

Policy Title:**Senior Secondary Program Policy**

Policy Statement:

The Tlicho Community Services Agency believes that education is a lifelong process that requires the shared participation of all stakeholders. Our secondary schools will promote the development of Tlicho citizens who are prepared for their future educational and professional experiences. This will be accomplished by recognizing and celebrating strengths, providing programming that is responsive to their needs, including a Career Program Plan, and by encouraging students to be 'Strong Like Two People'.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines governing the: provision of senior high programming, calendar for programming decisions, requirements for IEP/K&E and other specialized programs, regulation of purchasing of teaching and learning resources, direct readers to pertinent legislation, promotion of Tlicho Language and Culture, and preparation of our youth for their future.

Procedures:**1.0 Appropriateness of Programming**

High School programming decisions (including course offerings, teaching assignments, suggested pathways, and career path counselling) shall be evidence-based per the following principles:

- 1.1 Strong leadership from administration for using a collaborative decision making model for course selections that includes students, parents, and school personnel using the students' Career and Program Plan;
 - 1.2 Student centered timetabling based on the current grade 9-12 landscape (achievement and wellness indicators):
 - 1.2.1 Schedules will prioritize core graduation requirements.
 - 1.2.2 Schedules will prioritize the academic level appropriate for the majority of students in the program.
 - 1.3 All school-based support team members will be fluent in the graduation requirements of the NWT and approved list of secondary school courses;
 - 1.4 Appropriate and innovative strategies for implementation of timetables and course offerings will be used. These may include varied course duration (extended time), delivery (traditional classroom, modular, distance education), community partners (Cadets, Northern Youth Abroad, pilot projects, Work Placements), and recognizes that the time to graduation may be in excess of three years;
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- 1.5 Relevant documentation will be used to determine the programming needs of each student. The school may, with the parent/guardian's written consent, obtain assessment of a student's educational, psychological, or medical status, to inform the student support program. Without documentation, the principal shall identify programming based upon best knowledge of the student's programming/educational needs;
 - 1.6 Principals will employ the following timetabling practices, as appropriate, to support student success:
 - 1.6.1 Offer courses over an extended period of time (above the minimum hours and/or extended over multiple semesters);
 - 1.6.2 Limiting the combination of multi-grade, multi-level courses;
 - 1.6.3 Offer more than one course concurrently (bridging) (i.e. ELA 10-2 and Lit 10);
 - 1.6.4 Offer some courses with variable credit value (i.e. Phys. Ed. 3, 4, or 5 credits);
 - 1.6.5 Implement block scheduling (i.e. CTS or LDC courses as week-long options during poorly attended periods);
 - 1.6.6 Offer modularized courses (i.e. low attendance, for "-1" academic courses);
 - 1.6.7 Schedule tutorial classes;
 - 1.6.8 Design multi-year timetables to assist in accommodating specialty courses and/or alternate courses in rotating semesters;
 - 1.6.9 Use approved distance education courses to supplement the in-school programs (for most academically advanced courses).

2.0 Placement and Course Selection

When considering a change of placement for a student which involves a change of school or program, the Principal shall ensure:

- 2.1 Discussions are held with the parents regarding the rationale for the change and which placement options are available;
- 2.2 If programming cannot be provided in the school, the student will be given access to programming while placement alternatives are being considered; and
- 2.3 If there is disagreement between the Principal and parent/guardians regarding suitability of placement, a review by Director of Education will be held to identify suitable options and assist in resolving the dispute.
- 2.4 Procedures for course selection will be school based but must include:
 - 2.4.1 Discussion with student, parent/guardian, and school-based support team members (as needed); and
 - 2.4.2 A completed Career Program Plan that includes a high school career path outlined using the current GNWT graduation requirements.

3.0 Distance Education

Distance Education courses may be offered at TCSA schools through either Alberta Distance Education Learning Center packages (ADLC), or Territorial Distance Education programs. It is most

often appropriate for accessing *advanced level* or specialized courses for students who couldn't otherwise get them. Distance courses may also be considered when:

- 3.1 A student will be physically separated from their instructor for the majority of the learning process;
- 3.2 Access to a course or program cannot be offered locally due to lack of teacher expertise, or sufficient student numbers;
- 3.3 A course does not fit into a student's timetable; and/or
- 3.4 It is part of a home-schooling program.

4.0 Calendar

TCSA schools are expected to provide secondary school planning documents to the Director of Education by the dates included below:

- 4.1 By the end of May (unless otherwise stated), each Principal shall provide the following to the Director of Education:
 - 4.1.1 Reporting dates;
 - 4.1.2 Schedules / timetables of offered courses and corresponding teaching assignments;
 - 4.1.3 Anticipated distance education programming requirements; and
 - 4.1.4 Anticipated student enrollment (kindergarten);
 - 4.1.5 Special requests for course selections (i.e. K&E); and
 - 4.1.6 Approved school calendars to be made public.
- 4.2 By the second week of school Principals will provide the following to the Director of Education:
 - 4.2.1 Class assignment and tentative class lists;
 - 4.2.2 Teacher assignments and timetables;
 - 4.2.3 Distance Education packages required; and
 - 4.2.4 Updated enrollment.

