

WHAT IS THE COALITION OF NUNAVUT DEAS?



kiggartuijningit illinniaartulirijikkut nunavuumi
COALITION OF NUNAVUT DEAS
May 2007

It is... the Voice of Parents in Nunavut Education



The Voice of Parents in Nunavut
Education

The Coalition is a Non-Government Organization

The Coalition was formed in August 2006 in Iqaluit at a meeting of Nunavut DEAs.

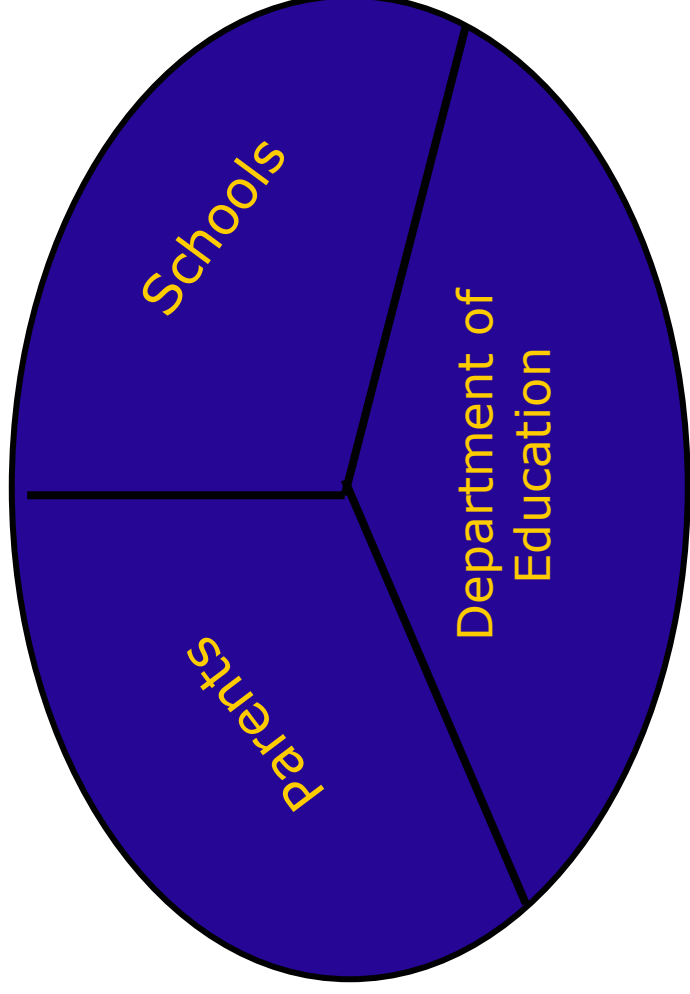
It was formed to represent the collective voice of parents in discussions on the creation of a new Nunavut *Education Act*.

DEA Representatives at the August meeting voted in 6 representatives to the Coalition Executive:

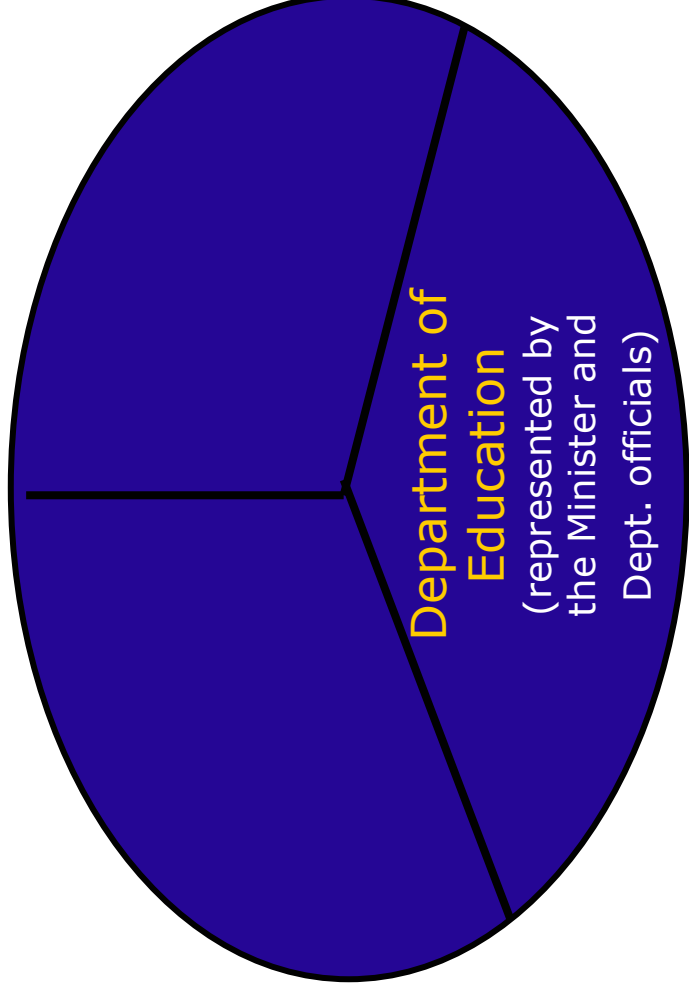
- | | |
|----------------------|------------|
| •Jeeteeta Merkosak | Qiqiktaluk |
| •Christa Kunuk | Qiqiktaluk |
| •John Illupalik | Qiqiktaluk |
| •Dino Bruce | Kivalliq |
| •Ron Tologanak | Kitikmeot |
| •Bernard Putulik Sr. | Kivalliq |

