

Nunavut's Education Act: Education, Legislation, and Change in the Arctic

Heather E. McGregor

Abstract: The 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* endeavours to call Nunavut's public education system to account for linguistic, cultural, and local relevance to the majority Inuit population. Development of the Act involved lengthy scrutiny of existing and proposed education legislation to ensure consistency and compatibility with the new vision of education. Implementation of this Act is now necessitating system transformation on a substantial scale, on the part of educators, administrators, district education authorities, and territorial government officials. This article explores the historical roots of the 2008 Act. Renewal of the education system was made possible and necessary by the creation of Nunavut Territory in 1999, which grew out of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* and negotiations for increased Inuit self-government. However, situating the Act in the history of Nunavut's educational policy and decision making, it can be seen as a milestone in a longer change process aimed at creating schools that better reflect communities and the needs of northern students. Considering the inherent potential of education to reflect and sustain Inuit self-determination, linguistic protection, and cultural promotion, the intersection of education with politics through the Act was long in coming. Education is now seen to be one of the Nunavut government's most important priorities. This is well worth recognizing in the history of education in Nunavut, and in Canada as well.

The 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* (the Act) is the first provincial or territorial education legislation in Canada that represents the educational vision of an Indigenous population. The Act calls on the education system to account for linguistic, cultural, and local relevance to Inuit, beginning with this statement: "It is the responsibility of the Minister, the district education authorities and the education staff to ensure that Inuit societal values and the principles and concepts of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* are incorporated throughout, and fostered by, the public education system."¹ The term *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ)² refers to Inuit culture, world view, language, tradition, social organization, knowledge, life skills, values, and expectations.

Development of the Act consolidates a new vision of education for Nunavut's students, a majority of whom are Inuit, and live in one of Canada's most remote regions.³ Implementation of the Act is now necessitating substantial system transformation on the part of educators, principals, district education authorities (DEAs),⁴ and territorial government administrators.

It is worth considering whether this recent legislative change continues or diverts away from the direction of educational change that was underway before the creation of Nunavut and, secondly, why such a significant public effort towards articulation of the vision for Nunavut education did not come sooner.

Renewal of the education system through legislation in 2008 could be viewed as simply an extension, if somewhat protracted, of Nunavut's creation in 1999. The territory grew out of the 1993 *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (NLCA) between Inuit in the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, and out of lengthy negotiations for increased Inuit self-determination during the 1970s and 1980s. With the coming of Nunavut, expectations for change were high, and rightly so. Political reorganization to support Inuit self-determination has been significant and groundbreaking since the agreement. However, public focus on the land claim and creation of Nunavut has overshadowed other important change processes, particularly in the realm of education. I argue that the movements for educational change and for Inuit self-determination in Nunavut have not been closely aligned. The transition to the Nunavut government diverted from the form of local and regional educational decision making that had been established by the previous Northwest Territories government by closing the boards of education. Re-drafting education legislation was identified as the first priority of the Nunavut government beginning in 2000, yet it was not successfully passed until 2008. In the meantime, Thomas R. Berger characterized the state of education in Nunavut as a "crisis" and essentially a failure of NLCA implementation by the signing parties.⁵

Therefore, to the history of Inuit self-determination in Nunavut, the Education Act and the mandate it has established represent an overdue merging of the political and educational change movements. The Act sets direction for education in the second decade of Nunavut and builds on change that was underway well before the NLCA was signed, particularly change that occurred after the mid-1980s, when Inuit regions of the Northwest Territories began administering education in order to better meet the needs of Inuit students. The *Nunavut Education Act* is the most notable milestone in a longer journey—one that has endured remarkable changes—to establish an education system appropriately balanced between cultures, languages,

economies, and ways of living in the Arctic, and built on decision making structures that reflect the Inuit majority. Unfortunately, what the 2008 Act did not allow was formal public reconsideration of an important part of Nunavut's history: the role of boards of education⁶ as a bridging mechanism between community needs and the territorial government.

