

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS – JUNE 03 - 06, 2025 | KUUJJUARAAPIK

The Council of Commissioners was briefed on the agreements in principle that were reached with unionized employees in April 2025 (professionals) and May 2025 (teachers and support staff). Over 90% of employees in each category voted in favor of the agreements, reflecting strong support across the board. Kativik Ilisarniliriniq will implement administrative measures that feature generous new benefits alongside those introduced under the 2020-2023 collective agreements.

The collective agreements will be renewed for a period of five years (2023-2028). As of June 2025, the final texts of the collective agreements are being prepared. These will then be signed by both parties. Once these steps are completed, the 2023-2028 collective agreements will come into effect.

The implementation of all financial benefits and salary increases will require changes in our pay-roll system, which we aim to put in place as soon as the collective agreements are signed.

It is important to note that the payment of salary increases under the 2023-2028 collective agreements will be retroactive for any employee having worked with us during the period concerned. The new benefits will be paid in accordance with the applicable modalities. The food transportation benefits introduced under the 2020-2023 collective agreements will remain.

In addition, benefits will also be implemented by Kativik Ilisarniliriniq, through administrative measures that are funded under a differentiated financial framework, enshrined in the 2022 Protocol of Agreement. Namely, benefits introduced for the 2020-2023 period will remain: retention premium for locally hired staff, transportation benefits (including outings on the land for Nunavik residents) and housing allowance for locally hired staff.

Funding available under the differentiated financial framework was also bonified, allowing the introduction of a generous signing bonus and a returning bonus for Nunavik based teachers and professionals. Furthermore, the existing retention premium, originally established in 2001, has been significantly enhanced to include a broader range of professionals and teachers. Rather than being based on Nunavik's geographic sectors, the premium is now structured according to years of service, which will make it accessible to more professionals and include those working in positions based outside Nunavik.

Finally, support staff based in Nunavik and outside Nunavik will be offered a new and substantial attraction and retention premium.

In the context of the implementation of Law 14 by the Quebec government, the Council of Commissioners followed up on a resolution they adopted in December 2024, which gave Kativik Ilisarniliriniq the mandate to initiate legal proceedings to seek exemption for Inuit beneficiaries pursuing post-secondary studies in Quebec. After being briefed on the next steps to move forward a proposed judicial application, the Council approved a resolution to retain legal counsel for the purpose of the legal proceedings.

The legal proceedings are initiated to challenge Law 14 on the grounds that it violates the treaty-based right of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq school graduates to pursue post-secondary studies outside the Nunavik region in the language of their choice.

In a separate briefing from the Director of Post-Secondary Student Services (PSSS) Phebe Bentley, the Council heard that the negative impact of Law 14 is already felt on the ground. Some students have withdrawn from courses and programs, feeling discouraged by the requirement to take additional French courses, while others persevered, failing their courses or passing them with very low grades. This in turn affects their CRC (R score), lowering their chances of being admitted to competitive university programs offered by English universities in Quebec.

The legal briefing of the proposed judicial application highlighted the need for support and active involvement on the part of Makivvik, as ultimately, the judicial application will focus on the treaty-rights of all James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) beneficiaries. This aspect was also highlighted in the activity report of PSSS Director Phebe Bentley, who stressed that a more proactive involvement on the part of Makivvik could make a significant difference and help dismantle the barriers that Law 14 has placed on the path of Nunavimmiut.

The judicial application will be filed before the Superior Court of Quebec. It will ask the court to declare that certain sections of the Charter of the French Language infringe on the treaty rights of JBNQA beneficiaries, and to declare that these sections don't apply to them.

The next steps include the continuation of discussions with Makivvik and the Crees, the filing legal proceedings and the preparation of the case for trial.

The Council reviewed and approved the 2025-2026 balanced budget. The Commissioners were also informed that although discussions with the MEQ are progressing, the approval of budget rules is still pending.

The school board's current budget rules were approved at the end of 2019 and expired on June 30, 2023.

