

Tth'eycha hugë' ay
I am still learning

Education Oversight Committee

Year in Review 2024–25



Drin hqzq,

The Education Oversight Committee is pleased to share our successes and ongoing work over the past year. Education is fundamental for all those living on Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory. The way we approach education has powerful potential to fully integrate the current system with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in culture, history and language at the core.

Our vision is a co-governed and integrated education system on Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory. We are guided by sections 17.7–17.10 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement and the shared commitments of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon as outlined in the 17.7 Agreement of 2013.

This booklet highlights the shared efforts between the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Education Department and the Government of Yukon Department of Education to work towards tangible changes, including increased on-the-ground staff at Robert Service School, training opportunities for Tr'inke Zho staff, and expanded adult education supports. Two key positions that support the work of co-governance were also established this past year: an Education Oversight Committee Administrator and a Cultural Education Advisor, both funded by Yukon Government.

The actions we have taken together in the last year reflect a joint commitment to weaving Dënezhu knowledge systems together with the colonial education structures we have inherited, to support student success. We look forward to seeing how this next year propels us forward on this important journey.

Mähsj' cho.

The Education Oversight Committee



Education Oversight Committee gha tr'édähok'-áy I work for the Education Oversight Committee



EOC members meeting in Dawson, 2024

For Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

Jody Beaumont, Education Director

Jody provides strategic leadership for education policies and programs in Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Traditional Territory. She leads government-to-government work with the Government of Yukon to build education co-governance that is authentic and reflects Dënezhu ways of knowing, doing, and being. Jody.Beaumont@trondek.ca

Ashley Bower-Bramadat, Education Manager

Ashley works closely with the Robert Service School Principal and Vice Principal to shape a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment for all learners and jëje-in. This includes co-managing daily school operations and staffing, and ensuring TH ways of knowing and doing are a daily practice within the school. She manages and guides the daily activities of the 13 TH Education staff who work directly with RSS learners. Ashley. Bower-Bramadat@trondek.ca

Mark Nelson, Fiscal Implementation Representative

Mark works to ensure that TH has the resources it needs to implement its jurisdiction in the area of education under the Self-Government Agreement, and helps to align efforts with other Yukon First Nation governments.

For Government of Yukon

Suzan Davy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Learning and First Nations Initiatives

Suzan provides strategic leadership for student learning and Yukon First Nations education priorities, guiding the development of policies, programs, and partnerships. She works closely with Yukon First Nations to strengthen relationships, support shared governance, and advance initiatives that reflect local values and priorities. Suzan.Davy@yukon.ca

Paula Banks, Director, First Nations Initiatives

Paula leads government-to-government work with Yukon First Nations, advancing shared priorities and supporting collaborative decision-making. She helps ensure that the delivery of education on TH Traditional Territory is grounded in shared governance and reflects Dënezhu ways of knowing, doing, and being. Paula.Banks@yukon.ca

Superintendent Area 2:

The Superintendent provides leadership and guidance to staff, students, and families. They work in close partnership with TH to ensure education reflects community priorities and supports student success in meaningful ways.

- Linda Lamers (April–December 2024)
- Trevor Ratcliff (December 2024–March 2025)
- Jan Olson (April 2025–present)

EOC Support

Meg Walker, Education Oversight Committee Administrator

Meg provides support to the EOC, increasing capacity to implement the committee's work plans, track actions, share successes and strengthen relationships foundational to co-governance Meg.Walker@trondek.ca

Kim Ho, Senior Partnerships Advisor

Kim builds and maintains strong working relationships between Yukon Education, Yukon First Nations governments, and schools. She supports collaborative initiatives that honour TH values, ensuring education delivery aligns with local priorities and community needs. Kim.Ho@yukon.ca

Tara Rudnickas, Cultural Education Advisor

Tara works closely with Robert Service School educators to integrate Dënezhu ways of knowing, doing and being into their teaching practice and learning environment. Tara.Rudnickas@trondek.ca

The Fabric of Co-governance

Dënezhu Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in identity as Dënezhu *"is born out of our land and shaped by our relations with our home, our animal relatives, and each other. The integrity of our culture and of our land depend upon this relationship. They are intertwined. Our existence as Dënezhu is our inherent right. We are Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. The people of this river. We are Dënezhu. The people of this land."*

- Excerpt from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Declaration of Identity



**Yäch'är ih'yäk.
I am fishing.**

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in puts on several culture camps each year. Students in Grades 10-12 can receive credits for attending these.

