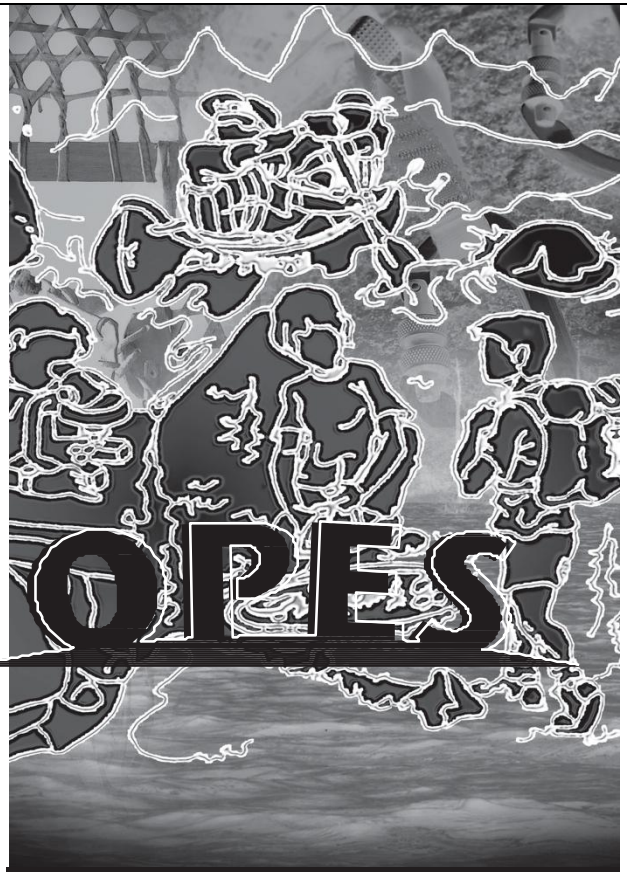

Yukon Education

Outdoor Pursuits & Experiential Science

Understanding our environment through activity and study

Student Application for OPES 9

Application Deadline: January 26, 2026
Interview dates are on or between February 2 – 11, 2026

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application on or before February 18, 2026.

Step 1:
Complete the two-page application found on the Wood Street Centre website.

Step 2:
Complete a letter in English including:

- Who are you? Describe yourself!
- When do you feel most comfortable, most yourself?
- Why do you want to spend time learning outdoors?
- What do you struggle with in school or in life?
- What are your strengths?

Step 3:
Send your one-page application and letter to:
applications-WSC@yukon.ca

We may contact teachers at your home school for additional references

Contact Colin Abbott at colin.abbott@yesnet.yk.ca if you have any specific questions.

For more information, please call (867) 667-8413 or visit our website at www.woodstreetcentre.yukonschools.ca/

Student Information
OPES 9 is an integrated experiential program open to all grade 9 students. Although prior wilderness experience is not a criterion for selection into this program, students should be able to meet the physical demands of the program in remote settings. All outdoor activities and extended field trips are selected with the safety of the students in mind and are appropriate for Grade 9 students who have had little or no prior experience in the outdoors. Class time will be spent preparing students for the extended wilderness trips.

Student Expectations
Class size is limited to 16 students and consideration will be given to students who are trustworthy, conscientious and respectful of others.

- Previous marks are not a criterion for selection.
- Students selecting this program should be committed to participating in the various outdoor and science field trips.
- Regular attendance is therefore essential.

Program Costs
The cost of the program is **$400,** which will cover costs associated with wilderness trips and a first aid course. Students are not expected to buy a lot of outdoor equipment. Those who already have suitable equipment will be expected to use it. If not, Wood Street is able to provide all equipment necessary including winter sleeping bags, ski equipment, backpacking gear, Trangia stoves, kayaks and canoes. All students are expected to provide their own food (expect approximately the same cost as eating at home).

OPES 9 – Outdoor Pursuits & Experiential Science

General Progam Description
Outdoor Pursuits and Experiential Science (OPES) offers a "new" approach to learning for Grade 9 students. This integrated program of studies provides students with a number of overnight wilderness trips designed to create life experiences that help teach the BC science and social studies curriculum.
The Outdoor Pursuits course is taught through the preparation and training for wilderness trips, and travel by human-power as a class. This is integrated with our bike building and repair course which teaches hands on skills to build, repair and maintain bikes.

Goals and Objectives
To encourage and develop:

- self discipline and a strong work ethic
- responsible attitudes in learning
- creative thinking and problem solving skills
- self confidence and self esteem through personal challenges
- greater knowledge and appreciation of the Yukon's natural environment
- a sense of stewardship for our environment
- knowledge and skills related to a variety of outdoor pursuits
- cooperative attitudes and positive peer relations
- leadership skills

The Year Overview

OPES 9 will be offered one semester per school year at Wood Street Centre. This facility provides the independence that is necessary to run a successful program. In the alternate semester students will attend regular classes at their home school.

OPES Semester	**Alternate Semester**
Socials Studies 9	Math 9
Science 9	English 9
Outdoor Pursuits 9	Second Language 9
Technology Explorations 10	Elective 9

Note: Courses may change depending on the strengths of the instructor.

Safety
The safety and well-being of the students is always the first and most important consideration when taking students into wilderness settings. Students who display inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour that puts themselves or others at risk may result in removal from the field trip at their own expense and/or removal from the program.

Course Content

Outdoor Pursuits 9
This course will provide students with a wide range of exciting, challenging and rewarding experiences. It will focus on the knowledge and skills related to a variety of outdoor wilderness activities. Topics that may be covered in the course will include *kayaking rescue and travel, travel by bicycle, backpacking, survival skills, winter camping, canoeing, skiing and wilderness ethics.*

Science 9
The Science 9 course is a continuation of the Science 8 program which further develops skills, practices and knowledge from the areas of Physical Science, Life Science and Earth Science. These topics include elements, the Periodic Table, compounds, chemical formulas, static electricity, current, electric circuits, cell reproduction, reproduction in living organisms and interactions within ecosystems.

Social Studies 9
This course focuses on political, social, economic and technological revolutions in the 1750-1919 period. Topics include: Nationalism and the development of modern nation states including Canada demonstrate change in ideas and ideologies; Students will know how local, regional and global conflicts influenced our identity and power relations between individuals and societies; Imperial and colonial impacts on indigenous populations in Canada and around the world with an emphasis on Yukon First Nation impacts.

Technology Explorations 10: Bike Building and Repair
Bike Building and Repair is an applied design, skills and technology course which focuses on building, maintaining and repairing bikes. Students will build bicycles themselves from parts. On a multi-day bike trip, students will repair and maintain their own bikes. Students show their learning by traveling to communities outside of Whitehorse and teaching others how to repair bikes of their own. Hands-on work and experimentation are a big part of this course!