



## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Director, Reform and Innovation	
Position Number(s)	Community(s)	Division/Region(s)
71-13912	Yellowknife	Reform and Innovation

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Director, Reform and Innovation, reporting directly to the Deputy Minister, Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) is accountable for general oversight respecting the planning, development, implementation, review and monitoring of major education system reform initiatives undertaken by the department. The incumbent will provide leadership, strategic planning advice, recommendations and support to ECE senior managers and staff, as well as to educational partners. The incumbent will develop strategies, policy, programs and services as well as processes, recommend on directed funding and procedures that ensure consistency and equity throughout the system. The reforms led by the incumbent will have an impact across the territory as the education system is territorial in scope. The incumbent will be a resource to the entire management team within ECE and will have the authority to provide independent advice.

Most immediately, the Director is responsible for the development and implementation of ECE's plan to reform the education system in the NWT. The Director will ensure the activities within the plan are completed in a timely, effective manner and will require significant leadership attributes as many of the key stakeholders are not direct reports, nor even part of the Department itself. The Director is also responsible for leading several key areas within the plan, including system wide change management, human resource and financial resource strategies as well as recommending, negotiating and implementing change in areas identified through an ongoing analysis of education system strengths and weaknesses.

These areas may include, among others, clarification and modification of accountability and implementation strategies, student and teacher resource development strategies, student achievement measuring and improvement, delivery of quality programs for students in small

communities, and the recruitment, orientation, professional development and retention of northern teachers. Collaboration and partnering with other GNWT departments, Aboriginal governments and educational partners will be a significant goal of the Division the Director will be responsible for. These may include Alberta Education, Western and Northern Canadian (WNCP) partner jurisdictions and post-secondary institutions within and outside of the NWT, among others.

The Director is responsible for representing the NWT education system nationally on all issues related to sustainability, reform and innovation.

## **SCOPE**

Nationally and internationally education is at a cross roads. Expectations around education have changed enormously. Knowledge and learning are no longer considered to be objects that can be broken down into packets, delivered by educators to students through written documents that learners ingest and replicate in static ways, measured by standardized tools administered by discipline content experts. Instead, student learning needs to be driven by meaningful inquiry and student choice, facilitated by teachers and other community experts, and presented to authentic audiences both community-based and geographically distant. Students need to be accountable for their learning, with rigour and learning standards that equip them to gain entry to a wide range of educational and vocational opportunities both in and beyond their communities.

These changes mean that there is a rapidly growing need for education services and learning opportunities that reflect this approach to learning. At the same time Education Authorities and Aboriginal governments are struggling to deliver these learning opportunities in equitable ways across the NWT, particularly at senior grades in small communities. Unless real, lasting changes are made, the system will be unable to supply the services that people need and deserve.

New technologies have brought us access to an infinite range of teaching resources, and promises great opportunities for connecting students to other students, teachers, courses of study, sources of information and authentic audiences to share their learning with. These technologies have a particular potential and relevance to the North, where they may help reduce barriers – geographic and financial - to the best education possible. The incumbent will be required to fully exploit these opportunities, including course delivery and support.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) is tackling these issues through a comprehensive strategy aimed at using system reform and innovation to move the NWT and its people to a more sustainable, community and people focused model of programs and service for the entire education system. This involves change not only at the Departmental level, but also with other GNWT Departments and the eight (8) Education Authorities currently in operation.

Key to this transformation is new governance and accountability frameworks that clearly define not only roles and responsibilities, but ensure that services are consistently and equitably available throughout the NWT.

Early Childhood programming is a key piece of the strategy, as are the policies and supports offered to students and teachers through Inclusive Schooling.

The Director, Reform and Innovation, reporting to the Deputy Minister, will provide guidance and/or direction for this change, with a focus on developing and leading projects related to the creation and implementation of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment plan for reform and innovation. This includes program and service development and implementation in the Authorities as well as the Department.

The Director, Reform and Innovation is responsible for consultation and communication related to the plan and related system reforms, as well as ongoing consultation with Aboriginal Governments, communities, key stakeholders and the public.

Reporting directly to the Director of Reform and Innovation is one strategic planning analyst.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1. The Director is responsible for providing strategic advice on all aspects of the educational reform and system innovation initiatives undertaken by the department.**

### **Main Activities**

- In collaboration with Senior Management in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and in the eight (8) District Education Councils and Yellowknife Education Authorities, advise on the development and ongoing implementation of the school system reform plan.
- Ensure Senior Management in the Department and the Education Authorities remain focused on the goals and initiatives under the reform plan and complete plan components under agreed upon timeframes.
- Provide strategic advice to the Minister, Deputy Minister and Senior Management on strategies to ensure completion of projects in the timeframes identified.
- Provide regular updates to Cabinet, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Legislative Assembly Standing Committees, Deputy Ministers, education authorities and the general public.