5.0 Graduation Requirements and 'Strong Like Two People' Recognition

Graduation requirements are set by the GNWT Department of Education, Culture, and Employment and must be adhered to in all instances.

- 5.1 In recognition of the journey Tlicho students take to become 'Strong Like Two People', those students who meet the requirements outlined in Appendix A will be awarded the *Tlicho Designation and Recognition Award* at the time of graduation.

6.0 Special Requests

- 6.1 Requests to offer Knowledge and Employability (K&E), bridging between grade 9 and grade 10 regular programming, second language strategy (ESL), or other specialized or modified programming must be approved in advance of offering the alternative programming. All applications must be submitted to the Director of Education, before the end of the prior school year, using the 'High School Program Planning Special Permission Request' form (see NWT School Administrator's Handbook).

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- 6.2 To support a consistent approach to the coordinating and delivery of Knowledge and Employability (K&E) courses within an inclusive learning environment, the offering of K&E courses shall consider:
- 6.2.1 These courses support high school completion for specifically identified students, who are normally working two or more years below grade level;
 - 6.2.2 K&E courses prepare students for employment opportunities in designated occupations or trade training programs, further studies, citizenship, and lifelong learning, but are NOT recognized as High School graduation level courses;
 - 6.2.3 May be used to accommodate students who transition to other courses and work toward achieving a senior high diploma;
 - 6.2.4 There should be multiple entry-exit points to accommodate the needs of individual students. As soon as the student indicates readiness to take one or more subjects in other sequences, such a transfer should be considered;
 - 6.2.5 Parents/Guardians must be consulted and give informed written permission annually for their student to be registered in K&E courses (see Appendix B); and
 - 6.2.6 Other documentation and practical applications to offering K&E courses may include, but is not limited to: Student Support Plans, Individual Education Plans, community partnerships (especially for Workplace Readiness and Work Experience placements), and/or increased parental involvement in transitional planning.

7.0 Curriculum, Student Assessment, and Instructional Resources

- 7.1 The curriculum for TCSA schools is set by the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT).
- 7.2 All senior high programming must adhere to the Student Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting (SAER) Directive, the School Administrator's Handbook, and the TCSA SAER policy (Reference #4.317).
- 7.3 Instructional resources will be purchased from authorized resource lists for each course and will be consistent with the programs of study outcomes from GNWT and the expectations of the TCSA.
- 7.4 Schools may incorporate the use of supplementary resources (those that are not found on the approved resources list for any given course) upon approval by the Director of Education.

8.0 Locally Developed Courses

- 8.1 Locally Developed Courses (LDC) may be developed by local authorities to promote and enrich students' opportunities to learn more about their local histories, beliefs, traditions, and knowledge.
 - 8.2 Locally Developed Courses must be submitted to GNWT-ECE by the TCSA board staff, using an approved template, for both original permission and renewal activation. LDC may not be offered by schools without confirmation the LDC is active, even if they appear in PowerSchool.
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- 8.3 TCSA education staff, parents/guardians, and/or community members may request the creation of a new LDC by sending in writing the request to the Director of Education, who will consider the application.
 - 8.4 The TCSA may also ask permission from other districts to use their LDC curriculum (see ECEs Senior Secondary Handbook for a listing of the territorially approved LDCs). Requesting permission to use other district's LDC is a formal process that must be completed by the Director of Education and approved by ECE, prior to offering the course in a TCSA school.

9.0 Examinations and/or Testing Days

- 9.1 Examination and testing days will:
 - 9.1.1 Immediately precede semester changeover and/or school closed days which are classified as non-instructional days;
 - 9.1.2 Not extend beyond a one-week period;
 - 9.1.3 Be advertised and communicated to families / community members; and
 - 9.1.4 All final exams and schedules will be kept on file for a period of 12 months.

10.0 Tlicho Language Programs

- 10.1 Tlicho Language programming including course offerings, teacher assignments, development of assessment tools, material and resource development, and Language Instructor program evaluation shall be based on the following principles:
 - 10.1.1 Tlicho Yati courses may be offered as 3 or 5 credit courses and require corresponding time allotment;
 - 10.1.2 As with all courses, multi-grade course combinations increase the difficulty to offer the courses with fidelity. As such, if courses must be combined Tlicho Yati 15 a and b, and Tlicho Yati 25/35 are the preferred groupings;
 - 10.1.3 Instructors are responsible for providing a rich, and vibrant Tlicho language program, in order to maintain high standards Tlicho Language Instructors should be supported by the Regional Tlicho Language and Culture Coordinators, PSTs, and Principals. While the supervisor remains the Principal and the support comes from the PST and Regional Coordinators, Principals may request support from the Regional Coordinators to assist in the Tlicho Language Instructor's evaluation (with permission from the Instructor).