My Perspective and the Nunavut Context

My writing is shaped by my own history. I am a white northerner⁷ born in the Northwest Territories (NWT) and raised in Nunavut, and my family has been involved in educational change since the early 1970s. As a student, I attended elementary school in Iqaluit, and experienced culture class in which we learned sewing or carpentry from Inuit Elders and went on land trips by dog team. Later, in high school, I experienced culture *clash*. Inuit and non-Inuit students ranging in age from 12 to 21, with nearly all non-Inuit teaching staff, were struggling to make sense of ourselves, each other, our place in the North and in Canada, and where this daily grind called education would really take us. Some students attending Inuksuk High School (formerly Gordon Robertson Education Centre), the oldest and largest high school in Nunavut, came as residential students from smaller communities around the region in order to complete their senior grades. Those who lived in Iqaluit were only walking to a different building in the same town, but in my memory, wherever we came from, we felt a loss of the affirmations received in elementary school, from family, and through community. This experience of academic, social, and cultural disarray induced pervasive dissonance, resignation, or even hopelessness. Combined with seeing few clear links between high school achievement and employment prospects, it also resulted in many students—particularly Inuit students—leaving school early, before completing graduation requirements. This is only a limited window into the memories and outcomes that suggest northern schools have not successfully built on the strengths and met the needs of most students, despite the efforts of many caring and committed teachers and administrators.

My perspective is also informed by my experience working on territory-wide implementation projects in the Nunavut education system. What I believe is crucial to engaging teachers and parents in the ongoing purpose and process of educational change is an understanding that legal and political signposts are only pieces of a longer and deeper story about Inuit leadership in northern education. I am working to support a conversation about Inuit educational decision making because I believe it is a tradition in Nunavut distinct from political decision making and, like many traditions, it continues to need active engagement and renewal to remain vital. Recognizing that I

do not bring the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic strengths or world view of an Inuk, I claim an investment in Nunavut (as Nunavut has invested in me, beyond community and relationships, through education and employment opportunities), and a commitment to strengthening Nunavut histories and seeking Nunavut solutions.

Situating Inuit Educational History

The history of Inuit education in Canada has received relatively little attention in academic research and publication. Situating Inuit education alongside Indigenous histories of education offers some advantages, but must carefully take into account distinctiveness in Inuit culture and language, the condensed period of northern colonization, the differing relationship between Inuit and territorial/federal governments, and the unique influences of Arctic space. A core theme in the literature on Indigenous education is seeking decolonizing⁸ approaches to teaching and learning, and re-centering Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. This theme emerges in educational history when colonization, decolonization, and reconceptualization of education are placed in larger historical processes, and when histories are constructed to inform decolonization or Indigenization projects. Such histories typically address the extent to which, at different moments in time and space, there is Indigenous involvement in educational decision making; recognition for Indigenous knowledge, pedagogies, and relationship to place; and engagement of parents and community in education support networks. Verna J. Kirkness, Jean Barman, and Marie Battiste have contributed greatly to this dialogue in terms of Indigenous education in southern Canada,⁹ and more focused histories are emerging in the literature—though again, generally, little attention is given to northern or Inuit education. Michael Marker's work from Coast Salish territory (British Columbia/Washington State) offers models for bringing ethnohistorical research and educational decolonization together, models that could inform future research in the Arctic.¹⁰ Marker has also begun theorizing historiography from Indigenous perspectives, raising critical questions for historians and history teachers working in Indigenous contexts.¹¹

Inuit educational history should also be informed by and responsive to Arctic histories focused on other topics, including work by Frank Tester with Peter Kulchyski¹² and with Peter Irniq.¹³ There are many rich questions to be asked in determining points of commonality between Canadian Inuit educational history and First Nations or Metis education, other rural jurisdictions, Indigenous education in other international contexts, or across the Circumpolar World. This is a discursive space still seeking shape and

that would benefit from a great deal more consideration and analysis, particularly from Inuit contributors.