*“Keep your land clean, keep your animal, that’s your friend.
You look after them, they look after you. You look after your water,
land, and trees, you look after it, respect it.
That’s our spirituality.”*
– Percy Henry



**Jëje-in nëlay
gay hêt’ä.**

**People are
cutting dry
meat.**

We were proud to co-host the Rural Experiential Model (REM) this year. Students from four rural Yukon communities—Dawson, Faro, Mayo and Carmacks—took part in the five-day program. The REM gives high school students a chance to spend time together, share their experiences, and immerse themselves in hands-on learning through a diverse range of engaging sessions.



The Fabric of Co-governance

Hän hënjìk / Hän language

“My worldview is I think our language is really important. Some people, even for some of our own people, it’s ‘What’s the sense in teaching it. We’re never going to use it—we’re never going to learn to be fluent.’ But I think—I have more hope than that. But right now our young people are so interested, you know—so interested in our way, our cultural way, our tradition, our identity. It’s seeping into their lives now. And the proudness you see in them—it’s amazing.

It’s amazing.”

– Angie Joseph-Rear, 2017

Successful Hän language events:

First Nations language teachers across the Yukon asked for more opportunities to learn from and with one another. The Yukon government’s First Nations Language Coordinator, Kahina Chouiter, supported the following activities:

- Four professional development days for all language teachers working in schools overseen by Yukon Education. This gave teachers a chance to share their experiences and talk about their professional development needs and preferences. Three sessions were held in person and one was online.
- A two-day visit to Robert Service School, where Kahina met with the Hän language teachers, toured the school and language classroom, and discussed their teaching practices.

Ongoing efforts to use more Hän language at Robert Service School:

- Hän language teacher Allison Anderson shared useful Hän phrases at weekly all-staff meetings.
- We added Hän signage in the foyer and other areas of the school.

Hän Language mini-lesson	
Nèzhùdintsay?	Are you hungry?
Wèkā'tr'ètäht'ë.	We are going to cook it up.
Ch'ëgèr, lugqshq, lëgit.	Eggs, bacon, tea.
Lèt'e nìthan.	I want bannock.
Lèt'e nèdla! Nä'tr'ëtä'al.	Lots of bannock! We are going to eat.

Current and potential Hän Immersion projects

The Education Oversight Committee contracted IRP Consulting to compile a snapshot of the current state of Hän language learning. The vision for Hän language revitalization is strong, but the path forward requires sustained investment, strategic action, and a multi-generational, community-driven approach. The IRP report will be released for Fall 2025. In the meantime, discussions with educators, program staff, Elders, and TH Citizens continue to reveal consistent themes about what’s working, what’s needed, and where gaps persist.

Many encouraging efforts are underway including:

- A self-paced Moodle course available to TH Citizens, with growing enrollment.
- Four TH Citizens are employed in the full-time, multi-year program Youth Today, Language Leaders Tomorrow that started in Fall 2024 through the Yukon Native Language Centre. Shyanne Beatty, a TH Citizen from Eagle, Alaska, coordinates the cohort.
- Ongoing heritage work, including story collection, recordings, and resource development.
- As of June 2025, a Citizen and language instructor is holding virtual community conversation circles three times a week.
- Recruitment is under way for a Language and Culture Educator for Dawson’s Early Learning Programs.

Despite these efforts, programming and teachers are stretched thin. The focus now is to empower adults to learn, reclaim, and speak their language, strengthening the language across community life.

Early Learning and Child Care



The Department of Education's Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) branch works directly with Tr'inke Zho to nurture the community's youngest Citizens.

In 2024–25, a transfer payment agreement of \$515,000 supported operating costs and educator wages through the Universal Child Care funding program. Additional support funded a Supported Child Care Educator for a child who needed specific extra supports.

