

	YTA QUESTIONS	NDP ANSWERS
1	This school year is a collective bargaining year for the YTA and the Yukon Government. Setting aside wages, there is considerable disparity between a number of fundamental provisions in the YTA collective agreement and that of the Yukon Employees Union. The result is an inequality between two groups of employees with the same employer to the detriment of educators. With that in mind, briefly outline your approach to collective bargaining and, in general terms, the mandate you will give to your negotiators to address this disparity.	A New Democratic Party government, led by Liz Hanson, will direct its contract negotiators to develop, for approval by the management board, a non-monetary mandate that is progressive, that improves the working conditions for employees represented by public service unions, and that addresses disparities between groups of employees. With respect to those provisions specifically impacting educators represented by the YTA, we are aware of issues like maternity/paternity/adoptive leave; discipline and the grievance procedure, personal leave and a whole range of job posting, transfer and recruitment articles where there are disparities between groups of employees specifically the YTA and the YEU. There is no reason for these differences and employees should not have to chose to withdraw their services in order to have the same contract language as another group of employees
2	Health and Safety issues including assault and violence against educators as well as environmental concerns in the schools are major issues for the YTA. What approach will your party in government take to addressing these issues?	New Democrats are aware of the increasing incidence of assault and violence against educators in our schools. Assault and violence against any person is unacceptable. We understand the YTA has recently undertaken a survey amongst its members on this issue. Following an election, I would ask a new Minister of Education to meet with the YTA to address the results of your survey and jointly develop an action plan to reduce and eliminate the incidents of assault and violence. We will ensure that the Department of Education is implementing the new language in your collective agreement dealing with this issue. From Old Crow to Watson Lake, Teslin to Dawson and too many schools in Whitehorse, there are environmental issues ranging from mold to air quality, and unsafe structures to cold temperatures. This is unacceptable for our children as well as the educators and to their employees in the schools. Again, as a priority, we will direct the departments responsible for care and maintenance of these buildings to fix the environmental conditions that are unsafe and unacceptable for our children and the adults responsible for their care. No child should be in an unsafe building, no one should work in an environment that is unsafe and/or unhealthy.
3	Class Composition is an on-going concern for all educators in all our schools. To date there has been little action on the part of successive governments to address these concerns. What is your party's approach to addressing this issue?	We will address this issue by immediately sitting down with educators - teachers, educational assistants and administrators - to develop concrete steps to improve teaching and learning conditions in classrooms. We can build on the work that has already been done and is underway. We understand the issue is complex and that no one solution will fit all classrooms, schools and communities. In some cases more resources will be required, in others, different organization and class assignments. All will require improved assessment processes and monitoring. Multiple split grades, especially in rural schools, make differentiated teaching a complex proposition. We will also need to involve parents, school councils and communities in addressing class composition issues. Educators shouldn't have to negotiate better learning conditions for their students; it's a societal responsibility.
4	What steps will your government take to address grade achievement and graduation rates for all children in our schools?	Yukon New Democrats have made a commitment, in our platform for this election, to address these issues: Liz Hanson's Yukon New Democrats have a positive alternative. We will: <i>improve classroom education and outcomes by implementing the recommendations of the Auditor General to: set specific targets for graduation rates and grade achievement levels for all students and closing the gap for First Nations Students.</i> Working with educators we will first ensure that we have a database that gives us an accurate picture of the current situation. And then, working together with parents and school councils, we will develop a five-year plan with targets for all three elements of this commitment. Too many of our children are being "passed on" without achieving basic grade level material requirements, which no doubt is linked to low graduation rates. We are aware that attendance is a critical component to success in school. We need to work with students, their parents, school councils and communities to remove any barriers to regular attendance. Superintendents will be asked to spend more time in schools and classrooms to provide departmental support to educators. We have also committed in our platform to: <i>make special programs such as Music, Arts and Drama (MAD) at Wood Street, Outdoor Pursuits & Experiential Sciences (OPES), Plain Air et Sciences Expérientielles (PASE), Achievement Challenge Environment Service (ACES), Experiential Sciences (ES), and SASE more accessible and more broadly available, particularly to students from communities outside of Whitehorse.</i> Greater availability of these programs as well as those such as the Independent Learning Centres should support our commitment. Wilson Reading and Reading Recovery programs have been successful in helping many struggling and at-risk students. An NDP government would maintain and enhance these programs.