I have previously argued that the history of schooling in Nunavut must be considered with reference to traditional Inuit education, and to do that, one must understand the active role of the Arctic environment in shaping Inuit life.¹⁴ Inuit education traditionally reinforced the relationship between the individual, their family—generations both past and future—and the environment. An education in Arctic subsistence was tailored according to who took it upon themselves to act as teacher, the local particularities of the environment, and the special abilities and interests demonstrated by each learner.¹⁵ This approach to education resulted in a competency, world view, and knowledge base now distinguished as Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ). Survival, in an ecosystem with a relatively thin range of resources and high dispersal of population, was completely dependent on this education.

Traditional knowledge, skills, and respect for the environment remain vital for Inuit and other northern residents. Examination of school experience at different points in history should address to what extent that education deviates from, undermines, incorporates aspects of, or actively promotes IQ, Inuit educational practice, and associated ways of being. In this work, I focus on two aspects: how curriculum policy reflects Inuit education, and the extent to which educational decision making was and is informed by Inuit and local leadership. The degree to which government structures are centralized, regionalized, or dispersed to communities is a recurring challenge in this history, one that takes on particular importance in the context of Arctic geography and sense of place.

The 2008 *Nunavut Education Act*

The 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* demonstrates a commitment to reconceptualizing education to reflect Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing. It includes repeated and specific references to carrying out school programs and administrative responsibilities in accordance with IQ; the role of Elders as subject experts in Inuit language¹⁶ and culture; the requirement to educate students bilingually, in the Inuit language and either English or French; the philosophy and procedures of inclusive education, to ensure every student has their unique strengths and needs recognized and accommodated; and many sections outlining approaches to education that reflect Inuit views of learning, parental engagement, and the values of Nunavut communities. Realizing these requirements arguably necessitates substantial involvement from Inuit educators. References to Inuit language, culture, and values are linked to traditional ways, but the Act itself is a model

of how traditional concepts may be applied to modern contexts, keeping them vital. This emphasis on Inuit ways is not articulated to exclude other languages, knowledge, or cultures¹⁷ but rather to demonstrate a responsibility to reflect the wishes of the Inuit majority in Nunavut.

This educational mandate is made clear through the introductory portion of the Act. The “Preamble” and “Fundamental Principles” lend an unusual idealism and vitality to the legislation, including references to the purpose of education in Nunavut and how it may be achieved: use of a holistic educational approach so that students may become capable, contributing members of Nunavut society; the belief that this will be achieved by connecting learning from the earliest years through to post-secondary and adult learning or “life-long learning”; the belief that to sustain locally relevant education it must be carried out with the input and contributions of communities, parents, and Elders; the responsibility to deliver high quality education; and acknowledgement and affirmation of the NLCA objectives.

The Act requires that all curricula be developed on the basis of IQ and that schooling be better oriented to the unique characteristics of life in the Arctic, recognizing the important and active role of the environment. One of the principles of IQ is *Avatimik Kamattiarniq*: ‘to show environmental stewardship.’ The Act enables Elders to be specially certified and more consistently employed to participate in instruction as subject experts, primarily focused on language and skills related to land activities and subsistence.¹⁸ The Act offers communities the opportunity to establish their own school calendars—allowing for flexibility during times of year when subsistence activities are most common.¹⁹

In terms of educational decision making, the Act defines the role of district education authorities (DEAs) and provides for the involvement of parents and community members. For example, the development and implementation of mandated policies must be done by the DEAs in accordance with IQ, and using a process to consult with and engage parents and community members both initially and through periodic reviews. Such consultation duties are numerous throughout the Act and reflect the consultation imperative of any public organization operating in Nunavut today—an expectation that has emerged from the challenge of effectively recognizing and addressing the needs of twenty-five unique communities. These duties also result from a strong expectation that in the realm of education, the perspectives and priorities of parents and the community should be heard by decision makers.