In 2006 and 2007 the Coalition met by teleconference and twice in person.

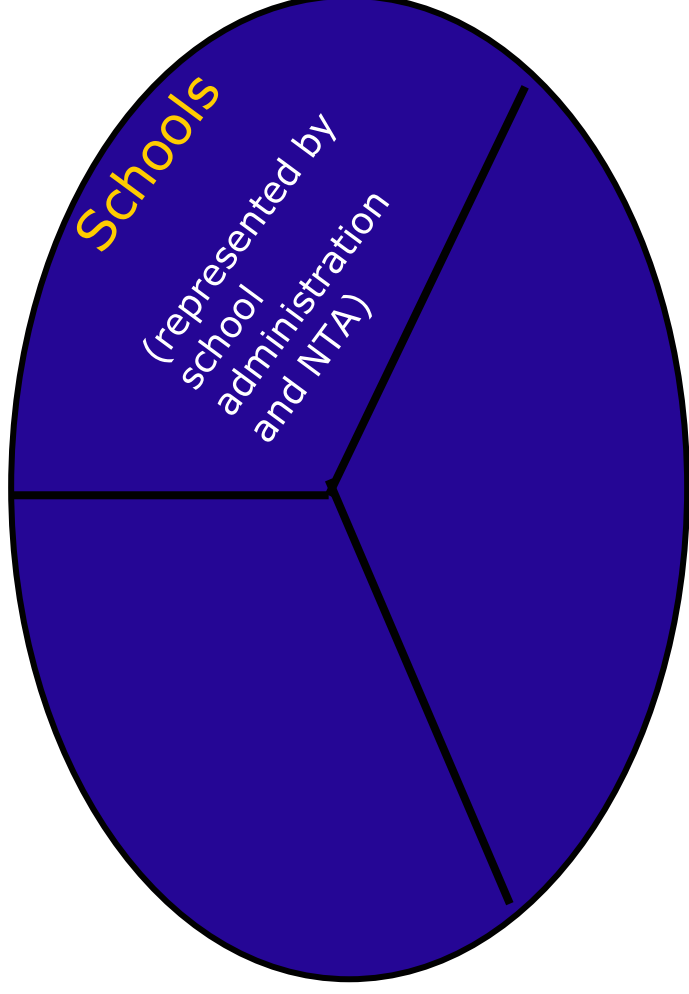
There are 3 main voices in public education in Nunavut.



