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Background and Introduction

The Nunavut *Education Act*, 2008, is founded on two fundamental principles: first that the education system shall be based on Inuit societal values, and second that every individual (subject to some residency and age-based criteria) is entitled to attend school and to have access to the public education program. Aside from making these assertions, the Act does not provide specific instructions as to exactly how the Inuit values will be expressed, but the goal appears to be that they will be infused throughout the school system and in the relationships among teachers, administrators, students and parents.

The legislation is based on this very consultative and integrated model, and as part of that approach it calls for a review every five (5) years by Members of the Nunavut Assembly. This task was undertaken in 2014-15, by a committee chaired by the Hon. George Hickey, Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk.

This research reviews the many submissions made to the Committee, but focuses on the Recommendations tabled in the 3rd Session of the 4th Legislative Assembly in November of 2015 by the Special Committee to Review the *Education Act* (SC)¹. Members of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly developed twenty-three recommendations². This examination focuses particular attention on three areas in those recommendations:

- language of instruction,
- inclusive schooling, and
- roles and responsibilities of District Education Authorities (DEAs).

These areas were identified as being of immediate interest, and likely to see proposals for new legislation in the near future. The object of this Report is to convey information and analysis to inform DEAs and the territory-wide Coalition on the larger context and the potential impacts of specific interest to the DEAs in these areas.

¹ Special Committee on the Education Act, Final Report, Recommendation 23
23) *That proposed amendments to the Education Act, especially with respect to sections on Language of Instruction, Inclusive Education, and the Roles and responsibilities of DEAs and regulations be introduced within the term of the 4th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.*

² A Timeline of Events is included in this report as Appendix 5.

Methodology

This research is based on data collected from two sources. The first source was a comparison of the *Education Acts* of four different Canadian jurisdictions (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Ontario and Alberta). The second was from submission to the SC, which assisted greatly in gaining an understanding of where the SC recommendations came from.

While there were many interesting submissions to the committee, this Report will *not* address a number of significant concerns raised in the review process. These are valuable recommendations addressing fundamental and systemic issues, but the one month period for research did not afford the time to adequately address: social promotion, *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit*, recruiting and retention of teachers, communication, training, effective collaboration and the need for educators trained to deliver bilingual education. These topics would require further time to be addressed properly and it would be valuable for further work to be done in these areas as resources permit.

Addressing the Recommendations

Implementing the Recommendations can be a positive process for DEAs and for the Coalition. This will, however, require efforts from all participants to ensure that stakeholder interests are being heard *in the implementation process*.

Findings of this Report suggests that Nunavut (if the Recommendations are implemented) would be alone among the jurisdictions examined in moving *away* from community decision-making. Efforts all over the world are moving towards self-determination of indigenous people and the essence of the Special Committee report seemed dangerously close to further extending the mandate of government in the opposite direction - removing authorities that typically belong at the community level, in both an indigenous and a non-indigenous Canadian context.

Given the global acknowledgement of the importance of community engagement in effective change, DEAs and CNDEA will have to be unified to ensure this dialogue occurs in Nunavut. Other jurisdictions such as British Columbia have audited their system in relation to aboriginal peoples' engagement. In that report the Auditor General for the province recommends that the Ministry works closely with boards of education and aboriginal leaders³. It suggests that a failure to support or engage communities (in this instance DEAs and their Coalition) is likely to result in poor outcomes, including low graduation rates and the use of techniques like social promotion, resulting in students graduating with a lower standard of education.

³ [An Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System](#), Auditor General of British Columbia, Nov 5, 2015, Recommendation 6
see also [CBC Radio, The Current, February 18, 2016](#) "*The Racism of Lowered Expectations*"

For each of the priority Recommendations of the Committee, this Report provides a discussion on potential impacts, and a series of suggested responses.

PLEASE NOTE: A paraphrased recommendation has been inserted in reference boxes in each section. For the actual and extended wording of each recommendation, readers are asked to refer to Appendix 3.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION (SC Recommendations 9-11)

Recommendation 9

Current Situation

The Inuit language has many regional dialects. There is a serious threat of decline as recognized by The Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut :

In the 2006 census, 64% of respondents reported using the Inuit Language in the home, even though it is the mother tongue of 83% percent of the population. This represents a 12% decline in ten years. This is partly due to a very large youth population, with a median age in 2006 of 23.1 years, compared to Canada's media age of 39.5 years.⁴

Under the current *Education Act*, DEAs choose among three language models provided in regulations and then the school team implements that model. While the models have some merit, gaps occur in the area of supporting materials and curriculum, which the *Act* requires the Minister to provide in order for the DEA to implement the model chosen. Submissions to the SC identify significant implementation problems, including a lack of Inuktitut language instructors and materials, no upper year language curriculum and extremely sparse upper year Inuktitut language teachers.