While most of the requirements listed here represent a departure from the previous education legislation carried over from the Northwest

Territories, many were in practice to some extent in Nunavut schools before being entrenched in law. The links briefly described here between tradition, education, and legislation are unique and exciting. They demonstrate groundbreaking leverage of legislative powers by an Indigenous population in a public government and, as stated, deserve much greater study than has yet been undertaken.

Early Schools and Educational Change to 1977

Substantial changes to education occurred in the Arctic during the twentieth century, at a speed and in a way unlike any other Canadian or circumpolar jurisdiction. Intensive colonization began in the mid-twentieth century; later than in other Canadian jurisdictions, largely because of the unaccommodating Arctic environment. It then proceeded quickly, involved drastic change, and dismissed Inuit life ways. Inuit were politically, socially, and economically challenged in increasingly interventionist encounters with non-Inuit. The introduction of schooling by the federal government resulted in the removal of children from their homes, disrupting their relationships with family members and sending the message that Inuit language, knowledge, and subsistence were of the past, dying out.²⁰ The federal residential and day school system was assimilationist, controlled by unknown bureaucrats often far away in Ottawa. Many Inuit youth were left without the skills and environmental knowledge critical to Arctic life. The remnants of such difficult experiences endured by individuals, families, and communities extend into our time; some are only coming to light now, with the undertaking of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.²¹ This history reinforces the importance of Inuit self-determination and, by extension, any efforts towards greater involvement in decision making, such as input into, and ongoing consultation supported by, the *Nunavut Education Act*.

Full transfer of responsibility for education from the federal government to the Northwest Territories in 1970 was the first major step towards change to the education system. Government administrators and policy-makers in the North no longer viewed assimilation as an appropriate purpose for education, and turned toward cultural protection. This marks the beginning of integrating aspects of Inuit education within the school system, and where the first inklings of philosophy and practice leading to the *Nunavut Education Act* can be found.

The initiatives of greatest importance from this era include developing curriculum guides²² that promoted culturally appropriate content, using the Inuit language in primary grades, and employing Inuit in classrooms. The 1973 middle school curriculum guide advocated for teachers to invite

local cultural specialists into classrooms, further enhancing the opportunity for establishing local relevance.²³ The Department of Education also began promoting Aboriginal Languages as essential to affirming the identity and culture of Aboriginal peoples.²⁴ The use of local-language materials in primary classrooms was increasingly supported through the establishment of the Linguistics Division for Aboriginal Languages in 1976.²⁵ Increased opportunities became available for Inuit to work in schools, first as classroom assistants employed on an ad hoc basis as of the late 1950s, and then through a teacher education program as of 1968.²⁶ The 1972 internal review *Survey of Education* pointed out a lack of involvement by parents and community members in the education of their children, and called for more action to establish school districts and invite parents into the classrooms.²⁷ Other sources from the same era suggest that parents were beginning to voice concern over the purpose and content of education for their children.²⁸

The NWT inherited its first education legislation from the federal government, a 1956 Ordinance based largely on southern models. Following a five-year process of drafting and consultation with northern organizations, a new Education Ordinance was approved in 1977.²⁹ In addition to making statements of support for cultural curriculum content and employment of non-professional local staff to instruct in cultural programs, the ordinance offered decision making powers over the language of instruction in K–2 on a local basis.

The most significant opportunity afforded by this ordinance was a framework for northern communities to guide the policies and administration of their schools, if they desired and could meet various criteria. Local control could occur according to three different models—a committee, society, or board, each with a progressively higher level of responsibility. In practice, none of the local authorities in Inuit communities could reach the highest level, and so their capacity to leverage such potential powers was limited. However, the ordinance provided the legislative precedent and grounds for change that would significantly alter the structure of educational decision making in the NWT and Nunavut in future.

