



Context

Since 1976, the Kativik School Board has promoted through its Educational Mission the preservation of the Inuit way of life, language, culture and values, by striving to reflect these realities in its curriculum and pedagogical materials. The Kativik School Board has moreover assumed responsibilities that are unique to Nunavik and northern education and that go beyond those expected of southern school boards. These responsibilities include:

- Construction and maintenance of schools in each of the communities.
- Creation and implementation of a full-time Inuktitut-based curriculum for all primary students below grade three.
- Development of pedagogical materials in Inuktitut for all other levels.
- Creation and delivery of training for Inuit teachers.
- Post-secondary education.

A Few of the Challenges

Educational:

Even though the education reforms implemented in Québec failed to take into account Nunavik realities, the Kativik School Board has been obliged to adapt its curriculum accordingly.

With limited human and financial resources and day-to-day education operations, the Kativik School Board nonetheless continues to develop culturally sensitive curriculum and to train Inuit teachers.

Curriculum and educational programs must be developed simultaneously in Inuktitut, English and French.

Funding:

The funding received by the Kativik School Board does not allow for adequate staff training and development following the introduction of new curriculum and educational programs.

Pedagogical Material:

No Inuktitut publishing house exists, which means that textbooks adapted to northern curriculum are not available and have to be created.

Qualifications:

On arriving in the region, most non-Inuit teachers are poorly prepared to teach in a cross-cultural, second-language setting.

Migration:

Bachelor of Education training in Montreal requires Inuit teachers to leave their communities during their summer breaks, making it hard to recruit candidates and stretching out the time needed to complete the program.

Post-secondary education is not delivered in the region. Long absences from their communities are stressful for students and take a toll on families.

Infrastructure:

Science laboratories in schools in the communities do not meet modern technological requirements.

Schools are already overpopulated, even while the number of students continues to grow.

A lack of housing makes it difficult to hire the staff needed to deliver educational services.

Solutions and Priorities

It is unjust to see that children living in the same province are not being granted equal treatment. Inuit students must have access to the same services and pathways as those in the south. The following impediments are prohibiting proper education in Nunavik and must be addressed.

Different pathways have to be created to prepare students to respond to regional economic conditions.

Establish in the region a full-time Bachelor of Education training program for Inuit teachers in order to make the program more accessible and speed up certification.

Develop a cultural program for new teachers to inform them about their new home and facilitate their integration into the communities.

Commit funding to classes and resources for students with special needs.

Ensure proper funding for program development and training.

Create a curriculum centre or publishing house to produce culturally relevant educational materials.

Deliver in the region post-secondary education so students can study without leaving home.

Renovate science laboratories, expand and build new schools to accommodate the growing student population, and build new staff housing.

Proper Internet infrastructure is required along with videoconferencing services.

Plan Nunavik pre-condition 5: Education services in Nunavik require substantial additional human and financial resources from Québec that are culturally adapted to Nunavik Inuit.