Committee Recommendation 9

Ensure that Nunavut's education system delivers bilingual education according to a single standardized model for all schools.

Potential Impacts – Recommendation 9

⁴ Official Languages Commissioner of Nunavut: Website (excerpted February 5, 2016)
<http://langcom.nu.ca/nunavuts-official-languages/>

The SC Recommendation suggests “a single standardized model” for all schools. This raises sub-issues that will need attention including: *dialect, teachers, and curriculum, including current moves to roman orthography by departmental authorities.* As long as standardization advances language preservation, this recommendation can have positive impacts. If the proposed standardization is based on a standard curriculum, issues such as geographical differences can be a challenge.

Change alone does not address the resource deficit (in curriculum, teachers and funds) identified by submissions to the SC.

Suggested Responses –Recommendation 9

Rather than creating a standard/single “bilingual education” model suggested in Recommendation 9, the DEAs and other stakeholders can look to the NWT Legislation Part III – Cultural Diversity. This is also the regime that existed in Nunavut when there were divisional boards. Despite eleven official languages the NWT does not attempt to limit or define the number of languages that will be taught in their schools.

70. (1) The language of instruction of the education program must be an Official Language.

(2) There may be more than one language of instruction in an education district and more than one language of instruction in a school. NWT Education Act

If Nunavut can take a similar approach, coupled with specific provisions or programs which support the development of local materials (potentially by rewarding teachers who do so) and a large commitment to teacher training, this change can potentially advance the linguistic goals cited by the committee and still ensure a “single standard” with multiple deliveries.

Having reviewed the four jurisdictions, it is clear that the other three are responding to local languages by allowing differences or providing alternative programming opportunities for local boards. The other jurisdictions delegate language of instruction decisions to local boards, creating opportunities for meeting diverse linguistic needs of students.

Recommendation 10

Current Situation

Whether the revised version of bilingual education proceeds or not, DEAs will continue to require resources to deliver language programs. A mechanism will still need to be established to permit DEAs to seek additional resources or contribute to the larger

effort. As far back as 2008, DEAs have been seeking additional resources to deliver additional language programs.⁵

NWT, Alberta and Ontario direct that education bodies determine and make available to students the language rights specified in their jurisdiction/legislation⁶. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction of the four where that authority resides in the Minister's office. Section 25 of the current Nunavut *Education Act* speaks to the Minister's authority in relation to the Inuit Language, while s. 24 speaks to DEA authority, (consistent with regulation) to decide which of English or French will be the language instruction for schools. The DEAs are not permitted to develop their own model, they are limited to choosing from among the three regulated options.

Nunavut and Alberta have student-centred legislation. Each creates affirmative rights for students: in Nunavut every student shall "*be given a bilingual education*"⁷ while in Alberta every student "*is entitled to receive instruction in English*".⁸ The other two jurisdictions' focus in legislation is to ensure that options are available and that the regional boards will implement the provisions on language of instruction.

Committee
Recommendation 10
Accommodations be made within the legislation to enable DEAs to request and receive necessary resources to support DEAs to deliver additional regional language programs including the Inuit, French and English language

1. NWT states that the instruction must be in an Official Language.

2. Alberta makes alternative programming (language, culture, religion or subject matter), available based on options offered by specific school boards.

Submissions to the SC centred around the need and capacity for children to be excellent in more than one language, and that the education system needs to support the development of children to achieve that excellence. Submissions addressed the necessity of meeting student need, through: better administration of bilingualism resources, clarity in the Act (inclusive education to add definition of student support services), roles and responsibilities, clarification of the scope of oversight by DEAs and reallocation of resources to permit DEAs to contribute.

Potential Impacts – Recommendation 10

Submissions suggest that Nunavut Education has not been provided with adequate resources to its meet its priorities. Even if high funding levels were implemented, Nunavut Education will need to make significant changes to its administrative processes to allow resources provided to flow to DEAs in order to allow them to deliver additional regional language programs.

