

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS – MARCH 12 - 14, 2024 | SALLUIT

As part of on-going work on the Nunavik education system, the Council of Commissioners was briefed on the results of the 2019-2021 Education Research (Audit), which examined and the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq second language curriculum, comparing it with the Quebec Education Program. Concrete progress was achieved in the clarification and implementation of clear pathways to student success. Work continues in the effort to address specific pedagogical challenges as well as gaps identified in the area of teacher training.

The 2019-2021 Education Research (Audit) was commissioned by the Council to examine the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq curriculum and compare it with the Quebec Education Program.

In December 2022, a comprehensive complementary report was tabled at the Council of Commissioners. Titled *Language Teaching and Programs at Kativik Ilisarniliriniq: A State of the Debate*, this report examines existing bilingual education models and findings from recent research on bilingual education. The report's conclusions were also presented at the April 2023 Education meeting in Quaqtaq.

Findings from this report include 7 pedagogical keys that will continue to guide the work undertaken. Next steps include:

- clarification of KI's pedagogical approach and progression of learning;
- time and resources allocation proposals in view of piloting proposed changes to the Nunavik education system, and;
- development of a comprehensive proposal and implementation plan to be submitted to the Council of Commissioners.

The report [*Language Teaching and Programs at Kativik Ilisarniliriniq: A State of the Debate*](#) is available on the KI website, along with the [2023 Education Council report](#).

In the context of a newly elected Council of Commissioners and on-going collective agreement negotiations for teachers, support staff and professionals, the commissioners discussed the limitations of the current legal structure from the perspective of self-determination in education as guaranteed under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreements (17.0.68).

The commissioners discussed how KI's demands for negotiation mandates often align with those of its unionized employees. However, as the employer, KI can only apply the mandates that are approved by the Quebec Treasury Board. Yet, KI is not allowed to present its demands directly to the Treasury Board; within the current structure, KI must rely on the MEQ to advocate on its behalf. The approved negotiation mandates also follow the budget constraints identified by the Treasury Board.

The commissioners found that often, KI's hands are tied without approval from the Treasury Board. For example, during the negotiation of the 2020-2023 collective agreements, KI had no approved mandate to discuss benefits for locally recruited employees at the negotiation table. Funding for benefits such as a retention premium, transportation benefits (outings) and housing allowance was negotiated

separately, and these benefits were rolled out through administrative measures outside of the collective agreements.

The commissioners expressed their dissatisfaction at the fact that under the on-going negotiations to renew the 2020-2023 collective agreements, regional disparities, although directly relevant to KI, are being discussed at the central tables where KI does not have a seat. KI only participates in the negotiations taking place at the sectoral tables.

Work is progressing on the preparation of the Kativik Ilisarniliriniq (KI) strategic planning process. A consultation plan is currently being developed around our cyclical calendar of meetings to ensure we take advantage of scheduled activities to consult as many stakeholders as possible (staff, commissioners, parents, and more). The consultation will aim to identify a shared vision and prioritize needs; this will inform the development of the strategic plan.

A detailed implementation plan, along with a contract proposal, will be presented at the June 2024 Council of Commissioners for review and approval.

The strategic plan consultation phase is expected to last 1 year, and would be launched at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

The strategic plan development phase is expected to last 6 months. A final document, endorsed by the Council of Commissioners, would thus be available by June 2026.

Commissioner Eva-Kauki Gordon (Kuujuuaq) reported back to the Council concerning training needs identified by members of the Ungava Tullatavik Health Centre committee, on which she represents KI. Particular needs include the Security Guard training certification and specialized Inuktitut translators who could help with vocabulary related to health, anatomy and medical procedures.

The Security Guard training is part of the current service offer of the Adult Education and Vocational Training department. The training can be offered in different communities upon request from Nunavik organizations. Funding options could also be explored once a request is made to KI's AEVT department.

Requests for support related to specialized Inuktitut vocabulary should be directed to the Avataq Institute, the organization leading language preservation in Nunavik.

At Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, specialized language resources are scarce. As such, we are only able to prioritize content related to education, curriculum development and corporate communications of all types.

The commissioners approved the Policy on Psychoactive Substance Use Procedure on School Grounds ([CS-03](#)). This policy is new. In the context of the opioid crisis currently affecting Canada, it will complement prevention activities currently offered in our schools addressing drug use and addiction prevention. The policy seeks to create a safe environment that fosters learning and the potential for every student to grow.

Kativik Ilisarniliriniq has the obligation to create a procedure to address situations related to the use, possession or selling of psychoactive substances on school grounds (in school, on school premises and at school activities).

The procedure focuses on targeted prevention, as well as individualized and specialized intervention with a harm reduction approach (including an intervention toolbox).

This procedure is the result of collaborative efforts begun in 2022. It stems from various consultations with key stakeholders, under the umbrella of a cross-sectoral NRBHSS committee that brings together multiple organizations including, among others: Nurrait, DYP, Makivvik Justice, CLSC, KI, Isuarsivik, NIIA, Nunavik Police Service, and more.

Between now and the fall of 2024, next steps will include training and feedback on the toolbox, with the goal of deploying it in selected pilot schools during the 2024-2025 school year.