- 2. Identifies best practices in other jurisdictions (nationally and internationally) on reform and innovation within education.**

### **Main Activities**

- Identify best practices both nationally and internationally, conduct research and analysis to determine if the best practice would be a valuable addition to the NWT education system.
- Determine, in consultation with experts in the field and Senior Management, how to apply best practices identified in other jurisdictions to the NWT.
- Communicate results of research and develop NWT appropriate programs.

3. **Directs the development of strategic internal and external communication plans to effectively develop, implement, communicate and deliver education reform activities.**

**Main Activities**

- Identify areas of the reform plan that require strategic communications.
- Provide direction to Communications Coordinators in the drafting of communications.
- Act as the Spokesperson for the reform plan in front of many challenging audiences including Superintendents of the Education Councils and Authorities, staff of the Education Authorities and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, and media.

4. **Conduct major reviews of key elements of the education system reform plan.**

**Main Activities**

- Oversee the implementation of all aspects of the project charter that guides the system reform initiative.
- Lead reviews with multiple stakeholders and partners.
- Provide strategic and statistical leadership on analysis of results.
- Develop recommendations for Cabinet and the Financial Management Board.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Expert ability to develop strategies and plans to meet territorial and system wide goals.
- Expert ability to represent the Department and its position accurately and professionally in a variety of consultations, meetings, presentation and other situations.
- Expert knowledge and ability to facilitate meetings.
- Expert knowledge of policy development, communication planning and strategic planning and an ability to apply this knowledge in a rapidly changing and challenging environment with a complex governance structure.
- Expert ability to analyze, interpret and evaluate a wide range of information and apply it within the unique sociopolitical environment of the NWT.
- Expert oral and written communication skills, including presentations, briefing notes, charts and graphs, reports and publications for a wide variety of audiences.
- Expert ability to motivate colleagues to achieve difficult goals.
- Expert knowledge of project management and the ability to lead large and complex projects from development to implementation.
- Expert ability to build and maintain excellent working relationships with colleagues throughout the GNWT, the education system (especially with Education Authority Superintendents) in the NWT and throughout the nation and with partners outside of government.

- Expert knowledge of and an ability to facilitate the development of comprehensive strategic plans for organizations - with an emphasis on the ability to lead system wide change in Departments and eight (8) Education Authorities.
- Expert ability to analyze, evaluate and interpret a wide range of information and apply it within the unique social, economic and political environments of the NWT.
- Seasoned ability to build and maintain excellent working relationships with Aboriginal government representatives.
- Seasoned ability to build and maintain excellent working relationships with Education partners across, and beyond, the NWT.
- Seasoned ability to lead and motivate staff in a cross cultural environment.
- Seasoned knowledge of and ability to apply generally accepted approaches to accountability planning, monitoring and reporting. This includes an ability to adapt to evolving governance structures.
- High level of organizational skills to manage projects, timetables and implementations.
- Advanced interpersonal skills to direct and coordinate complex activities.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by**

- The completion of a Master's degree in Education
- Ten years progressively more responsible experience in the development of curriculum, learning resources, professional development, project management, including:
- Five years of supervisory/management experience, and a minimum of 3 years progressive program development and quality improvement experience required
- Several years of experience in bridging traditional Aboriginal knowledge and learning practices and approaches with those of Western research
- Skill and experience in program development and project management, plus methods of improvement, theories of change, and current concepts of team-building
- Current on research and practice in the field of education change
- Requires an expert understanding of and an appreciation for the complex interplay of political, economic and social forces at work in the NWT, as well as a thorough understanding of the determinants of education success and authentic learning are essential ingredients to success in this position.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

(Working Conditions identify the *unusual and unavoidable*, externally imposed conditions under which the work must be performed and which create hardship for the incumbent.)

**Physical Demands**

Normal office environment

**Environmental Conditions**

Except when travelling, normal office environment.

### **Sensory Demands**

Normal office environment.

### **Mental Demands**

Position requires regular travel to NWT communities, including travel in small airplanes.

Position requires frequently dealing with individuals who hold strong views which may be inconsistent with GNWT and ECE overall direction. Incumbent will cope with conflict and animated discussion of issues on a frequent basis

Must manage very tight deadlines, competing priorities and complex issues that can be very stressful.

Must lead meetings and actively participate in community and regional consultations on future directions in health and social services. These events can be stressful with a great deal of emotion.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Position Security (check one)**

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust - criminal records check required