In collaboration with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, reporting requirements for this funding were streamlined to reflect the government-to-government relationship and improve efficiency.

The Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund (YG) helped increase physical accessibility at Tr'inke Zho by upgrading ramps and enlarging bathrooms to meet accessibility requirements. Additional funding will be provided in 2025–26 to continue this work.

Early learning program specialists facilitated a workshop at Tr'inke Zho on June 6 and 7, focusing on the roles and responsibilities of Early Childhood Educators, and on supporting the well-being, learning, and development of school-aged children by creating safe and supportive learning environments.

On September 9 and 10, staff from Tr'inke Zho attended the Early Learning and Child Care Conference: A Gathering for Yukon Early Childhood Educators. Their participation was made possible through dedicated travel funding from Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC).

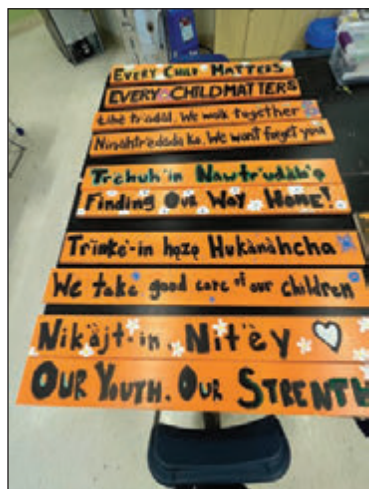
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and ELCC continue to collaborate on exploring how professional learning and development can grow in the future. For example, they are mapping a pathway for meeting regulatory requirements for Early Childhood Educator Level 1 certification in ways that are grounded in Dënezhu ways of knowing, being, and doing. To help meet certification requirements, two early childhood educators and TH Citizens received \$1,400 in bursaries from ELCC to pursue post-secondary studies in early learning.

Kindergarten to Grade 12

Ñdè ts'ä ihàl? Where are you walking to?

Hätr'unohtän zho ts'ä ihshàl.

I am walking to the school.



Robert Service School Operations

- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Yukon Government began a collaborative evaluation process for Robert Service School staff in the 2022–23 school year. As part of this process, the TH Education Manager meets individually with teachers to check in and provide support.
- TH continues to be actively involved in all stages of staff recruitment at RSS—from creating job postings to sitting on interview panels.
- This year, a new Wellness Worker joined the Education team at the school. TH now provides 13 staff at RSS.
- Through YG's Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE) initiative, funding has been secured for a new position to support mental health at RSS. This four-year agreement began in the 2023/24 school year and continues through 2027/28.
- One of this year's biggest successes at Robert Service School was the strong partnership between Helen McCullough, Angela Edmunds, and Ashley Bower-Bramadat. Their teamwork provided consistent support for jëje-in and students, ensured smoother day-to-day operations, and fostered an inclusive, culturally grounded learning environment.
- The RSS admin team found more flexible and creative ways to support students this year by improving access to technology, strengthening systems, and creating opportunities for all staff to co-teach and integrate Dënezhu ways of knowing, doing, and being into the classroom.

Adult Education



Funding from YG enabled TH to organize a Career Fair, which hadn't happened since 2013. It increased awareness of work or education pathways for high school students and other adult learners, and was an example of skillful co-governance.

The TH Adult Learning Support Worker position was created and filled in August 2024 by Katie English. Katie helped facilitate Citizen-led programming, including twice-weekly Elders on Campus gatherings.



Katie was also fundamental in getting YukonU's "Land-Based Learning: English 030/050" course up and running. She worked collaboratively with learners and the community to create connections between the course outline, and land-based approaches to learning.

The Employment Pathways Coordinator position, filled by Becky Alderson in April 2024, plays a key role in supporting employment efforts by:

- Coordinating mentorship placements, including meeting with mentees to match them with opportunities and supporting mentors through site visits and paperwork.
- Leading weekly training sessions for summer students.
- Providing direct, personalized support for Citizens at all stages of their job search—from resumes and mock interviews to on-the-job check-ins.



