#21, 4802 50th Avenue
Yellowknife, NT X1A 1C4
Phone: (867) 920-4944

August 28, 2026

The Honourable Caroline Wawzonek
Minister of Finance
Government of Northwest Territories
PO Box 1320
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9 Canada

Delivered by email: Caroline_wawzonek@gov.nt.ca

Dear Minister Wawzonek:

Re: North Slave Campus Development and the Future Workforce Needs of the Northwest Territories

The Financial Management Board is being asked to fund the investment required to advance the North Slave Campus. The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce supports this investment and encourages the Board to proceed with urgency, building on the years of planning, analysis and professional advice that have already established the need for expanded post-secondary capacity in the North Slave region.

The most important issue facing the North Slave Campus is the urgent implementation of the Mandate Agreement and its funding proposal. As the federal government makes major investments in Arctic sovereignty through Northern infrastructure, the NWT needs the people, skills and institutional capacity to participate fully in that opportunity. Timely investment in accessible post-secondary education will strengthen workforce participation to increase the NWT's capacity to capture the benefits of federal nation-building investments. There is no credible alternative to the Financial Management Board's current decision that would provide the same path forward for Aurora College. Choosing to proceed now will provide certainty, maintain momentum and enable the College to advance its planning and development. We need to begin building this institution now so that its programs, facilities and capacity are aligned with the workforce needs created by the federal investments already coming to the North.

The decision now before the Financial Management Board to invest in the North Slave Campus is the result of years of professional strategic planning and millions of dollars invested in developing the necessary plans and analysis.

The decision now before the Financial Management Board to invest in the North Slave Campus is the result of years of professional strategic planning and millions of dollars invested in developing the necessary plans and analysis. We encourage the GNWT to stay the course and build on that work. This decision is critical to strengthening the fundamental institution that will provide the people, skills and capacity the NWT needs to participate in emerging opportunities. The Chamber also supports continued investment to ensure trades programs are effective in meeting the labour needs of major projects. This includes investing in the Thebacha Campus in Fort Smith and in the Beaufort Delta region, served by the Aurora Campus.

#21, 4802 50th Avenue
Yellowknife, NT X1A 1C4
Phone: (867) 920-4944

We encourage government to maintain that momentum, complete the necessary due diligence and move toward implementation with urgency. it is an investment in Northern people, workforce capacity and quality of life, with both economic value and strategic value to Canada. A more productive, capable and livable North strengthens Arctic sovereignty and advances the broader nation-building objectives behind the federal government's investment in the region. The Yellowknife Chamber supports this established direction and will support the government in moving it forward decisively.

Sincerely,

Mark Henry
President
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce

c.c.

The Honourable R.J. Simpson, Premier of the Northwest Territories R.J._Simpson@gov.nt.ca

The Honourable Caitlin Cleveland, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the Northwest Territories Caitlin_Cleveland@gov.nt.ca