

OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

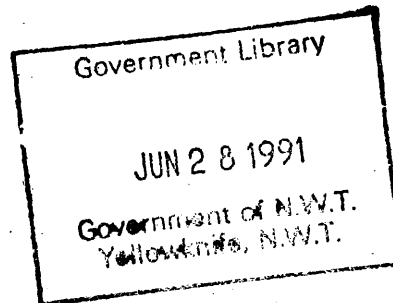
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OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



June 27, 1991

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the Northwest Territories
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

The public schools of Yellowknife are in crisis. Existing public school space is approaching 100% occupancy. Growth in enrolments is outstripping our rate of construction of schools. The new school planned for Range Lake North will not alleviate this overcrowding as it will probably be full on opening day.

In January 1991, under pressure from parents, Yellowknife MLAs, the Deputy Minister of Education, and you -- and on the strength of promises made by your Deputy Minister -- this Board changed its May 1990 development plan from building a junior/senior high school to building a grades K-8 school. Promises made on your behalf were that:

1. Adequate modern educational facilities would be provided at Sir John Franklin Territorial High School to accommodate Yellowknife Education District No. 1 grade 9 students. Portables are not acceptable.
2. The addition to Sir John Franklin Territorial High School would be ready for occupancy by Yellowknife's grade 9 students in September 1993.
3. The interim overcrowding at Sir John Franklin Territorial High School would be reduced by:
 - (a) extending high school grades in community schools effective September 1991; and
 - (b) ensuring students, except for extenuating circumstances, would attend high school in their community/regional school, effective September 1991.

To date, the following has occurred:

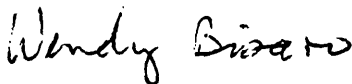
1. Two additional portables are the suggested solution for Sir John Franklin Territorial High School for the 1991-92 school year.
2. The addition to Sir John Franklin Territorial High School is on hold until a "feasibility study" is completed. The addition will not be ready for occupancy in September 1993.
3. Community/regional high school grade extensions have not been funded for 1991-92 and will not occur.
4. Effective June 19, 1991, any N.W.T. high school student may attend the school of his/her choice regardless of their resident community/region.

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 has worked for at least 18 months developing plans to meet its facilities requirements. This District has its plan. What is needed posthaste is for the Department of Education to develop a plan that will mesh with ours. Portables, added one or two at a time, are not a facilities plan.

At a Board planning meeting in early July, we will be revisiting the proposed transition from grades K-9 to grades K-8. In all likelihood this restructuring will now not take place as scheduled -- the facilities just will not be available at Sir John Franklin Territorial High School for our grade 9 students.

We must work together to find an immediate solution to the present crisis.

Yours truly,



Wendy Bisaro
Chairman

cc: Michael Ballantyne, MLA, Yellowknife North
Brian Lewis, MLA, Yellowknife Centre
✓ Tony Whitford, MLA, Yellowknife South