Jit ch'èdàt dìnch'e.
This is an Elder.

Jit shèja dìnch'e.
This is my friend.





ខ្ញុំបង្គំបង្គំ
Nekhwetr'enoh-ay
ស្ថាប័ន វិទ្យាស្ថាន វិទ្យាស្ថាន

Bringing Commitments to Life

Robert Service School Infrastructure

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has worked to increase its cultural presence at Robert Service School, helping make the school more inclusive and welcoming for all. The front entrance has been updated to visually reflect TH culture and the Hän language.

An early co-governing commitment was to create a TH Cultural Education Centre. Over time, this idea evolved into a broader vision: seeing the entire school as a space for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in ways of knowing, being, and doing. The project is now called Imagine Education Spaces.

The renewed focus reflects a key principle of reconciliation—that Dënezhu ways should be embedded in the heart of education, not placed in a separate room or program.

Imagine Education Spaces community outreach

From July to December 2024, the Education Oversight Committee contracted Justine Hobbs to lead community outreach for the Imagine Education Spaces project. Phase One focused on gathering ideas from educators, students, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens and the broader Dawson community about how Robert Service School can continue to reflect TH values in its spaces and daily learning.

The goal was to reinvigorate conversations about how co-governance can be meaningfully expressed through the school's design, layout, function, and overall look and feel.

More than 200 people took part. Feedback was collected in a variety of ways:

- One-on-one and small-group meetings, including with jëje-in from Tr'ínke Zho, K'äjít-in Zho, and Ní'ehlyat Nidähjì'
- Outreach tables at Moosehide Gathering and the Career Fair
- A public survey
- A community dinner and discussion at Älä́t Nēhējēl
- Group brainstorming with the Intermediate and High School Student Councils, and youth at K'äjít-in Zho
- Conversations with the Elders Council

Mentorship success profile: Paul Butterworth



Where did you study?

I attended F.H. Collins Secondary School and Yukon University; St. Michael's High School and Lethbridge Community College in Alberta; Stockholm University School of Business in Sweden; and Simon Fraser University through its partnership with Yukon Native Language Centre.

What led you back to school?

In 2019, I was reaching the end of my first career. Constant travel, a growing sense of disconnection, and the physical and environmental demands of the work were taking a toll on me. So, I hung up my welding helmet—without knowing for certain what my next move would be. I visited Yukon College to see if anything might pique my interest. At that very time, the college was transitioning into a university and had just begun offering a bachelor's degree in business administration.

Who inspires your leadership?

I've consistently been inspired by role models who demonstrate qualities I deeply admire — politeness, patience, transparency, and openness. These individuals prioritize knowledge sharing, foster growth, and empower others by encouraging autonomy through trust and meaningful challenges.



How did the TH Mentorship shape your path?

I completed two internships with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, gaining experience in Economic Development and Implementation. I contributed to justice research, procurement policy, and cultural initiatives, while deepening my connection to community and language. At Yukon University, I led a capstone project that launched our nation's energy strategy, Yuhke Hwëdëk. In my second internship, I advanced this work through research, outreach, and regional collaboration. I now work alongside Citizens and a dedicated Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in team to implement Yuhke Hwëdëk and ensure its long-term sustainability.

What achievements stand out?

After a decade in the trades, I made the decision to return to school and am now graduating with a bachelor's degree in business administration as a mature student. While at university, I also answered the call to learn Hän Hënjik ilëk eyts'ą' nánkay. Now, our language lives in me forever.

What's the best part of your job?

Connection to home, heritage, culture, language, and our nation is deeply important to me. Relationships are everything, and I truly enjoy meeting diverse people and building meaningful connections along the way.

Any advice?

My suggestion would be to spend time defining your interests and needs, and work to satisfy them while staying grounded in your values and community. Be open to learning, remain curious, and don't be afraid to take unconventional paths. Be kind and create space for others to grow and contribute alongside you.