From 2020-2021 to 2023-2024, the Council of Commissioners approved deficit budgets and financial statements reporting a cumulated deficit. At the same time, the issue of inadequate funding was part of recurring discussions with the Quebec Ministry of Education. Inadequate funding was also at the core of a litigation before the Superior Court of Quebec, initiated by Kativik Ilisarniliriniq in 2016.

These proceedings were discontinued by the Council of Commissioners in 2022, when a revised and renewed Protocol of Agreement was negotiated with the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Treasury Board Secretariat as part of the 2020-2023 collective agreement negotiations.

The 2022 Protocol of Agreement sets the framework for collective agreement negotiations. It replaced a 1986 protocol that had been last renewed in 1991. Furthermore, it includes a differentiated financial framework that ensures funding for administrative measures related to the retention and attraction of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq's employees. Funding available under the differentiated financial framework was bonified for the 2023-2028 period, allowing Kativik Ilisarniliriniq to introduce new sets of benefits through administrative measures.

As part of the activity report presented by the Education Services' School Operations team, the Council was briefed on projects that support student perseverance and academic success. Implemented by partner organizations in various schools throughout Nunavik, these projects complement extra-curricular activities led by teachers.

An agreement with United for Literacy (formerly Frontier College) allows high school students to benefit from the support of mathematics and literacy tutors. In 2024-2025, nine tutors were present in eight Nunavik communities (Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq, Kangirsuk, Quaqtaq, Kangiqsujaq, Akulivik, Umiujaq and Kuujjuaraapik). As always, the full deployment of these professional resources depends on the availability of local KI housing, as well as on the ability of our implementing partner to recruit suitable candidates.

In 2024-2025, Youth Fusion implemented five other projects in five Nunavik communities (Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq, Akulivik, Umiujaq, Kuujjuaraapik). The projects focussed on creating links between the schools and the communities, while allowing participating youth to explore new interests.

Nurrait – Jeunes Karibus maintains a strong and successful presence in our schools. In 2024-2025, its nature and adventure-based intervention program was offered to secondary students in 12 participating Nunavik communities (i.e. all villages except Kuujjuaraapik and Akulivik).

Once again this year, summer courses were offered from June 3 to 19, 2025, to youth sector students requiring mandatory Secondary level credits to obtain their Secondary School Diploma. Based on the success of the model adopted last year, and in order to extend student access, the deployment of in-community teaching resources was prioritized. Additional academic support is also available to students during the school year, through tutoring services for which parents can obtain funding under the Homeschooling and tutoring policy (SO-08).

The courses offered include Secondary 4 and 5 levels mathematics, science, social sciences, French, English and Inuktitut.

In 2024-2025, funding for tutoring available to parents under the Homeschooling and Tutoring policy ([SO-08](#)) has benefited a total of 42 students (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in Nunavik, as well as beneficiary students outside the region).

As part of the activity report presented by the Education Services' School Operations team, the Council was briefed on the Student Teacher Placement Program. This initiative is implemented in collaboration with Canadian universities where candidates are identified for six to eight weeks placements in our schools. The initiative has been successful. Although recruitment is not necessarily an outcome of the student placements, the program complements the school board's global recruitment efforts.

The program focuses on 4th and final year university students. The host school must have a qualified teacher who is willing to mentor the student teacher during their placement. Finally, housing also needs to be available.

In 2024-2025, six placements were completed in five Nunavik communities: Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq, Kangiqsujaq, Puvirnituq and Umiujaq.

The Council of Commissioners approved its new five-year strategic plan, Sivumuattiit – Going Forward Together, marking a major milestone in the organization’s journey toward strengthening student success across Nunavik. This plan is the result of a deeply collaborative and inclusive process. It engaged nearly 1,000 voices from across the region, including staff, students, commissioners, and community members.

The development of the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan was guided by a comprehensive consultation process that prioritized inclusivity, transparency, and community engagement. Between June 2024 and June 2025, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq conducted a series of in-person and virtual consultations with nearly 1,000 participants, including students, parents, educators, school administrators, community leaders.