⁵ Suvaguuq Newsletter, Volume 1, Issue 1, January 2008

⁶ See Appendix 1 on Language of Instruction for detailed comparisons

⁷ *Education Act* (Nunavut) s.23(1)

⁸ *Education Act* (Alberta) s.17(1)

Suggested Responses – Recommendation 10

This recommendation approaches language learning by recognizing that additional resources are needed to respond to community differences. From the perspective of DEAs this approach is preferable to standardization. Moving resources to DEAs to deliver additional regional programs could include much improved attention to the Inuit, French and English languages while ensuring that the overall language of instruction available to all students includes opportunities to learn any (and in any event, two) of the languages.

The Coalition may seek to recommend that this scope be expanded to increase the engagement of DEAs. For example in the NWT, DEAs can seek, and are entitled to guidance from divisional bodies including plans to secure the supply of teachers fluent in a language and their availability to teach in that language⁹.

The successful implementation of this recommendation will require improved funding agreements, more flexible timing of projects and more responsive resource allocation. The Coalition and DEAs may choose to advocate in favour of these changes.

Recommendation 11

Current Situation

Nunavut is the only jurisdiction that specifies that targets will be set for spoken and written competencies in the language(s) of instruction.¹⁰ Submissions suggest that, to date, these targets have not been established, or it appears that the targeted dates are now approaching. If the intent was to legislate measures to preserve the Inuit Language, ambition appears to have exceeded delivery, and effort appears to have fallen below anticipated levels.

Committee
Recommendation 11
*That the deadlines for
language of instruction
requirements be revised and
amended or deleted at the
earliest opportunity.*

Potential Impacts – Recommendation 11

While the target has been made unattainable for many complex reasons, the intention of ensuring a bilingual society is still important. Removing these goals is, to a certain degree, an acknowledgement of a systemic failure to achieve the levels of language instruction aspired to by many Nunavummiut.

This is disheartening for language advocates, but need not lead to a system with *no goals*. It is possible to make goal-setting more flexible (in regulation for example, or by Ministerial Directive), and have it incorporate smaller steps, with the means of accomplishing each step substantiated, with frequent revision.

⁹ Education Act (NWT) section 71(2)

¹⁰ Education Act (Nunavut) section 25(4)

Suggested Responses – Recommendation 11

It is agreed that where aspirational targets are legislated they should be realistic, if ambitious. It is disreputable for governments to break their own laws, and the regrettable remedy once the goals have initially been legislated is to, as Recommendation 11 states, revise or delete these goals. The focus of the preservation and revitalization of the Inuit Language must be re-directed to supporting practical approaches as advocated in the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs newsletter, quoting Inuit educator Naullaq Arnaquq:

“literacies, teacher orientation, teacher education, curriculum development, research, parental and Elder involvement, and the professional education and support of teachers [...] as crucial factors in maintaining and strengthening Inuit languages, as well as French”.¹¹

DEAs and the Coalition can advocate for realistic goals, in small stages, with an effective goal-creating process, clear resources and progressive levels of competency and impact. Regulations or Ministerial Directives can differentiate among regions and dialects with differing levels of language retention, incorporating frequent revision and community consultation.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (SC Recommendation 13)

Recommendation 13

Current Situation

The Nunavut Minister has the greatest scope of authority over inclusive education when compared to the other three jurisdictions. This includes authority to give directions, develop regulations for Principals to decide if a student should not be in a regular instructional setting, receive a referral from a principal for an opinion of alternative placement, agree (or disagree) with the school team on who receives specialized services or assessments, ensure that specialized services are provided, maintain a list of potential review board members and chairs for DEAs to choose from¹², and to set remuneration for those special needs Review Boards.

Recommendation 13
That Part 6 (Inclusive Education) clarify, in detail, when a student is entitled to support, the professional services available and the process for adjusting student support programs.

Submissions suggest that although Nunavut has a progressive and rights based system, it is essentially not implemented. Parents are not made aware of the rights and

¹¹ Suvaguuq Newsletter, Volume 2, Issue 4, November 2009

¹² Education Act (Nunavut) s. 51(3)

processes in the Nunavut Act, and DEAs have not been encouraged to create the Review Board structured under Act.¹³ It appears anecdotally that, in fact, no such Board has ever been created in any community.

In contrast, the NWT Minister has two authorities in this area: to provide direction to an education body, and to determine where the education body will provide a student with accommodation.

