



Inclusive Schooling in the Northwest Territories

Inclusive schooling ensures that students across the Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) system have access to the level of support they need to learn, participate, and succeed at school. It is a legislated responsibility under the Education Act and a core commitment of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

The following actions and timelines outline how the GNWT will strengthen inclusive schooling across the territory:

1. Stabilized student supports

Spring 2026 – Ongoing

To prevent disruptions to services that students rely on, the GNWT has committed an additional \$30 million in GNWT-managed funding to stabilize inclusive schooling supports in 2026-27. This funding is intended to provide ongoing support for inclusive schooling, reducing reliance on short-term and uncertain funding sources. It will lead to fewer staff changes, fewer gaps in services, and more predictable and consistent support in classrooms.

The majority of this funding will flow directly to education bodies, enabling them to maintain and retain school-based staff and services, which can include:

- Support Assistants and Program Support Teachers
- Therapeutic and rehabilitation services such as speech language therapy, occupational therapy, and counselling
- Other essential inclusive schooling supports



2. Early Childhood Screening

Fall 2026 – Ongoing

Early childhood screening will help identify learning needs earlier in a child’s education. This allows schools to respond proactively when support is most effective and provides teachers with clearer information to plan instruction/supports.

3. Clearer Information and Protocols for Families and Schools

Fall 2026 – Spring 2027

Families and schools will see clearer guidance and tools to make the system easier to understand and navigate for families. These include:

- Plain language information on inclusive schooling supports, roles, and plan types
- Clearer JK–12 transition protocols to support smoother movement through the education system
- Improved coordination with health partners for referrals and follow up

4. Strengthened rehabilitative and therapeutic services

Spring 2026 to Spring 2028

Work is underway to improve access to rehabilitative and therapeutic services through:

- Clearer roles and responsibilities between education and health systems
- Improved referral and communication pathways
- A school-based rehabilitation service model, targeted to launch in the 2027–28 school year



5. Building toward long-term system improvement

2026 – ongoing

Some elements of inclusive schooling renewal require further research and development before making improvements. A financial needs assessment will begin during the 2026–27 school year, with findings expected in Spring 2028 to guide the following:

- Long-term funding models
- Staffing ratios and service levels
- System-wide accountability and monitoring approaches

In Summary:

The GNWT is taking a deliberate, phased approach to ensure changes strengthen inclusive schooling and reflect the diverse realities of schools and communities across the Northwest Territories.

This work is focused on:

- Providing students with access to supports and services
- Providing schools and families with clarity and stability
- Building a stronger, more equitable, and more sustainable inclusive schooling system for the future