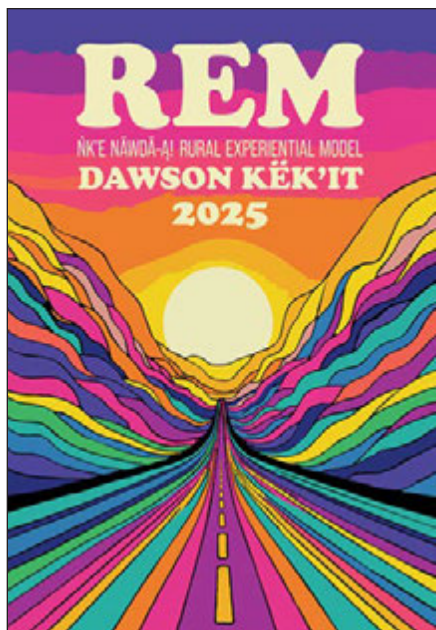


This year

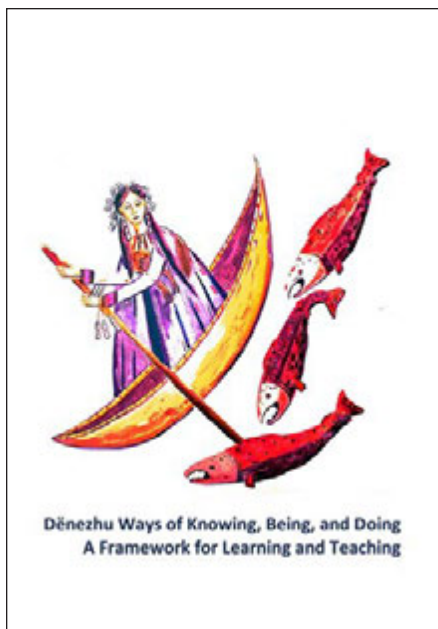
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in also developed an internal learning resource called Dënezhu Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing: A Framework for Learning and Teaching. This resource has been shared with all RSS staff. A monthly book club was hosted by Cultural Education Advisor Tara Rudnickas, offering space to explore key themes and engage with TH experts.
- Increased focus on Indigenous pedagogy was also supported by the Cultural Education Advisor through a round of training on the First Peoples Principles of Learning.
- The Rural Experiential Model (REM) was delivered in Dawson City, bringing together students from Dawson, Carmacks, Faro and Mayo. This program offered expanded course options that emphasized hands-on, land-based, and culturally relevant learning.
- Five positions were added to the TH Education Department:
 - Employment Pathways Coordinator
 - Cultural Education Advisor
 - Adult Learning Success Coordinator
 - Education Oversight Committee Administrator
 - AOC First Nations Education Advisor
- A number of mentorships were completed with help from the Employment Pathways Coordinator, Becky Alderson:
 - Seven after-school jobs
 - Seven internships (for post-secondary or recently graduated students)
 - Eight jobs created
 - Fifteen summer students (15-17)
 - Five junior summer students (12-14)
- Starting in October 2024 and ongoing, TH Adult Learning Success Coordinator Katie English hosts bi-weekly Elders on Campus events.
 - Elders on Campus events are shaped by Citizen requests. For example, in March a “Constellation Learning Journey” involved a star-gazing trip to the Midnight Dome and collaboration with Yukon U to bring up the Astronomy for Beginners course.



The stars shine bright in the Constellation Learning Journey.



Vivid colours welcome students to the Rural Education Model.



Darcy Tara provided cover art for the Dënezhu Framework.



Kids and adults co-create a mural at Moosehide Gathering 2024.

Looking Ahead

The Education Oversight Committee shares the resolve to transform education into something healing and affirming rather than harmful.

The EOC has several initiatives underway that will support students and lifelong learning opportunities for Citizens. These are noted in the committee's Work Plan, which is updated annually.

The new *Early Learning and Child Care Act* received assent in the Legislative Assembly on May 1, 2025. This legislation sets out a mandate to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to develop the early learning framework and to include Yukon First Nation knowledge, worldviews, cultural and traditional practices, and education priorities in the framework. In the coming months, the Early Learning and Child Care branch will begin working with Yukon First Nations, including Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and other key early learning partners towards this goal. This will be a key opportunity to shape learning for our youngest community members from a Dënezhu perspective.