Read in terms of both the path toward self-determination and the *Nunavut Education Act*, educational change in the 1970s reveals the first steps and a great deal of vision and hope. Change was largely envisioned and driven by predominantly non-Inuit administrators and policy-makers centralized in Yellowknife, operating according to their ideas of current and future needs across the Arctic. However, in comparison to the assimilationist federal system during the colonial period, this level of educational change was highly significant.

Political Change: Towards Nunavut

The following discussion of political change in the Arctic situates the importance of the *Nunavut Education Act* as well as earlier efforts toward implementing schooling that would be more responsive to Inuit and IQ. By looking at political and legislative actions taken by Inuit leaders to address education over time, we can begin to track when and to what extent education became an issue of priority or a point of neglect. Was the dream of Nunavut one that included a dream of Inuit-controlled education? I will argue that between two education milestones—the 1982 initiative *Learning: Tradition and Change* and the completion of the 2008 Act—there was an inconsistent connection between the political path towards self-determination for Inuit and the path of educational change.

The Inuit political movement began with cooperative efforts amongst representatives from various Inuit regions, largely motivated by environmental consciousness and concern about their role in decision making regarding wildlife, land, and other natural resources. The 1970 “Coppermine Conference,” sponsored by the Indian and Eskimo Association, marks the beginning of Inuit political activism, and directly preceded the formal creation of Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC).³⁰ Conference proceedings called for national advocacy on behalf of Inuit with regard to numerous issues including education. Concerns voiced by representatives were summarized into a resolution sent to top government administrators, calling for action to better ensure that schooling would be meaningful and relevant.³¹ From that time on, political advocacy was largely focused on the drive for Inuit land claims, and to what extent that involved education has varied amongst Inuit groups across Canada and over time.³²

Inuit have chosen to negotiate rights and privileges based on land claims in certain areas, pursued by regionally-focused Inuit associations, each with differing results. The Nunavut land claim process formally began with a 1976 proposal to the federal government for the creation of an Inuit territory carved out of the NWT.³³ The proposal was withdrawn in 1977 because of evidence that it was unworkable, largely due to the low number of educated and experienced Inuit at the time, but also due to the undefined issues of land claims and individual compensation.³⁴ In 1980 a new proposal, entitled *Parnagujuk “A Plan for Progress,”* was prepared by ITC and was of a vastly different tone and nature, re-casting priorities in ways that would be more palatable to the federal government.³⁵

Following the *Parnagujuk* proposal, a 1982 NWT plebiscite regarding division of the territory resulted in 57 percent support and a record voter

turnout in Inuit communities. Also in 1982, the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, later called Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), took over lead negotiating responsibilities from ITC. After more lengthy negotiations, NTI signed an Agreement-in-Principle with the Government of Canada in 1990, and presented the land claim, ratified by 69 percent of eligible voters, in 1992.³⁶ In 1993, the NLCA was signed and that same year the Canadian Parliament passed the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act* and the *Nunavut Act*.

The results of the land claim are significant, especially in terms of land titles and environment and wildlife management.³⁷ For Inuit education, however, the land claim delivered only a small, one-time \$13 million training trust fund for implementing the new government, which had little impact on the K–12 public education system. The NLCA includes a significant clause relating to Inuit employment; Article 23 sets the expectation that government positions be filled by Inuit at a level equal to their representation in the whole population. However, this target was not supported by any measures such as federal financial resources or commitments to K–12 education or adult training, and remains woefully beyond reach.³⁸ Inuit education was not identified in the final NLCA as necessitating legislated financial investment, let alone a mandate for language instruction, cultural content, or an administrative structure that would guarantee parent involvement and community decision making.³⁹

Education may have been part of the package of issues to be negotiated with the federal government, although attributed a lower level of importance in relation to issues like wildlife and mineral resource rights.⁴⁰ At some point in the negotiations, education fell off the table or was blocked by the federal government.⁴¹ Educational changes desired by Inuit were, instead, to be addressed through political and administrative bodies and mechanisms that were already in place. The vision for Nunavut at the time of the NLCA, therefore, suggested that education continue to chart its own course, at least until the creation of a new government.