Key elements of the consultation process included:

- **Youth Voices:** Dedicated workshops were conducted with secondary students to ensure their perspectives were central to the planning process.
- **Staff Input:** Teachers, professionals, support staff, and administrators contributed through consultation workshops and online activities.
- **Data Collection:** Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to identify trends in student success, well-being, and access to culturally relevant education.
- **Collaborative Analysis:** Findings were synthesized and reviewed by the Sivumuattiit team, ensuring alignment with Inuit values and long-term regional goals.

The insights gathered through this process directly informed the vision of student success, the renewed mission and vision of KI and the strategic priorities outlined in the plan, reinforcing the commitment to student-centered, culturally grounded, and community-driven education.

The Post-Secondary Student Services (PSSS) team plays a vital role in supporting Nunavik students pursuing higher education across Quebec and beyond. The June 2025 activity report provided Commissioners with a snapshot of the team’s work, student demographics, achievements, and ongoing challenges.

- **Student Support and Reach:** As of May 2025, 133 active students were enrolled in the sponsorship program. Sponsored students are affiliated with communities across Nunavik, with the highest representation from Kuujjuaq, Inukjuak, and Puvirnituk. They span a wide age range, from 17 to 58 years old, and are enrolled in over 40 different institutions (in Quebec, Canada and beyond), including John Abbott College, Dawson College, Concordia University, and Nunavik Sivunitsavut.
- **Graduation and Achievement:** In 2024–2025, 30 sponsored students completed their programs of studies, including, but not limited to, the following types of programs: Ph.D., bachelor’s degrees, college-level programs, vocational training programs offered outside Nunavik.
- **Strategic Development:** Work is underway to establish a Post-Secondary Institute in Nunavik, supported by a 2023–2024 consultation report, collaboration with Nunavik organizations and partners, and a funding agreement with the Quebec *Ministère de l’Éducation* (MEQ) and *Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur* (MEQ).

The Council of Commissioners was presented with the June 2025 activity report from the Adult Education and Vocational Training Department. The report informed the Council of the department's continued expansion across Nunavik, highlighting its efforts to deliver accessible, culturally grounded, and community-driven learning opportunities. Commissioners were briefed on key achievements, challenges encountered, and strategic priorities set for the upcoming academic year.

General Education:

- A total of 409 students enrolled in 2024–2025, marking a 34.5% increase from the previous year. Retention and attendance rates vary widely across centers. Kuujjuarapik leads with 70% retention and 80% attendance, while Kangiqsujuaq and Salluit show high retention but low attendance, indicating barriers to participation.
- During the school year, two students earned their Secondary School Diploma via distance education.

Vocational Training:

- Enrollment increased by 17.5%, with 74 students participating in 2024–2025. Vocational programs show higher retention and attendance, which is attributed to the program's direct relevance to employment.
- During the school year, 25 graduates completed programs in areas such as Carpentry, Pharmacy Assistance, Automobile Mechanics, and Diamond Drilling.
- New programs planning for 2025–2026 include Hairdressing, Heavy Vehicle Mechanics, Plumbing and Heating, and Inuktitut Translation and Interpretation.
- Ongoing projects include Reconnaissance des acquis for Professional Cooking and Secretarial Studies, with training across 12 communities.

Services to Businesses and Communities:

- A total of 93 training sessions were delivered across 14 communities, reaching 1,362 participants.
- SAAQ Class 5 driver training supported 548 participants, with 189 successfully obtaining licenses.
- Initiatives include expanding Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC) pathways, developing local First Aid instructors, and planning new training sessions in culinary services, equipment operation, and early childhood education.