There is growing collaboration between the **Post-Secondary and Future Skills branch** (YG) and Adult Learning and Employment (TH). By sharing information about programs, funding options, and how each partner supports TH Citizens, we are working together to make joint decisions on how best to use available funding. This approach increases efficiency and creates opportunities for more Citizens to access funding for adult education and training.

An Independent Learning Centre Program Review report gathered insights from former teachers, staff, and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens or family members of students in the Individual Learning Centre program at RSS. The program's challenges and potential were combined with research into best practices at other schools. Recommendations from the report inform the EOC 2025-26 Work Plan.

IRP Consulting provided a snapshot of current **Hän Hënjik** programming, as described on page 7. The EOC Work Plan is shaped by the goal of keeping the spirit of language present in daily life, across distance, and in spaces where Citizens gather and share.

The **Imagine Education Spaces** project gathered ideas and recommendations in Phase One, as outlined on page 13. Phase Two begins this next year with assessing the size, scale, and scope of priorities identified by participants. We will provide updates and aim for small but tangible “Momentum Projects” that continue embedding Dënezhu ways into the school, at the core of education. The intended outcome for 2025–26 is a solid project plan and budget request.

At Robert Service School, YG and TH staff all work together, sharing roles for student support, field trips, supervision, and more. With an “all one team” approach, Helen McCullough (RSS Principal) and Ashley Bower-Bramadat (TH Education Manager) can connect jëje-in with activities and children according to relationships, instead of by employer.

This next year will be a time for reflection as Ashley, Helen, and their teams co-develop the School Growth Plan (SGP) together. It is created in conversation with parents, Elders, students, and School Council. The School Growth process has three parts: growth planning, evidence-based conversations at the school during the year, and a school review that includes the community. Each part will be firmly based on a Dënezhu foundation, to ensure Dënezhu ways are reflected in all parts of the plan.

Yukon Government’s Integrated Outcome Strategy for Yukon Learners will be released in September. RSS School Growth Plan discussions will use this information too. It includes 14 outcomes for student success, like cultivating a strong sense of belonging, an orientation toward lifelong learning, and an understanding of the land and First Nation culture where they live.

A Bridging Program is being co-developed by Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and Yukon University. The goal is for participants to emerge with confidence, a strong sense of identity, and the drive to “go do something” meaningful each day. They’ll build a bridge to whatever is next in their life, not just to post-secondary education. The scoping work for this project is complete. The first offering will start in January 2026.

We are Dënezhu



The new Adult Learning Success Coordinator enabled Citizen-led programming, from twice-weekly Elders on Campus meetings to workshops on butchering and mitt-making.



We live Tr'ëhude



Games at Youth Leadership Camp,
May 2024



Youth Leadership Camp,
May 2024



Three TH youth visit
YukonU in Whitehorse



Youth Leadership Camp,
May 2024



The spirit of lifelong Dënezhu learning extended into RSS as a new unit on Northern Indigenous Constellations was led by a TH Elder in collaboration with RSS staff. One week, Grade 8 and Grade 3 students learned together at Nānkāk Chéholay (Land of Plenty).

“There is nothing more important to self-determination than the education of our people. We look forward to co-governing lifelong and integrated education in partnership with the Government of Yukon for the benefit of everyone living on Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Traditional Territory. Our past leaders dreamed of a Yukon based on the principles of “Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow” and the signing of this Letter of Agreement [on Education Co-governance] is another step forward in realizing that vision.”

– Hähkè Darren Taylor

“This Letter of Agreement [on Education Co-governance] is a significant step toward building an education system that truly reflects and respects the culture, language, and values of the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in people.

This partnership embodies our government’s shared commitment to supporting all students in the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Traditional Territory. I look forward to this new chapter of collaboration.”

– Minister of Education Jeanie McLean

“It is a recognition that as people living on Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in traditional territory, we must have sustainable education systems that reflect the knowledge and needs of our community. It is a commitment to rejecting systems built by others and to build an education system for the benefit of everyone.”

– Councillor Kyrle Nagano

