

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS MARCH 15-16, 2022 | MONTREAL

The Council of Commissioners continued its work on the Nunavik education system. As part of follow-up discussions, the Commissioners were briefed on graduation requirements for Nunavik students. The presentation included an overview of mandatory and complementary courses leading to units required to obtain an SSD. The presentation led to a conversation on the language of instruction in Nunavik, and the need for an in-depth review of the bilingual education model currently used in Nunavik schools. Work on the development of an action plan to improve the Nunavik education system has started. The action plan will be presented to the Council of Commissioners in December 2022.

Director General Harriet Keleutak indicated that the objective of the action plan will be to address the academic competencies gap between Nunavik students and their Quebec peers in the youth sector. The academic obstacles resulting from this gap have been researched, documented and discussed at length by the Council over the years. These challenges have a significant detrimental impact on Nunavimmiut wishing to continue their studies at the vocational, college or university levels.

The Director General also stressed that as part of the initial work undertaken to develop the action plan, the review of the Language of Instruction Policy by the Council of Commissioners would be a necessary step. For example, findings of the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq (KI) mandated 2021 Education Research point to the necessity of introducing instruction in the second languages as of Grade 1. This is a major change that could be introduced as early as 2024-2025. To be implemented, it would require the amendment of the Language of Instruction Policy by the Council.

President Sarah Aloupa indicated that no Nunavik-wide consultation would be held on this subject. Rather, a review of past consultation reports would be undertaken to inform the development of the action plan.

During their December 2021 meeting, the Commissioners reviewed conclusions of the final report of a two-year Education Research that examined the school board's curriculums, programs and pathways aimed at enhancing the success of Nunavik students. As a result of a comparison with the Quebec Education Program (QEP), the research documented gaps in competency expectations in many areas. Many of the documented gaps directly and indirectly relate to the acquisition of second language competencies. The research team received its mandate on December 13, 2019, from the KI Executive Committee. The mandated researchers are affiliated with the *Chaire-réseau de recherche sur la jeunesse du Québec*.

Information on graduation requirements is available on the KI website, in three languages: <https://www.kativik.qc.ca/en/graduation-requirements/>

The school calendars for the 2022-2023 school year were reviewed and approved by the Council of Commissioners. They feature a school year with August 15, 2022 as a start date, and June 5, 2023 as an end date. The overall length of the school year remains the same. Compared to recent years, the school year will start the third week of August rather than the second.

The Council of Commissioners approved changes to the Post-Secondary Sponsorship Policy, increasing financial support for students opting to manage their own lease and as well as amounts reimbursed to parents using babysitting services. The rate used to calculate the housing allowance of students opting to manage their own lease increased from + 10% (CMHC rate) to + 25% (CMHC rate), which reflects current rent levels in the province. Babysitting fees were increased to \$15 an hour for a maximum amount of \$90 a day.

The Commissioners from various communities shared information about recruitment challenges affecting schools, and more specifically Inuktitut instruction. Schools continue to require support for local recruitment. The shortage of Inuktitut teachers at the secondary level is a concern. The situation directly impacts graduation, as students require 6 units in Inuktitut language to obtain their SSD.

The renewed collective agreements for teachers, support staff and professionals, includes an unprecedented package of benefits for locally recruited employees. This may help schools attract, recruit and retain employees.