Cultural and Parenting Programs:

- Cultural workshops under the Ilurqisitigut program were held in multiple communities, featuring qajaq making, muskox wool spinning, fish skin tanning, and parka making. More than 70 participants benefited from these activities that aim to strengthen Inuit knowledge, creativity, and academic success (e.g., secondary school credits).
- A regional parenting assessment identified sleep-related challenges affecting student learning. In response, community-based workshops will launch in September 2025 to promote healthy routines.
- A radio project with Esuma and a Cultural Toolbox initiative aim to strengthen parent-student engagement and traditional knowledge transmission.

The Council of Commissioners expressed support for the launch of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq's new full-time university-level teacher training program in partnership with McGill University. The program is designed specifically for Nunavimmiut aspiring to become educators. This initiative reflects the Council's commitment to strengthening the Inuktitut sector, addressing the regional teacher shortage, and promoting culturally grounded education across Nunavik.

The program officially began on September 2, 2025, in Kuujjuaq, with the opening of a new student residence to support learners from across the region.

Developed in partnership with McGill University and funded by the MES, the program leads to a teaching certificate valid in Nunavik, and offers a pathway toward a Bachelor of Education to those who would join our workforce after completing the Certificate.

The curriculum is tailored to Nunavik's educational context, with instruction in Inuktitut, and includes cultural content, practical field experiences, and three academic semesters (Fall, Winter, Spring).

Commissioners also acknowledged the long-standing partnership with McGill University, which has supported over 200 Inuit educators through on-the-job training programs over the past five decades. This new full-time model complements existing efforts and is expected to inspire similar initiatives in other Indigenous regions.

The Council of Commissioners reviewed and discussed the Material Resources Department's evaluation of the current use of Kativik Ilisarniliriniq's warehouses in for Adult Education and Vocational Training (AEVT) programming. This review was part of a broader effort to ensure that facilities meet both educational and operational needs across Nunavik.

Commissioners were informed that the shared use of warehouses to host vocational training courses and run maintenance operations leads to significant logistical challenges, including:

- Conflicts between daily maintenance activities and scheduled classes.
- Noise and safety concerns, especially when welding is conducted in the woodshop.
- Limited space for racking and storage, resulting in reliance on outdoor containers, which are inefficient in winter.
- Classroom areas overlapping with staff area and task coordination zones.

In response to the assessment presented, the Council supported the following actions:

- Preserving the warehouse for exclusive maintenance use, to ensure operational efficiency and safety.
- Offering AEVT a newly built facility (45' x 26') in Kangiqsujuaq, ready by August or September 2025, specifically designed to host auto mechanic training.
- Including requests for new AEVT facilities in the next revision of the Investment Plan, prioritizing communities that lack proper workshop infrastructure.

The Human Resources department presented a comprehensive update on staffing, onboarding, and recruitment initiatives. The Council reviewed the department's efforts to strengthen workforce planning and improve employee integration across Nunavik. The Commissioners also expressed appreciation for the department's efforts to improve recruitment and retention. They encouraged continued collaboration with local administrators and community partners to ensure culturally responsive onboarding and support for new hires.

Recruitment and Staffing:

- Between November 1, 2024, and April 15, 2025, the department received 3,166 applications and posted 58 positions. A total of 160 hires were made, including:
 - 62 teachers (25 in the Adult sector, 9 local, 28 regional)
 - 54 support staff, with 22 Special Education Technicians
 - 25 professionals
 - 19 managers.
- Five new positions were created during this period:
 - 3 support staff (Administrative and Social Aid Technicians).
 - 2 management roles (Assistant Director and Coordinator).

Onboarding Measures:

- A 3-day onboarding program continues to be offered in alternating English and French sessions. Since the start of the 2024–2025 school year, 204 new employees have been onboarded through this program.

Onboarding Feedback (April 2025 Survey):

- Overall onboarding experience: 80% satisfied or very satisfied.
- Supervisor support: 88% satisfied or very satisfied.
- Feeling welcomed: 84% satisfied or very satisfied.
- Relocation experience: 77% satisfied or very satisfied.
- Feedback emphasized the value of cultural training and the need for improvements related to housing and ID access.