5	The availability and quality of Staff Housing in many rural communities is a major concern for educators and the YTA. What steps will your party in government take to address this issue?	Yukon New Democrats have made a commitment to address staff housing issues as part of our party platform: <i>Staff Housing: Staff housing for government service providers is in short supply and/or of poor quality in too many of Yukon's communities. A Liz Hanson New Democratic government will: direct Yukon Housing to meet with First Nations and communities, unions and managers to develop a strategic plan to address this issue.</i> We are concerned because of the lack of good housing adversely impacts recruitment and retention and then quality of life for educators in small rural communities. Consequently, this negatively impacts student, their families and communities. We have made housing availability a major priority of our campaign; staff housing will be part of that initiative in an NDP government.
6	Lack of decent, affordable housing and, for some, poverty are major issues for families and their children in the Yukon. What initiatives is your party proposing to address these issues?	New Democrats address both issues as major elements of our platform. We have attached the relevant sections of the platform as they are lengthy but a summary follows: <i>Housing: Affordable and Available. Today, too many Yukoners are grappling with major housing problems--from having difficulty paying the rent or making the next mortgage payment or being homeless. Liz Hanson and the Yukon New Democrats pledge to work with municipalities and First Nations, housing developers and financial institutions to find housing solutions for all Yukoners. We will: direct Yukon Housing (YHC) to enhance Home Ownership programs with low down payments and low interest loans; direct YHC to increase the size of its mortgage portfolio in order to increase the numbers of people who may be eligible for its programs; and increase the supply of building lots by releasing more land for housing and encouraging the development of privately owned land and derelict lots. Poverty: Poverty is consistently linked to poor health, lower literacy, poor school performance for children, more crime, greater public health care costs, increased policing costs, last productivity, and foregone economic activity. Poverty reduction is much less costly than allowing poverty to continue and pay for the consequences. A New Democrat government will: provide individuals and families in need with social assistance at rates that reflect real costs in all areas, not just food rates, and specifically ensure the housing allocation allows clients to live in safe modest accommodations; and support programs for food security like the Food Bank and local growers contributing to the Food Bank.</i> We would also like to acknowledge the Yukon Food for Learning Association, which works to ensure that every child in the Yukon attends school well nourished and ready to learn. Many educators in schools across the territory contribute food and time to make this and similar programs successful.
7	Under the Education Labour Relations Act, substitute teachers are denied the right to be represented by a union. This is contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Several decades ago government rectified this fundamental injustice for the rest of government by recognizing auxiliary employees and giving them the right to join a union. Are you prepared to extend the same recognition and rights for substitute teachers within the first half of your mandate?	Yes. The Yukon Public Service Commission is aware of the issue following the Supreme Court decision in favour of healthcare workers in British Columbia. We will direct the Commission to make the necessary changes, including draft legislation if required, within the first half of our mandate.
8	For the past several years the government's Employment Engagement Survey has consistently shown that educators have the highest level of commitment to public service and yet, paradoxically, they have a very negative view of the leadership and human resource practices in the Department of Education. What steps are you prepared to take to address this issue?	First, we commend members of the Yukon Teachers' Association for their commitment to public service. But the negative views of the leadership and human resource practices in the Department of Education is an unacceptable situation which must in the end have a negative impact on students - the children in your care. We will direct the department of Education and the Public Service Commission to develop a strategy to address the issues behind this result, which are no doubt impacted by the situations described in the forgoing and following question.
9	If you form government are you prepared to ensure that educators have a recruitment appeal process similar to that afforded to all other Government of Yukon employees?	Yes
	YTA QUESTIONS	LIBERAL PARTY ANSWERS
1	This school year is a collective bargaining year for the YTA and the Yukon Government. Setting aside wages, there is considerable disparity between a number of fundamental provisions in the YTA collective agreement and that of the Yukon Employees Union. The result is an inequality between two groups of employees with the same employer to the detriment of educators. With that in mind, briefly outline your approach to collective bargaining and, in general terms, the mandate you will give to your negotiators to address this disparity.	The YTA and the Yukon Government Employees Union have and continue to negotiate independently and individually to set their priorities. A Yukon Liberal Government would not implement a "master agreement" unilaterally with its employees as we believe that these separate bargaining units have significant differences in priorities in areas like hours of work, training and rates of pay. A Liberal Government would direct the negotiators to address all issues brought forward by the individual bargaining units in a thoughtful, respectful and diligent manner. We would also work with the ITA to address the issue of the overuse of non-permanent staff where full time positions are available. In recognition of one of the unique circumstances faced by teachers, we are proposing a tax credit of up to \$500 per year to reimburse teachers purchases of teaching supplies and learning materials.