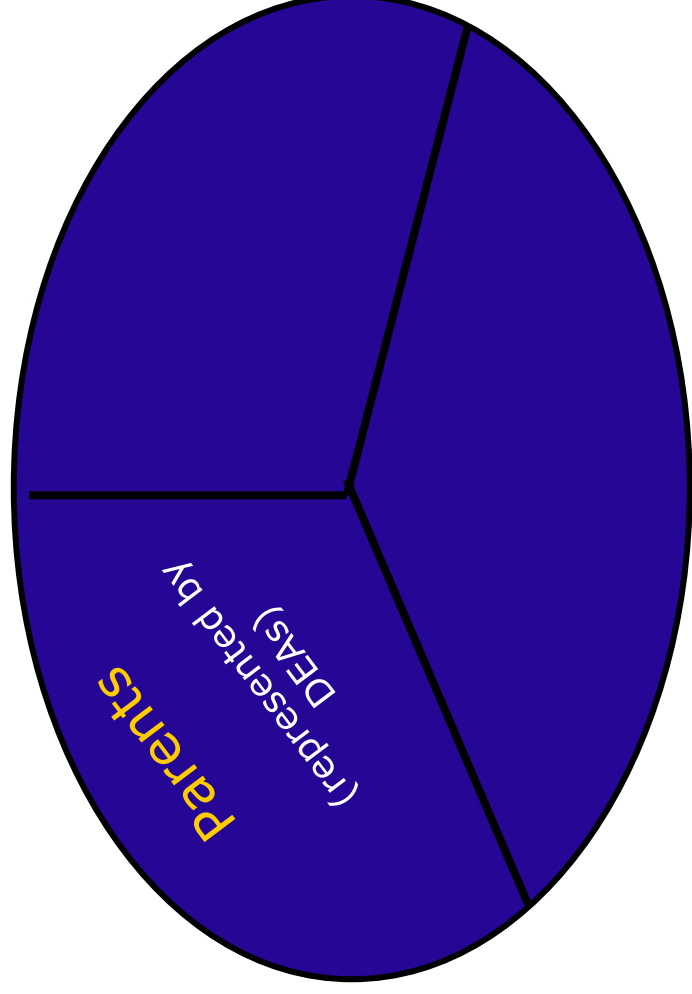
**The Dept. of Education's voice is spoken
through the Minister and officials.**