The Alberta Minister establishes a tribunal who receives, reviews and decides the specialized supports and services for students. This Minister may determine if a decision of the board is reasonable and may make regulations setting out how a review will be conducted.

The Ontario Minister ensures appropriate programs, provides an appeal process, requires school boards to implement procedures, defines “exceptionalities” by regulation, and establishes, organizes and administers the special education program. Ontario’s system is the most parent focussed, legislating many opportunities for parents to be informed, appeal decisions and have timely notice of programs. They also legislate that a parent whose child has been assessed as needing special help shall be provided a Parent’s Guide to assist them in understanding the system.

Potential Impacts– Recommendation 13

It is hard to know which direction this recommendation will take the system. Nunavut is severely lacking data on numbers and needs of students, so it is hard to judge impacts of change. Given that Nunavut appears to have the most complicated process for dealing with students who have special needs, this recommendation, if it leads to a clearer and better-documented system, is warranted.

Professional services in Nunavut are severely lacking and changes in education legislation will not address these shortfalls, which may be a more significant barrier than complex legislation. In order for this recommendation to represent an improvement, other areas of change will be needed, including clarifying in detail a simpler process and ensuring, as part of that process, that parents are informed of the system and their rights and role within it.

Suggested Responses – Recommendation 13

The recommendation needs to be supported to the extent that it simplifies the current process and engages informed parents.

The Coalition can choose to urge Nunavut Education to compile data on the special needs that exist in Nunavut schools and identify the scope of resources required to address those needs, even if these services, supports or professionals are not currently available.

¹³ Education Act (Nunavut) s. 50 and 51(1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

The Coalition may wish to recommend that an arms length special needs tribunal be developed. Ontario has the Special Education Tribunal. Alberta has the Complex Education Needs Tribunal, which also has the authority to identify and allocate funding based on student need.

SCOPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY (SC Recommendations 15 & 20)

Recommendation 15

Current Situation

The SC report made it clear that DEAs are seeking clarity, enhanced supports and better responses to having their issues addressed by the Minister. It was only the Nunavut Education submission supported by some school staff, that appeared to seek greater centralizing authorities within Nunavut Education.

The Coalition and DEAs have advocated for years to have better communications, consultations and collaboration from and between Nunavut Education and the elected community representatives.¹⁴ Indeed, the concerns and recommendations submitted to the SC centred around the need for clarity and transparency. These included suggestions that the *Act* appears to be impeding the delivery of high quality education. For example there were many suggestions about how to ensure language retention by making changes to the bilingual education section.

Recommendation 15
Minister to put emphasis on communicating the roles and responsibilities of DEAs, school administrators and regional school operations.

Potential Impacts - Recommendation 15

This is a positive recommendation, it would be difficult to see a negative in effective communications. More communications on the roles and responsibilities of the DEAs, school administrators and regional school operations will clarify many uncertainties, and the responsibility is given to one entity, which does have diverse resources.

¹⁴ See Submission of Niaqunnguu District Education Council, October 2014

Para 8. “DEAs are elected bodies. We are pretty low on the ladder of elected bodies – but that is what we are. We get our mandate from the community...we balance the ministerial authority. Could we please be acknowledged and respected for what we have to contribute.”

Suggested Responses Recommendation 15

DEAs and the Coalition can agree that this emphasis can be valuable. Communications both from Nunavut Education and CNDEA will need to be consistent to ensure that it is not creating further confusion about the different roles and responsibilities of the Minister, staff and DEAs.

Nunavut Education has recently responded to DEA requests for a DEA “Handbook”. Additional suggestions for areas of interest (Inclusive Education – A Parent’s Handbook, Understanding the High School Curriculum – your child’s choices, Discipline in our Schools, Home schooling in Nunavut etc.) should be advanced.

Recommendation 20

Current Situation

A notable observation between the four jurisdictions is that, NWT, Alberta and Ontario have delegated authorities to “regional” bodies. In this way they have ensured community decision making to address social issues. They serve as an “intermediary” between local communities and the Minister. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction where there is a local community authority and than the authority of the Minister.

Recommendation 20
Re-define the role and responsibilities of the CNDEA to ensure a clear mandate and lines of accountability between the Ministry, and DEAs.

