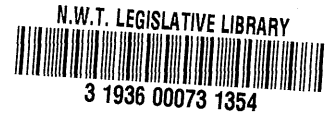
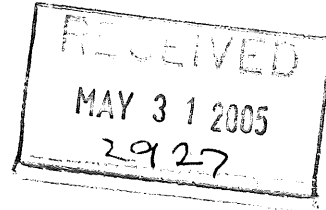


# Yellowknife Catholic Schools

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May 31, 2005



Mr. Bill Braden  
 MLA, Great Slave  
 Legislative Assembly of the  
 Northwest Territories  
 Yellowknife, NT

Dear Mr. Braden,

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern about the relocation of the Territorial Treatment Centre. Yellowknife Catholic Schools is a direct stakeholder in the Treatment Centre as we provide two staff members for the educational component of this program. We also provide an integration protocol of assisting these children back into the regular school system as do the other schools in Yellowknife.

We have had this partnership with the Territorial Treatment Centre for over a decade. Yellowknife Catholic Schools has worked hard in establishing a coordinated therapeutic and educational service system for the many families throughout the North. We have committed in-kind contributions to ensure this service provision is welcoming, child-centered and qualitative. It has taken years to develop this partnership and collaboration and we have continued because we believe that children deserve this type of coordinated, comprehensive support.

Yellowknife Catholic Schools was never consulted, notified nor apprised of this upcoming relocation. We could not adequately prepare staff that currently work there about the relocation. We feel there has been a total disregard for the human element to this situation. This impacts children, staff, families, and professional working relationships and disregards the complexity of providing services for children who are at risk.

Why would the Department of Health and Social Services, dismantle a viable and dynamic asset to families, caregivers and professionals especially when it has taken so many years to develop? With the little coordination that exists for child and youth services in the Territories, it is difficult to see how we are building upon our strengths and existing capacities if this is our approach towards social development and interagency collaboration. How effective, efficient or proactive can we become if stakeholders and government do not work together?



*Where Learning Lights the Spirit*



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While we recognize and fully acknowledge the benefits that politicians believe Hay River will experience, the issue for us is clearly about the way in which this decision was made. We are concerned that the Territorial Treatment Centre will deteriorate or narrow what it can offer as it prepares to move. What extra costs will incur for the government so the children can maintain their other services with Stanton Hospital? We need to add to the existing services throughout the Territories not shuffle them around. Our school system has seen the demand for specialized child and youth services increasing as our populations increase in diversity and complexity. Health and Social Services can no longer work without education at the table. It is time for collaboration between government departments and he constituents it represents to achieve more effective and complete child services both in Yellowknife and the North. This latest example illustrates that the government is out of touch with the realities of its people or with what kind of programming is required to serve its people. This has been a poorly thought out or planned decision.

The Territorial Treatment Centre and its programming will not be able to function, as it does presently, in Hay River. There are many other forms of programs that could and they should be considered in addition to what already exists.

We strongly urge the government to reconsider this decision, to re-examine the issues associated with it and to take steps to address the concerns of both NWT communities in a different manner.

Sincerely,

Shannon W. Gullberg  
Board Chair  
/mfh

- c     Brendan Bell, MLA Yellowknife South  
       Charles Dent, MLA Frame Lake  
       Joe Handley, MLA Weledah  
       Robert Hawkins, MLA Yellowknife Centre  
       Sandy Lee, MLA Range Lake  
       Dave Ramsay, MLA Kam Lake  
       Kern Von Hagen, Superintendent – Yellowknife Catholic Schools  
       Honorable Michael Miltenberger, Minister – Health & Social Services

