

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS OCTOBER 24-25, 2022 | MONTREAL

The Commissioners approved the auditor report for the fiscal year 2021-2022. In addition, they reviewed and approved the 2022-2023 summary of financial statements, which confirms an expected year-end accumulated deficit of \$18 million.

Discussions with the Quebec Ministry of Education are on-going, following the submission of the 2022-2023 deficit budget that commissioners approved at a special meeting on September 22, 2022.

The deficit budget reveals the need for new budget rules that will provide Kativik Iisarniliriniq with adequate funding. The school board's current budget rules were approved at the end of 2019 and will expire on June 30, 2023. The negotiations of new budget rules with the Ministry of Education are expected to begin shortly.

The accumulated deficit results mainly from infrastructure needs (construction and renovation).

The Commissioners approved changes to the SO-09 Policy on evaluation of student learning and promotion. The approved modifications will provide additional professional autonomy to teachers; specifically, teachers will now be able to attribute grades ranging from 56 to 59 to their students, and grades lower than 40.

These changes will be reflected in DASH, the student file data management system.

Prior to these changes, grades ranging from 56 to 59 were rounded up to 60. Grades ranging from 56 to 59 can now be attributed. In addition, grades under the 60 pass mark were capped at 40, and could not be attributed to students. Grades lower than 40 can now be attributed.

The Commissioners approved a resolution awarding a contract to Northern Counselling and Therapeutic Services (NCTS). The firm will be mandated to deliver services to support the mental wellbeing of the school community including students, families and school staff.

The contract is awarded for a two-year period. NCTS services will allow student support professionals to prioritize students in crisis, while ensuring that employees and their families are also able to access counselling services.

For more information, please contact Complementary and Compassionate Services at cc.services@kativik.qc.ca.

Renovations were delayed and are still on-going at Iguarsivik School in Puvirnituk, which has resulted in challenging working conditions for staff. The situation has also impacted students. The Commissioners were informed that starting November 11, 2022, the school will be closed pending the completion of the school's renovation. As at October 25, it is expected that teachers will remain in Puvirnituk during the school closure.

The contractor has been asked to prioritize completion of renovations at Iguarsivik School. The contractor is also working on the construction of a new warehouse in Puvirnituk, as well as a fourplex (staff housing).

The completion of these projects had to be rescheduled due to unforeseen delays in the delivery of essential construction material.

The Commissioners approved the leasing of buildings in various Nunavik communities to be used for teaching and staff housing.

Opting for leasing agreements when infrastructures are available allows Kativik Ilisarniliriniq to now offer housing to its staff. In comparison, obtaining funding from the MEQ and constructing new buildings requires more time.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a notable increase in the cost of construction and renovation projects. This is mainly due to shortages affecting construction workers and building material.

In June 2022, the Commissioners expressed the concerns raised by their constituencies regarding the implementation of changes related to the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq Language of Instruction Policy. These concerns were reiterated. The Commissioners emphasized that they want to be provided with detailed summaries of the research that will inform the options to be presented to them. In addition, they asked that communities and parents be provided comprehensive information before any change be rolled out in Nunavik schools.

The Director General and Assistant Director General assured the Commissioners that work is on-going to present options related to the review of the Language of Instruction Policy and the research behind each of these options.

The Commissioners will be updated at their December meeting. In addition, a presentation is also planned for the Education Council of February 2023 (participants include Education Committee representatives and Executive Committee members).

The objective of the review of the Language of Instruction Policy is to strengthen Inuktitut, while also preparing students to pursue post-secondary education.

A working group was established to examine bilingual education models based on recent research. The group meets twice a month. No changes will be implemented before options are presented to the Council of Commissioners for review and approval.

The timeline we are currently working with aims at implementing changes as of the 2024-2025 school year.

The Kativik Ilisarniliriniq Student Ombudsman briefed the Council of Commissioners on her mandate under the current KSB-06 Policy on Student Ombudsman Process (Resolution CC no. 2015/16-38). Since her appointment, the Student Ombudsman has provided conflict resolution services only, as complaints received required no investigation.

The mandate of the Student Ombudsman is to address cases in which a student or a parent is dissatisfied with a service received from Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, or with the application of a regulation, procedure or practice, and wishes to make a formal complaint.

Parents, employees and citizens can reach the Student Ombudsman directly by phone or email. Information on the procedure to follow can be found on the KI website in three languages: www.kativik.qc.ca/en/student-ombudsman/

In May 2022, the Quebec government initiated a reform of the Student Ombudsman complaint processing procedure in educational contexts.

This reform is enshrined in Bill 9, an *Act respecting the National Student Ombudsman* (2022, chapter 17), adopted on May 31, 2022 and assented to on June 2. Bill 9 creates an independent body, outside of the education network, as well as the province-wide implementation of a standard complaint processing procedure. This new independent institution will replace local procedures that currently apply to both the public and private networks. The reform also provides for a standard, three-step complaint processing procedure.

The new National Student Ombudsman Mr. Jean-François Bernier has one year to set up the new institution so that it is operational by September 2023 along with the coming into effect of Bill 9. Kativik Ilisarniliriniq will examine the amendments required, if needed, to policy *KSB-06 Policy on student ombudsman process*, taking into consideration Bill 9.

The Commissioners reiterated the need for data driven decision-making, aligned to the 2016-2023 strategic plan. They specifically asked to be briefed regularly on student absenteeism, graduation and dropout rates, class closure and other essential statistics, with breakdown per community.

Following a 2017-2018 development phase, the school board rolled-out the implementation of DASH in 2018-2019, a student information management system.

Now operational in all of the youth sector schools and adult education centres, DASH allows departments to collect and manage data related to student files, student attendance and more.

In June 2019, an initial analysis of graduation and school dropout data was presented to the Commissioners. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and staff turnover disrupted the planned follow-up analysis and presentation of DASH data.

The Director General indicated that the presentation of data analysis would start again. This responsibility will fall under the responsibilities of the recently appointed Director of Strategic Liaisons Denis Daigle, who oversees files related to the Strategic Plan and its implementation.