In addition, compared to the other jurisdictions, Nunavut delegates the least authorities to DEAs. Nunavut also has the most complicated and complex determinations of authorities between the Minister and the DEA. NWT, Alberta and Ontario allow for board level decision making. Elected officials provide for decision making between the local DEAs and the Minister.

The majority of these concerns spoke to the way the *Act* creates confusion about who is accountable for what. There was an indication from Nunavut Education that some authorities should be removed from DEAs and more given to the Minister of Education. In addition, Nunavut Education was said not to be meeting its statutory obligations. While the CNDEA sought clarity, support and resources to implement their authority, all of Nunavut Education seeks to centralize authorities within either the Ministers office or within Nunavut Education.

Potential Impacts - Recommendation 20

The review needs to occur with the view to empowering communities.¹⁵ The recommendations and concerns shared with the SC were emphasizing the need to have more training and resources for DEAs to fulfill their mandate. If the review is to occur, it must be done in complete partnership with the CNDEA.

Allowing more resources for DEAs would be in line with other jurisdictions, whose role is “supervised by a board level” “intermediary”.

Suggested Responses - Recommendation 20

A collaborative re-definition can be a valuable process. The re-defining needs to occur within the spirit of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹⁶ and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission¹⁷ report. These are important foundational documents that the Coalition can reference to define the approaches and framework for community participation in the Nunavut context.

¹⁵ [Convention on the Rights of the Child, November 1989](#)

Article 29...the education of the child shall be directed to:

- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values

Article 30 In those States in whichpersons of indigenous origin exist, a child who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

¹⁶ [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2008](#)

Article 14

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

¹⁷ [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015](#)

Call to Action 10.

..... to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples [which would] incorporate the following principles:

- i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
- ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
- iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.
- iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
- v. Enabling parental & community responsibility, control, & accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
- vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.

Themes from Written submissions

The majority of the written submissions are available at the Nunavut Legislative Assembly Library.

Specific Legislative Amendments

According to the submissions, a gap exists between what the *Act* legislates and what Nunavut Education implements. An example given is that Nunavut Education has not supported DEAs legislated right and responsibility to exercise oversight under Part 6 - Inclusive Education.

In contrast the materials submitted by Nunavut Education do not reference building capacity at the community level. The typical recommendation from them is to seek to centralize the authority with the Minister (and in all practical terms, departmental officials). Two specific examples include:

“The department suggests that section 42 be amended to make the principal of the school responsible for the implementation of Part 6 of the Act and the directions of the Minister concerning inclusive education”

“The department suggests amending subsections 43(1)(3)(4) to clarify that the duties of the teachers outlined in section 43 must be performed in accordance with the directions of the Minister.

Language Models

There was a discussion in many submissions on whether there should be additional models for language instruction or movement towards a single model. There was an acknowledgement that there is a minority group of French language learners and even the suggestion that Inuktitut students may have easier time learning French rather than English. There was one recommendation that Inuit Language teacher resources be provided for French instruction in Iqaluit. The DEA felt that this would be beneficial to Inuktitut speaking students who have a hard time understanding English.

Training and Capacity Building

This area received significant attention. There was an overwhelming message that there is a significant need for more Inuit teachers (who have the training and skill to instruct, particularly in Inuktitut) and more training opportunities for more to gain this capacity. This included the need for unilingual Inuktitut speaking teachers and a suggestion that there need to be Inuktitut-only spaces for the delivery of these types of instruction.

Frequently mentioned within the submissions was the need to have Nunavut Education develop curriculum, consistent with its obligations under the Act, to support teachers in providing strong Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun programming.

Focussing on these areas may make achieving the system-wide goals attainable, if goals are set collaboratively and matched with effective planning and resources.

Comparative Analysis of Legislation

Part of the research for this paper was a review of the Nunavut Act in the context of Canadian Education systems. In a perfect world this could be extended to international and model systems, but once again time required a fairly narrow scope of review. Nevertheless this has been a most instructive exercise as it has created an initial framework to view Nunavut systems.

Four Canadian jurisdiction, reasonably comparable to Nunavut were examined. Nunavut and the Northwest Territories were chosen because in 1999, Nunavut received the NWT *Education Act*, and operated under it for almost 10 years. The Nunavut act underwent a major revision in 2007-08 after several attempts and diverse drafts were put in front of the Nunavut Assembly. The Alberta Education Act was selected because, as the NWT evolved, much of the body of legislation in the NWT was adopted and adapted from Alberta. Ontario was selected because that is the jurisdiction where the researcher is attending law school.