11.0 High School Credits

- 11.1 Challenging High School courses – As outlined in the GNWT School Administrators Handbook
 - 11.2 Retroactive credits – As outlined in the GNWT School Administrators Handbook
 - 11.3 A principal may remove a student from a course (withdraw) prior to the end of the course based on the following principles:
 - 11.3.1 A student who has moved out of the community or district;
 - 11.3.2 A student who has been expelled under the GNWT Education Act;
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- 11.3.3 A student, along with their parent/guardian and teacher, has made an informed decision to transfer to another course, within the first four weeks of the semester;
 - 11.3.4 Exceptions to transfers after the first four weeks of the semester will only be granted by the Principal after discussion with the student and parent/guardian, changes to the Student Support Plan, Career Program Plan, and shall be not be granted as the norm. The Director of Education must approve all transfers after the first four weeks of the semester; and

12.0 Mature Students

- 12.1 Mature students (22 years of age and older) – every effort will be made to accommodate mature students in the regular high school programming and to make every effort to register mature students as “a 0.5 FTE (by) providing they are registered for 15 credits or more for the entire school year” (NWT School Handbook, (2013) p.6).
- 12.2 The TCSA has the express desire to encourage mature students (22 years and older) to return or continue their education at TCSA schools and will expect mature students to: Conduct themselves as role models, attend regularly, register for core courses to support the Career and Program Plan, and register for school prior to the start of the school semester.
- 12.3 In alignment with the responsibilities of Mature Students, the Principal may remove a mature student from the high school program if/when:
 - 12.3.1 the student has less than 20% attendance; or
 - 12.3.2 the student verbally or physically assaults or bullies another student or staff member (see the TCSA Safe and Caring Schools Policy 4.318 for full definitions and procedures).
- 12.4 The Principal will communicate the withdrawal of the mature student from the senior high program in writing, as well as make every effort to do so verbally. There must be accompanying documentation with the written notice.
- 12.5 Senior high course selection decisions will be made that prioritize core course timetabling as required by a Mature Student’s Career Program Plan and High School Graduation requirements.

13.0 High School Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

- 13.1 The TCSA shall promote practices and procedures that ensure every child feels valued, accepted, and safe. It is essential that high school programming decisions are made collaboratively and are based on the strengths of the student. As such, Principals will ensure that:
 - 13.1.1 Every effort is made to engage active parent/guardian participation in educational programming and to foster a collaborative culture of solution-oriented program planning that support the needs of each individual student;
 - 13.1.2 Individual Education Plans are developed that are responsive, regularly updated, and are approved by parents/guardians with a signature;
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- 13.1.3 Reflect a process whereby the student is working toward a school leaving certificate based on unique outcomes appropriate to their strengths and needs; and
 - 13.1.4 The student is registered in courses specifically designated with the “IEP” designation, OR that they take a combination of ‘regular credits’ and ‘IEP credits’ as appropriate (additional information is available in the GNWT School Administrator’s Handbook).
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Authorities:

GNWT Education Act; NWT Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting Directive; NWT Inclusive Schooling Directive; NWT School Administrator’s Handbook

1st Reading: April 13, 2017

2nd Reading: April 14, 2017

3rd Reading: June 2017

Date Approved:

Chairperson: _____ CEO: _____

Appendix A: NWT Graduation Requirements and 'Strong Like Two People' Recognition

In recognition of the journey Tlicho students take to become 'Strong Like Two People', those students who meet the following requirements will be awarded the *Tlicho Designation and Recognition Award* at the time of graduation:

- Tlicho Yati 15 A (LDC 1385);
- Tlicho Agreement (LDC 1290);
- Gonawoke 15 (LDC 1720);

and two of the following,

- Beading and Embroidery LDC 1822,
- Drumming LDC 1428,
- Gonawoke 25/35 LDC 2720 or 3720,
- Tlicho Yati 15B/25/35 LDC 1386 or 2385 or 3385,
- Spirituality LDC (not yet developed) or Religion 15 LDC 1460 (YCS).

Appendix B: Parental Consent Knowledge ad Employability (K&E) Occupational Courses

_____ School is offering the following program to my child.

- K & E Mathematics 10-4
- K & E Mathematics 20-4
- K & E Science 10-4
- K & E Science 20-4
- K & E Social Studies 10-4
- K & E Social Studies 20-4
- K & E English Language Arts 10-4
- K & E English Language Arts 20-4
- K & E English Language Arts 30-4

The following must be attached:

- The Student’s most recent/updated Career and Program Plan
- The Student’s most recent Student Support Plan

Please indicate whether this/these course(s)/program(s) will be offered to the student as a:

- 3-credit, 75 hours of classroom instruction program
- 5-credit, 75 hours of classroom instruction and 50 hours of related on-the-job training

It has been explained to me and I accept that these courses / programs **do not meet** the Northwest Territories Senior Secondary graduation requirements and that they are worth unspecified credits only.

I have read and understand clearly how these courses / programs are related to my child’s overall Career and Program Plan (CPP) and their Student Support Plan (SSP).

I agree with the school’s recommendation that my child participate in this / these courses / programs.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

School Principal Signature

Date

Superintendent Signature

Date