2	Health and Safety issues including assault and violence against educators as well as environmental concerns in the schools are major issues for the YTA. What approach will your party in government take to addressing these issues?	Yukon Liberal Leader Arthur Mitchell, past alternate chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Board, is a strong believer in ensuring safe workplaces. Yukon Liberals continue to support the development of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which deals with acts of violence in the workplace. The Liberals believe that more resources are needed to address students with special needs and to address violent and disruptive behavior in schools to ensure the safety and security of the students and staff. Environmental concerns also affect a number of our schools and we are proposing that all tests regarding mould in public buildings be made public.
3	Class Composition is an on-going concern for all educators in all our schools. To date there has been little action on the part of successive governments to address these concerns. What is your party's approach to addressing this issue?	Five of our candidates are educators and understand what it's like on the front lines in the classroom and the challenges that teachers face. Taking into account safety and individual learning needs, a Yukon Liberal government would work with the YTA to look at the appropriate method of determining the resources needed by individual students and schools when determining class composition. Our platform proposes such measures as allocating additional staff to Yukon schools based on student needs and will work with the YTA to comprehensively address classroom composition.
4	What steps will your government take to address grade achievement and graduation rates for all children in our schools?	The Yukon Liberal Party believes that providing the appropriate resources in the hands of the teachers at the individual student level is the best method of increasing graduation rates. Our platform also proposes a number of measures to address this important issue including: <i>increasing the travel subsidy for secondary school students living in communities so they can take part in more educational events; Working with First Nations, teachers and schools to complete the Education Act Review; Working with all Yukon First Nations and key stakeholders to implement land-based experiential learning to all education modules; Supporting learning disability assessment in schools; Continuing to fund the Independent Learning Centre; Promoting and supporting healthy eating programs for schools through the Educational Innovation Fund and Yukon Health Promotion Fund, so that students are ready to learn; Implementing the educational recommendations of the January 2009 report of the Auditor General of Canada; Integrating material pertaining to the history and languages of the Yukon First Nations.</i>
5	The availability and quality of Staff Housing in many rural communities is a major concern for educators and the YTA. What steps will your party in government take to address this issue?	The Liberal Yukon Party recognizes the lack of availability and the poor quality of Staff Housing is an issue and that this situation is detrimental to schools in attracting and retaining teachers. We would work with Yukon Housing to ensure that residences are suitable and available in rural communities.
6	Lack of decent, affordable housing and, for some, poverty are major issues for families and their children in the Yukon. What initiatives is your party proposing to address these issues?	The Yukon Liberal Party believes that the environment children grow-up in is important to their development and that poverty and the lack of affordable housing can have a detrimental effect on their ability to learn. Promoting and supporting healthy eating programs for schools through the Educational Innovation Fund and the Yukon Health Promotion fund is part of our platform. Addressing the housing crisis is key to ensuring our families and children live in secure environments. The lack of affordable housing affects all income levels and fixing this problem is important to recruiting and retaining educators in the Yukon. We are the only Party offering both short-term and long term strategies, including: <i>Doubling the Yukon Home Owner's Grant to \$900 per year (\$1000 for seniors). Providing a maximum \$600 refundable tax credit per Yukon rental unit; Ensuring that an adequate supply of residential lots is available to meet demand; Working with industry and establishing programs to encourage housing developers to provide modest homes for middle income families; Selling new land at cost to facilitate affordable housing for Yukoners; Modernizing the Landlord and Tenant Act; Improving suites and standards by allowing landlords to apply to Yukon Housing Corporation for rental renovation grants, and providing funding to landlords to ensure all buildings are up to standard; Making it a priority to work with all Yukoners to improve access to land; Ensuring that affordable housing money from the federal government is spent fairly and effectively and actually creates affordable housing; Stimulating the economy by sufficiently funding the Yukon Housing Corporation's lending programs for: home ownership, owner-build, green mortgage, mobile home purchase assistance, mobile home relocation, R-2000 and home completion.</i>
7	Under the Education Labour Relations Act, substitute teachers are denied the right to be represented by a union. This is contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Several decades ago government rectified this fundamental injustice for the rest of government by recognizing auxiliary employees and giving them the right to join a union. Are you prepared to extend the same recognition and rights for substitute teachers within the first half of your mandate?	Yes, we would. Yukon workers are governed under the Canadian Labour code and as such have the ability to apply to become members of professional associations. Should either the employees or the YTA make such an application for substitute teachers, we would make the necessary legislative changes.