This examination is visible in more detail in Appendices A, B and C and is helpful to assess Nunavut structures and authorities in comparison with other jurisdictions. Nunavummiut have long expressed their hopes of being within Canadian standards, when it comes to education, health and other social indicators, yet the legislation for education is very unique and specific to the jurisdiction. To date much of the dialogue, both in public forums and in the Special Committee's review, have been from an internal-to-Nunavut context, with reference points being prior or other Nunavut institutions. Four areas stand out from such an external comparison and review:

Authorities

1. Ontario's legislation focuses on differentiating between French boards delivering to English schools and *visa versa* and states that the Minister may prescribe the languages in which a subject or subjects shall be taught.
2. Alberta legislation in regards to language of instruction is clear with the Minister holding the authority to make regulations governing the provisions of instruction *in any language*.
3. Alberta addresses, in part, the teaching vs. language competencies question by providing that a board may employ a competent individual to teach a language or culture under the supervision of a teacher who holds a certificate.
4. In Alberta, Boards may provide alternative (ie language) programming if there are sufficient resources.

Minister

1. Nunavut clearly centralizes its authorities with the Minister's office. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction that does not set out clear delegations of listed authorities to community boards.

Processes

1. Nunavut has the lengthiest process for dealing with students with special needs. This includes identification, planning for type of adjustment (3 types, may or may not be progressive), implementation depending on type of adjustment, mediation (if parent disagrees) and finally review by a review board (if parent continues to disagree).
2. NWT process includes assessment, IEP, accommodation, a complaint process (if needed) and a resolution process if needed.
3. Alberta delegates the process to the local Board who determines if a student requires specialised supports. If it is found that the student requires these the board refers the student to the Complex Education Needs Tribunal. The Tribunal assesses and delivers, including have some ability to allocate funding. A dispute resolution process is also included.
4. Ontario provides the most opportunities for parental involvement in the alternative education process. A committee is set up by each local board to oversee the identification, placement and review of student needs.

Quasi-Judicial Bodies

1. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction that does not create a quasi-judicial body that deals with special students' assessment and adjustment. A quasi-judicial body can be established on a case-by-case basis for a dispute resolution process.
2. NWT, Alberta and Ontario creates a specialized process that deals both with the students' needs and a dispute resolution process.
3. The role of assessment and adjustments fall to the responsibility of the school team.

Conclusion

Nunavut was created to make positive change for Nunavummiut. It was created to increase the decision-making authority to Inuit. To date, the Governments devolution of its authorities has been slow and hindered by important issues in the transfer of knowledge and the creation of appropriate structures.

Nunavummiut continue to express the desire to contribute and to belong within the education system, including in the role of community decision-makers, working towards positive impacts. This research affirms what Nunavut communities have been saying:

"As parents of students in our education system, we think it's OK to dare to dream and believe that things can be better than what we see today in our schools. That's how Nunavut came about, and we believe that if nothing dramatic changes in the governance of our schools, nothing will change."¹⁸

The extensive submissions and recommendations provided to the Special Committee by Nunavummiut asserted the need for improving education within the context of the social and cultural wellbeing of the community. There remains a sense of the hope that the Inuit Language and culture have the strength to thrive.

There was also a repeated assertion in submissions that there is currently an inability for the education system to deliver on that hope. The current structure is not yet allowing children to develop to their full potential. The advancement of Inuit culture and teaching the Inuit language are not yet being occurring at levels adequate to ensure their survival and development.

As the community voice for parents and DEAs, the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs is a fundamental stakeholder in the process of implementing these recommendations. In partnership with territory-wide DEAs, the Coalition is the stakeholder best positioned to bring about the collaborate approach and voice which Nunavummiut have told the Special Committee is needed. With positive and knowledgeable advocacy the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs can be that voice, advocating a balanced and effective approach to change which will increase community engagement and the educational success for our students.

¹⁸ Coalition of Nunavut DEAs: Website: <http://www.cndea.ca/i18n/english/index.html>
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To Contribute and To Belong:

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on the Education Act 2015*

L. Idlout, A. Crawford, February 2016

This Report was developed from research conducted in Iqaluit, Nunavut in January 2016 by Lori Idlout 2L student at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Common Law during a student internship at Crawford Law Office under the supervision of Anne Crawford.