**The voice of schools is spoken through
school administrators and the NTA.**

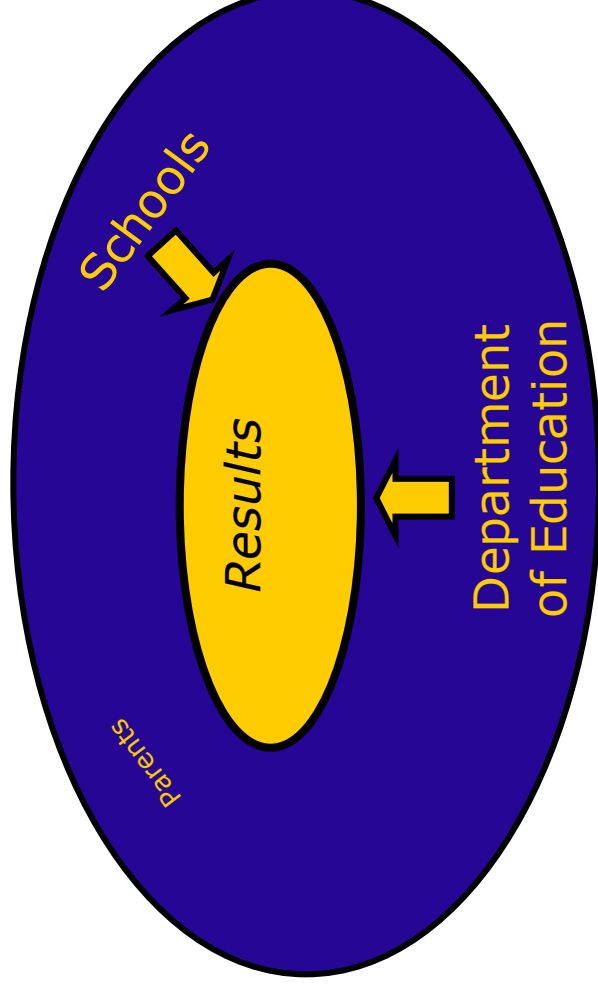


**And parents are represented through the
voice of DEAs.**

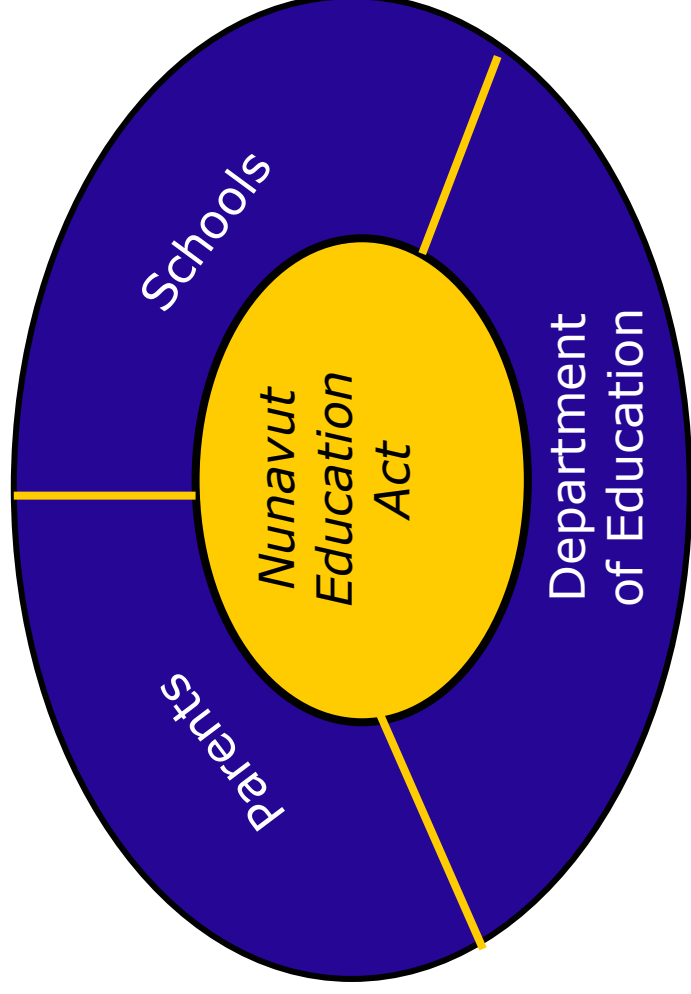


Two of the three voices are well heard.

The Department of Education and School administration currently have greater influence on the results in our schools because they are organized and have budgets.



All 3 voices need a legitimate role in our education system.



The Voice of Parents in Nunavut
Education

What are we hearing from parents?

Above all, the majority of our parents want to reclaim the legitimacy of Inuit languages, culture and knowledge into our schools.

This will lead to more graduates, more students achieving higher grades, safer schools, and schools that are better supported by their communities.

Our schools should be about hope and our laws and policies should contain the language of possibility and change.

What has the Coalition done to represent parents since it was formed ?

- ✓ Researched how other jurisdictions govern their schools.
- ✓ Issued a Press Release & Policy Statement on “*Why DEAs Should Run Our Schools*”.
- ✓ Met with Minister of Education, twice, to discuss new *Education Act* from the point of view of parents.
- ✓ Met with NTI to discuss their perspective on new *Education Act*.
- ✓ Applied for, and received, incorporation as a ‘Society’.
- ✓ Applied for and received funding to open a part-time administrative office.
- ✓ Issued a 2nd policy statement on DEA Roles in Education & Language of Instruction.
- ✓ Organized 1st Annual General Meeting.

The Parent's Point of View...

Parents believe that our new *Education Act* must be *transformative...it must bring about fundamental changes in our schools. How....?*

1. By shifting the basic values of our laws to truly reflect Inuit Qaujimajuqangit values and practices.
2. By shifting power down from a central authority into communities.
3. By empowering parents.

Across Canada, schools are governed by locally elected school boards

✓ There have been thirty years of studies of Aboriginal Education in Canada and elsewhere in the world and they all agree on two factors which are essential to success:

1. Aboriginal schools must be locally controlled
 2. Parents must be involved in schools.
- The Federal government has had a policy of local control of aboriginal schools since 1971.
 - Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada which has abolished local control of schools.

The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement reflects the same values as parents.

Coalition – How can our schools be transformed?

- By shifting the basic values of our laws to truly reflect Inuit Qaujiumajuqangit values and practices.
- By shifting powers down from a central authority to communities.
- By empowering parents.

NLCA

- GN must endeavour to reflect Inuit goals and objectives in its policies. (Article 32.2.1)
- GN is required to provide Inuit with an opportunity to participate in development of social & cultural policies including method of delivery. (Article 32.2.1)
- NLCA encourages self-reliance as one of its principal objectives. (Preamble & Article 2)

The Government of Nunavut's Pinasuaqtavut document reflects the same values as parents.

Coalition -How can our schools be transformed?

