performance of their peers and use defined criteria for determining the status of their peers’ learning |
| Checklists | Descriptions of criteria to consider in understanding students’ learning |

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| **Assessment Of Learning** |
| **Method/Tool** | **Description** |
| Quizzes, Tests, and Examinations | Opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning at the end of a lesson, unit, course for the purpose of reporting grades. |
| Standardized Tests | Standardized summative assessments can provide useful information about student learning. Some examples in use in the NWT are: Alberta Achievement Tests, Alberta Diploma Examinations, Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT-4), etc. |
| Projects and student-led inquiry | Opportunities for students to show connections in their learning through investigation and production of reports and artifacts. (Can also be formative) |
| Demonstrations and presentations | Opportunities for students to show their learning in oral and media performances and exhibitions. |
| Rich assessment tasks | Complex tasks that encourage students to show connections that they are making among concepts they are learning. Rich assessment tasks address a range of outcomes in one task, connect naturally to what is being taught, are deeply engaging for students, and connect deeply to student inquiry pedagogical approaches. |

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| **Diagnostic Assessment** |
| **Method/Tool** | **Description** |
| Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System | An externally developed tool designed to determine student’s independent and instructional reading levels |
| Basic Reading Inventory (Jerry Johns) | An externally developed tool that helps teachers assess student sight word recognition, comprehension, reading rate, and listening levels. |
| Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL) | An externally developed tool used to assess students oral language, reading, and writing skills. |

NWT Systemic Assessment Approaches

Systemic assessments serve different purposes from those of classroom assessments. They

supply information about the effectiveness of education systems at the level of the school, district, division, and territory. The NWT is involved in three systemic assessments on an annual basis: Functional Grade Levels, Alberta Achievement Tests, and Alberta Diploma Examinations.

**Functional Grade Levels (FGLs)** are the grade level of curricular outcomes a student worked at for the majority of the school year. These are reported by teachers for all Grade 1 to 9 students in Language Arts and Mathematics. FGLs are reported in May each year.

**Alberta Achievement Tests (AATs)** are Alberta developed standardized tests administered to students in Grade 6 and Grade 9. In the NWT AATs are only written in Language Arts an Mathematics.

**Alberta Diploma Exams** are Alberta developed standardized tests that are administered for Diploma level courses in grade 12. The Diploma Exam makes up 30% of a student’s final mark in each diploma level course.

Additional Resources

* The [*Principles of Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada*](http://www.aac.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/eng_principles.pdf) was developed by a Working Group guided by a Joint Advisory Committee made up of representatives from a number of professional organizations and included representation from Provincial and Territorial Ministries and Departments of Education.
* The [Alberta Assessment Consortium](http://www.aac.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/eng_principles.pdf) (AAC) is a not-for-profit organization that advocates for support sound classroom assessment practices, and develops a broad range of classroom assessment materials to support formative and summative assessment processes.
* The [Canadian Assessment for Learning Network](http://caflnforum.ca/) (CAfLN) is a non-profit organization focused on establishing and sustaining assessment for learning in elementary, secondary and tertiary education across Canada.

# Quality Teaching and Learning

**Creating Teaching Materials**

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, along with many partners in Education including the District Education Councils, the NWT literacy council and many individuals, have created a wide variety of books and other teaching resources. A list of ECE materials is available in the resource section of this package. However, you will also find many other resources in other places and your searching will reveal that a wide variety of Northern resources are available to support the goals of your classroom.

You will find it useful to:

* Spend some time on the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre website at [www.pwnhc.ca](http://www.pwnhc.ca). The site has much to offer including edukits for loan, the NWT history timeline, archival photos, searchable data bases with information on people from every community in the NWT, photo collections and much more.
* Search the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) has developed many resources for schools including information on most of the North’s plants and animals including range maps, recycling details, bear safety, climate change and conservation planning including beautiful resources on each of the protected areas within the NWT. Some of these resources are also available in the official languages.
* Contact the NWT Literacy Council. They have incredible resources for math literacy, language literacy and much has been produced in the languages. They have a catalogue of books and videos as well as resources to help support people who want to produce their own resources.
* Contact your District Education Councils for the lists of resources produced at the local and regional level. In some areas hundreds of books have been written and many Elders have been recorded.
* Most Indigenous governments and organizations have also created resources. Check out the Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute website or the Inuvialuit time line or the Tlicho history timeline.

In our digital age, educators can also create learning products in online spaces that are shareable, linkable, and embeddable. Some ideas for creation include:

* Screen recordings of learning experiences created by students with teacher guidance, and shared in protected spaces such as video sharing sites, wikispaces, simple blogs, etc.
* Images of local landmarks, cultural events, etc. saved in online photo sharing site with some rights reserved sharing licenses (eg. creative commons licenses)
* Collaboratively develop Wikipedia articles about relevant municipal, cultural, geographic, or historical topics
* Collaboratively create a book with an online bookmaking application about a local interest or experience using shared images; sell the book online using the same application; make it available in the local school and community library

Students can also create resources in the form of book making projects. Using readily available materials, their books become a source of pride which can be placed in the library for others to sign out.

One of the best resources are the people of this land. Parents, community members and local artists may also contribute to the collection of teaching resources. People who are knowledgeable in particular areas of the curriculum may be invited to share their knowledge. You can ask to videotape their presentations for future use. When inviting Elders into the classroom, it is very important to find out about the community protocol and the appropriate remuneration before proceeding.