The commissioners expressed concerns with the interruption of services due to lack of teachers. Although the on-going teacher collective agreement negotiations are expected to result in a significant salary increase over 5 years, the general population still appears to be unaware of the competitive working conditions KI currently offers to staff recruited locally (retention premium, housing allowance and transportation benefits that can be used for outings on the land).

Employee retention is a priority, and it's also part of the solution to the high staff turnaround that we are experiencing.

Since the renewal of the collective agreements for teachers, support staff and professionals in March 2022, KI offers the following benefits to locally recruited employees: cashable food transportation allowance, retention premium, housing allowance and transportation benefits that can be used for outings on the land.

Each school manages the recruitment process for local positions. We encourage Nunavimmiut to contact their school to discuss employment opportunities. We are always looking for teachers, but there are also many other types of positions available.

The Council of Commissioners approved the yearly renewal of Microsoft licences with terms that reflect the growing needs of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq in Information Technologies (IT). The commissioners were also briefed about on-going activities such as: cybersecurity awareness campaign, network upgrades planned in all schools, smartboard deployment and the installation of video conferencing units in all schools.

By the end of March 2024, schools, adult education centres, warehouses and offices located in communities of the Hudson Coast (Kuujuaraapik to Salluit), will be connected to fast fibre internet (Tamaani), as well as Starlink Business Edition. On the Ungava coast (Kuujuuaq to Kangiqsujuaq) internet access at all KI facilities continues to rely strictly on Low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites (Starlink Business Edition and OneWeb).

Growing internet access has resulted in new needs, including network upgrades that will ensure safe access for students and network security that meets MEQ requirements.

The commissioners were briefed on the Accumulated Maintenance Deficit (AMD) which has now reached \$248.6 M for all the buildings assessed so far. The assessment of KI housing units has been on-going since July 2023. The AMD is expected to grow further once this last phase is completed.

The replacement value of all our buildings currently represents more than \$1.8 B.

All required maintenance work is tracked using Maximo software, introduced in 2021. This computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) helps by automating workflows and provides an up-to-date inventory of all required maintenance work on our buildings.

Over the last three years, the maintenance needs of all schools, adult education centres, student residences and warehouses were assessed in the 14 Nunavik communities. All KI housing units are currently being assessed and entered into the Maximo software. This is the last phase of KI's global infrastructure maintenance needs assessment.

Next, the replacement of pad foundations by piles on new and existing buildings will be implemented in Maximo. The objective is to prepare for the forecasted receding permafrost over the next 20 to 30 years, and to confirm the current estimate of \$60 M for this planned work.

The Commissioners were informed about plans to implement a new software that will allow the Material Resources department to track vehicle maintenance needs and plan upcoming work. The objective is to reduce student transportation issues while getting a more accurate picture of vehicle operations in each community.

KI's fleet of vehicles has grown in all Nunavik villages. Meanwhile, maintenance and repair still remain an issue. Our fleet now totals 200 vehicles with more than 20 new vehicles to be added this summer. The fleet includes pick-up trucks, school buses and heavy equipment machinery used for maintenance purposes.

Future vehicle maintenance plans include the purchase and installation of hydraulic vehicle lifts and tooling in each of the new KI warehouses. This would allow for minor maintenance and repairs to be done by our own employees when possible. For major repairs, experts would be flown in and could work directly at our warehouses. This would reduce our dependence on NV garages or Landholdings facilities.

The commissioners were provided with an overview of all current capital investment projects, as well as major and minor renovations, along with past and projected delivery dates ranging up to 2029. The overview also included the requests submitted to the Quebec Ministry of Education (MEQ) for construction projects under the PQI 2024-2034, totalling more than \$750 M. Projects that were not granted over the past 2 years were included in the PQI 2024-2034.

Capital investment projects include: **housing units** (Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq, Aupaluk, Salluit, Puvirnituk, Inukjuak, Umiujaq, Kuujjuaraapik), **schools** (Tasiujaq, Quaqaq, Salluit—Ikusik, Akulivik, Umiujaq—portable classrooms and Kuujjuaraapik—portable classrooms), **warehouses and bus garages** (Kuujjuaq, Tasiujaq, Kangirsuk, Kangiqsujuaq, Salluit, Ivujivik, Akulivik), **student residences** (Kuujjuaq), **adult education centres** (Kuujjuaq, Kangiqsujuaq) and **administrative offices** (Kuujjuaq).

Major renovation projects include: **schools** (Kuujjuaq—Jaanimmariq, Tasiujaq, Puvirnituk—Iguarsivik, Inukjuak—Innalik, Umiujaq, Kuujjuaraapik), **adult education**

centre (Puvirnituaq), **housing** (Umiujaq), **offices** (Montreal) and **Nunavik Sivunitsavut** (Montreal).

The commissioner of Puvirnituaq resigned from his position. Elections will be held in this community in the coming weeks.

If you are interested in becoming involved in education, please consider running for the position of Commissioner with KI, for the community of Puvirnituaq. You can find more information about the work of the Council on the KI website by selecting "[Elected Officials](#)" from the website menu.

UPDATE: Theresa Etok was elected on April 3, 2024. She will be sworn in during the June council meeting, in Kuujuaq.