- By shifting the basic values of our laws to truly reflect Inuit Qaujiumajuqangit values and practices.
- By shifting powers down from a central authority to communities.
- By empowering parents.

GN – Pinasuaqtavut

- Our education system will be built within the context of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. (p.15)
- Building the capacity of communities will strengthen Nunavut. (p.5)
- We must provide options and opportunities which build the strengths of individuals, families and communities. (p.5)

Parents are echoing what Pinasuaqtavut wants to achieve.

GN – Pinasuaqtavut

- Our education system will be built within the context of Inuit Qaujimatunqangit. (p.15)
- Building the capacity of communities will strengthen Nunavut. (p.5)
- We must provide options and opportunities which build the strengths of individuals, families and communities. (p.5)

- All of these Pinasuaqtavut values speak to the need for our schools to be governed by parents who know their communities and are committed to success of their children and their communities.

How do parents see transforming schools to reflect Inuit values and practices?

Our laws must:

- ✓ ensure that Inuit languages are the language of instruction and language of administration.
- ✓ Set professional development standards for teachers and principals that are based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles of teaching and learning.
- ✓ Set Inuit employment targets for teachers, principals and administrators and support their ongoing development and training.
- ✓ Commit to development of Inuit principals as leaders.

How do parents see transforming schools by shifting power down from the Dept. of Education?

- ✓ By creating **Community Education Authorities (CEAs)** (similar to Hamlets) with responsibility and adequate resources for the delivery and administration of school programs, including:
 - Recruitment and employment of teachers, principals and support staff (similar to our municipal governments).
 - Allocation of budgets.
 - Setting school policies: e.g. school conduct, language of instruction, financial administration, school program etc.
- ✓ The **powers of the Minister** would include:
 - Certification of teachers
 - Establishment of Nunavut wide standards
 - Act as a watchdog over CEAs to ensure standards are being met.

How do parents see transforming schools by empowering parents?

Our laws must:

- ✓ Authorize the DEAs directly with powers and responsibilities.
- ✓ Clearly define roles and responsibilities of all those involved in education from the Minister, Deputy Minister, administrators, principals, teachers, parents (DEAs), and students.

Local control of our schools has been promised ...

In 1999 in the Legislative Assembly, the Minister of Education stated that dissolving school boards will result in district education authorities “ultimately managing more of the direction of education in their communities under the authority of a new Education Act”.

In 2004 the Minister of Education stated in the Legislative Assembly that with the new Education Act “there will be new direction and new powers brought forth for DEAs”.

In 2006 the Minister of Education stated in a letter that “the decision to dissolve the boards in July 2000 was guided by the belief that decision making should be more local and that DEAs should both have more responsibility and more accountability”.

Local control of our schools has been promised ...but not practiced

“In the current system, the Minister can choose which powers to allow each of the DEA to take on. This is likely unsatisfactory to DEAs, as the Act will not give them powers directly, only through regulation when the Minister chooses. This is also similar to the current system, which theoretically gives DEAs great power, but does not in practice”. (GN Department of Education document: DEA Powers and Responsibilities, p. 20)

Parents want to move forward.

The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs want parents to be directly involved in running schools, with the power and authority outlined in our laws to ensure that:

- the legitimacy of Inuit languages, culture and knowledge is incorporated into every aspect of our schools.
- the right staff are hired and receive appropriate professional developments based in Inuit Qaujimaqangit.
- the students are taught the approved curriculum.
- the school is supported by the community.
- the school is safe.
- We do not want to go backward. Rather, we want to move forward into an era of proven success in our schools.

The Trail Ahead...

- The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs needs a new Executive.
- The Coalition needs Executive members who want to stand up and represent the voice of parents in education.
- At the Annual General Meeting (tomorrow) we will be seeking nominations for 4 new Executive members from all three regions.
- The Coalition needs to be a strong voice in the coming months when the new Education Act is introduced in the Nunavut Legislature.
- The Coalition is only as strong as its members.

A photograph of a person in a small, light-colored boat on a vast, icy sea. The person is wearing dark clothing and is using a long wooden paddle. The sea is covered in numerous ice floes of various sizes. In the background, there are low, snow-covered mountains under a pale sky. The overall scene is desolate and expansive.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has".

Margaret Mead

Coalition of Nunavut DEAs

November 2006