**Advice from NWT Teachers**

Ken Ryan’s guide to surviving the first year of teaching:

1. Before you begin the first year of teaching, decide to teach a second year.
2. If you are not organized, get organized.
3. Do not look for love in the classroom. Look for respect. Look for student achievement. The new teacher who is looking for love is vulnerable and erodes the authority needed to lead a class.
4. Love the school secretary (and maintenance staff).
5. Focus on learning.
6. Become a member of the staff. Colleagues can provide a great source of satisfaction and professional learning.
7. Pay your body its dues.
8. Come to terms with your authority.
9. Do not get married the week before school starts.
10. Find a mentor – an experienced teacher who is willing to act as a guide and a confidant through the year.

Living Advice

* Have lots of energy – it‘s hard work.
* Have a positive attitude.
* Take breaks once in a while.
* Be prepared: come with eyes wide open.
* Find out about your community.
* Secure adequate long-term accommodation.
* Once in the community, keep busy by getting involved in the community.
* Be adventurous and independent.
* Come as a learner and a teacher.
* Do more listening than talking.
* Teaching Advice
* Whatever rules you and your class decide upon, make sure you word them in the POSITIVE... ie. "Always walk when in the classroom" rather than "Don't run in the classroom" or "Use inside voices when in the classroom" rather than "No shouting or yelling in the classroom"--- Children hear the words "run", "shout" and "yell" in their head, forget the rest of the words and end up running, shouting and yelling.
* Be willing to accept the challenge; it is lots of hard work.
* Be very flexible: willing to try new things personally and professionally .
* Be diplomatic and learn to go with the flow.
* Don‘t take things personally, be thick skinned.
* Don‘t expect too much from yourself: there’s room for improvement.
* Get organized early in the year, set up your filing systems, class lists, storage routines right at the start of the year.
* Be ready to work with individual differences.
* Be prepared to adapt the curriculum to the academic needs of your students.
* Leave all your preconceived notions about cultures at home; accept people the way they are and don‘t try to change things.
* Be patient and be willing to adapt.
* Move on from negative incidents and be positive.
* Don‘t be afraid to ask questions, everyone has gone through a new experience at some time.
* Take advantage of the quality professional development opportunities.
* File samples of student work at various times during the year. It will help you judge the progress your students make over the year.
* Take the students from where they are and celebrate progress.

Travel Advice

* Make sure you bring in food supplies for the first day or so. You may arrive after the community store has closed and there may not be any place that serves food after hours.
* If you are traveling in the winter by road, bring warm clothes, a sleeping bag, candle and matches, sand, shovel, a tow rope and extra gas. Northern roads are not always well traveled.

# Resources

## Mentorship – Books and Videos

Brock, B. and Grady, M. (1997) From First-Year to First-Rate: Principals Guiding Beginning Teachers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.

Danielson, C. (1996). How to Help Beginning Teachers Succeed. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.

Evertson, C.M. & Smitey, M.W. (2000). Mentoring effects on protégés‘ classroom practice: An experimental field study. The Journal of Educational Research. Vol.93, No. 5.

Gordon, Stephen P. & Maxey, Susan (2000). How to Help Beginning Teachers Succeed 2nd Edition. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandra, VA.

Scherer, M. (1999). A Better Beginning: Supporting and Mentoring New Teachers. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Wong, H. (1998). The First Days of School. Sunnyvale, California: Harry K. Wong Publications.

Mentoring the New Teacher. (1994). Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD. (1-800-262-8803) This is a series of nine videotapes using research-based case studies to present actual new and mentor teachers dealing with the most common problems facing new teachers.

The Effective Teacher. Sunnyvale, California: HKW Productions. This is a kit containing a series of eight videotapes.

## Internet Sites

Indigenous Resources

* Aboriginal Mapping Unit <http://www.nativemaps.org/>
* Arctic Circle <http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/>
* Dene Kede Curriculum <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/resources?denekede-inuuqatigiit>
* Innuqatigiit Curriculum <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/resources?denekede-inuuqatigiit>
* First Nations in Canada <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca>
* Native Web <http://www.nativeweb.org>
* Native Tech <http://www.nativetech.org>

Assessment

* Alberta Assessment Consortium (consult board office for member login) <http://aac.ab.ca>
* Rubrics for Teachers <http://www.teacherplanet.com/rubrics-for-teachers>

Curriculum

* Education, Culture and Employment Curricula <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/k-12-education-and-curriculum>
* Teachers First [www.teachersfirst.com/matrix.cfm](http://www.teachersfirst.com/matrix.cfm)
* Western and Northern Canadian Protocol [www.wncp.ca](http://www.wncp.ca)

Mentoring

* Mentors Peer Resources (Canadian) <http://www.mentors.ca/mentor.html>
* The Mentoring Group <http://www.mentoringgroup.com/html/archive.html>

Living and Teaching in the Northwest Territories

* Community information <http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca>
* NWT Library Services <http://nwtpls.gov.nt.ca>
* Spectacular Northwest Territories <http://www.spectacularnwt.com>
* Travel Information <http://www.travel.org/nw-terri.html>
* Transportation information <http://www.dot.gov.nt.ca/>
* Northwest Territories Teachers’ Association [www.nwtta.nt.ca](http://www.nwtta.nt.ca)

Media Awareness and Digital Literacy

* MediaSmarts<https://mediasmarts-k12-nwt.wikispaces.com/>

Education Renewal in the NWT/Renouveau en éducation aux TNO

* Directions for Change (Eng) <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/education-renewal>
* Nouvelles Orientations (Fre) <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/fr/services/renouveau-en-education-aux-tno>