8	For the past several years the government's Employment Engagement Survey has consistently shown that educators have the highest level of commitment to public service and yet, paradoxically, they have a very negative view of the leadership and human resource practices in the Department of Education. What steps are you prepared to take to address this issue?	The Yukon Liberal Party values the input of teachers and believes that employee contributions are important to properly understanding and addressing the issues affecting our education system. The Employment Engagement Survey is one of the measures of overall effectiveness of departmental management. While we are concerned with the results of this poll that were released, we have not yet had the opportunity for full analysis of the data. Liberals believe that employee engagement and input is very important and should be considered in determining the overall direction of the Department.
9	If you form government are you prepared to ensure that educators have a recruitment appeal process similar to that afforded to all other Government of Yukon employees?	Yes, Yukon Liberal Party believes that hiring, promotional and professional decisions should be transparent and open to appeal.
	YTA QUESTIONS	YUKON GREEN PARTY ANSWERS
		Thank you very much for your correspondence of September 15th, 2011. The Yukon Green Party (YGP) Council, Executive and membership are very appreciative of your interest in our policies, goals and future plans. We are also thankful for the respect you have displayed by including us in your correspondence. Many individuals, groups and industries are anxious to hear whether or not a particular Party will support them, and while we would love to say "Yes! We emphatically support you and/or your organization", the Yukon Green Party can only support policies and government initiatives that complement our six core values. Social Justice, Non-Violence, Respect for Diversity, Ecological Wisdom, Sustainability and Participatory Democracy. These core values form the basis of all our policies, therefore; in true participatory style, we would prefer an opportunity to meet and discuss with you how we can work together to achieve your goals. Please understand that with only two candidates running in this election, the YGP will not form government, but may well have a significant influence on the party or parties in power. Our elected MLA's can support your goals and we would love to do so once an understanding is reached as to how best to do that. If no Greens are elected on October 11th, we would still welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can work collectively to further one another's related ambitions in a positive and transparent manner. The YGP welcomes members of the public to our meetings regularly and we would like to invite you to attend our meetings whether in an election period or not, so that you may learn more about our outlook on the issues that you have presented us with.
	YTA QUESTIONS	YUKON PARTY ANSWERS
1	This school year is a collective bargaining year for the YTA and the Yukon Government. Setting aside wages, there is considerable disparity between a number of fundamental provisions in the YTA collective agreement and that of the Yukon Employees Union. The result is an inequality between two groups of employees with the same employer to the detriment of educators. With that in mind, briefly outline your approach to collective bargaining and, in general terms, the mandate you will give to your negotiators to address this disparity.	In its 2006 Yukon Party Platform, the Yukon Party made a commitment to: "respect and adhere to the collective bargaining process between the Yukon government and the unions representing its employees, and conduct all negotiations in good faith." The previous Yukon Party government lived up to this commitment and was successful in reaching a new 3-year Collective Agreement from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012 with the Yukon Employees' Union. As you are aware, the Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the YTA was the subject of an arbitration award dated June 28, 2010 issued by the arbitration board.
2	Health and Safety issues including assault and violence against educators as well as environmental concerns in the schools are major issues for the YTA. What approach will your party in government take to addressing these issues?	The Public Schools Branch staff members have been involved in an intensive training program with community partners, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Yukon Department of Health and Social Services, the Yukon Department of Justice and will be updating their knowledge and skills. The training has helped our professionals to recognize the many indicators and escalating signs of violence, assess them, and put in place interventions to support and reduce the level of risk. The Public Schools branch has developed a plan to respond to situations in which students may be demonstrating behaviors that pose a risk to themselves or others.
3	Class Composition is an on-going concern for all educators in all our schools. To date there has been little action on the part of successive governments to address these concerns. What is your party's approach to addressing this issue?	Yukon enjoys the lowest pupil-teacher ratio of any Canadian educational jurisdiction. On average, there is one teacher for approximately every 10.6 students.
4	What steps will your government take to address grade achievement and graduation rates for all children in our schools?	As of June 2010, there were 458 Yukoners born between January 2, 1992 and January 1, 1993 who were actively registered with the Yukon Health Care system. Using this figure, there were 458 Yukoners of graduation age compared to 317 who actually graduated which provides for a graduation rate of 69.2%. Currently, there is no consistent method used with Canada among provinces and the three territories to measure graduation rates. More and more jurisdictions, however, are moving towards using the Six-Year Cohort method and the Yukon is moving in that same direction.
5	The availability and quality of Staff Housing in many rural communities is a major concern for educators and the YTA. What steps will your party in government take to address this issue?	The need for new accommodations for teachers in Pelly Crossing has been addressed. Yukon Housing Corporation has increased the number of staff residences in the community by three, with the installation of a unit from Millenium Homes and the conversion of an existing duplex into a four-plex. We realize the availability of housing is an important factor in recruiting and retaining employees who offer essential services in the communities and are constantly working to meet that need.
6	Lack of decent, affordable housing and, for some, poverty are major issues for families and their children in the Yukon. What initiatives is your party proposing to address these issues?	The first part of the Yukon Party housing initiative is to deal with our most vulnerable citizens, the homeless. We are working with The Salvation Army to expand or replace their existing homeless shelter in Whitehorse. We are working with another NGO to develop a youth shelter in Whitehorse. Along with these facilities, we will be investing over \$20 million to ensure further housing options are available to those most in need including seniors and persons with disabilities. These investments include: <i>the construction of a new \$2 million seniors complex in Mayo; the replacement of McDonald's Lodge in Dawson City with a new facility to be attached to the new Dawson City Hospital; \$4.5 million for the second stage housing for Kaushes's Place in Whitehorse; \$2 million for Options for Independent Living to expand its current complex for adults with FASD from 6 units to 24 units; \$2.57 million for a new seniors Abbeyfield complex in Whitehorse; \$2.2 million for three Takhini duplexes to construct six units; \$2.2 million for double wide trailer replacements, four units in Carmacks and four units in Ross River; making land available to Yukon College to construct new student residences; proposing to sell a four-hectare parcel of land located between Range Road and Mountainview Drive in the Takhini area to a private developer or developers on special terms and conditions with the caveat that the property will be used for the construction of affordable rental units; and working with Kwanlin Dun First Nation to explore development opportunities on Kwanlin Dun lands to increase residential land and housing available to the public providing economic benefits to KDFN.</i> These strategic investments will build on the over \$100 million successive Yukon Party governments have already invested in affordable housing for seniors and Yukoners in need over the past nine years.
7	Under the Education Labour Relations Act, substitute teachers are denied the right to be represented by a union. This is contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Several decades ago government rectified this fundamental injustice for the rest of government by recognizing auxiliary employees and giving them the right to join a union. Are you prepared to extend the same recognition and rights for substitute teachers within the first half of your mandate?	No. This would be a matter for the collective bargaining process.
8	For the past several years the government's Employment Engagement Survey has consistently shown that educators have the highest level of commitment to public service and yet, paradoxically, they have a very negative view of the leadership and human resource practices in the Department of Education. What steps are you prepared to take to address this issue?	Education's employee engagement score was 62% in 2011 with 24% participation. The engagement surveys are a tool that the Department of Education and the Public Service Commission can utilize to improve the department's scores. A re-elected Yukon Party government respects the territory's 4,700 professional public service and the work they do. We will be responsible in the concept of Ministerial responsibility and a team approach to good governance. Yukon Party Ministers and MLA's in a re-elected Yukon Party government will be welcome for setting the policy direction of the government in accordance with the Yukon Party platform. We will then be asking the Yukon's professional public service to implement that policy direction and program delivery in keeping with our mandate.
9	If you form government are you prepared to ensure that educators have a recruitment appeal process similar to that afforded to all other Government of Yukon employees?	The Yukon Department of Education is always interested in good teachers. Yukon is an attractive jurisdiction to work in with its current robust economy, unparalleled natural beauty, and modern, well-kept schools with classrooms that have multi-site, high speed internet access. Further, we encourage Yukon students to become teachers and teach in our schools, through the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program. The Department of Education offers a Cooperating Teachers' Incentive Package for experienced teachers who volunteer to supervise a classroom practicum for a student enrolled in YNTEP.
	YTA QUESTIONS	YUKON FIRST NATIONS PARTY
		Were given an extension to the September 23 deadline, but to date, have not responded.