Education Between 1982 and 1999

Education in the Arctic underwent significant transition after the 1982 report *Learning Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories* (LTC), produced by the Special Committee on Education for the Legislative Assembly. The landmark report involved extensive public consultations conducted in thirty-four communities. It was the first time parents were formally and systematically consulted on their children's education.⁴² While this initiative occurred in the context of the NWT, and to address the needs of all

communities and not just those in the Inuit regions, significant leadership was demonstrated by Tagak Curley, an Inuk who was committee co-chair and a member of the legislative assembly. The process and outcomes of LTC laid the groundwork for allowing Inuit regions and communities more independence: “The Special Committee believes that the agreement between the people of the community and the school system regarding the aims and objectives of education is the crucial variable in the ‘success’ of the school in the NWT.”⁴³

The special committee found that local education authorities were acting more in a consultative role than participating actively in policy decision making: “the residents of many communities have seen little effect from a great deal of talk about the decentralization and devolution of authority.”⁴⁴ They add that only a few communities, such as Yellowknife, had the human and financial resources (tax base) to become school boards under the criteria of the 1977 Ordinance.⁴⁵ Their recommendation was to enact legislation transferring administrative authority and responsibility to regional boards of education, which would act on advice from the local level. This was arguably the most significant outcome of LTC: “Our hearings repeatedly indicated an urgent need to redefine the roles of senior administrators in the Department of Education and to establish elected school boards that will be responsible for local decisions in education.”⁴⁶ Scholars Frank Darnell and Anton Hoem explain how this change was expected to address limitations experienced by many early local education authorities: “Without an adequate understanding of the political dimension of school governance, such as was provided by the Baffin Region Education Society (later to become the Baffin Divisional Board) in the mid-1980s, the likelihood of sought-after local considerations finding their way into the education system is unlikely.”⁴⁷ In addition to financial and structural supports, and particularly because of geographic isolation and individual community distinctions, the boards provided an important bridge to enhance and facilitate community voices.

In 1982 *An Ordinance to Amend the Education Ordinance* was tabled with the intent to implement many of the recommendations included in LTC.⁴⁸ Reorganization of the NWT school system into ten education divisions or regions, each to operate under a board of education, was the most significant new mandate. Between 1985 and 1999, three regional boards of education⁴⁹ came to facilitate decision making in what is now Nunavut. The Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) was referred to by Darnell and Hoem as the “first Inuit-controlled education system to come into existence in the Northwest Territories.”⁵⁰ Board members were not directly elected; each local education authority appointed one member from their elected body to

sit on the board, and a chairperson and vice-chairperson were selected from that group. The vast majority of board members in each region were Inuit and most board meetings were held primarily in the Inuit language.

This level of Inuit control over the school system is highly significant given the state of education, and the emergence of Inuit self-determination, closely condensed with the experience of colonization. While the intersection of education and politics in 1977 resulted in the legal precedent for local education authorities, this 1982 milestone amplified the voice of parents and the wishes of communities, enabling both the decision making and administrative capacity necessary to substantially affect change in education.

BDBE priorities included the enhanced provision of Inuit language programs; Inuit language learning materials production; increased recruitment of, and support for, Inuit educators; cultural integration in curriculum; employment of Elders; delivery of grades 10–12 in every community; and, most importantly, unprecedented community and parental involvement in education through school-community visioning, goal-setting, and action-planning processes. The 1987 BDBE publication *Our Future is Now: Directions for Education in the Baffin* acknowledged the significant level of change being experienced by Inuit and asserted that schooling must meet those changing needs.⁵¹ In 1989, the BDBE published *Piniaqtavut*, a curriculum framework document for grades K–9, developed in response to what the BDBE considered to be “clear direction” from parents that education should centre on topics related to the North, respect for Elders, and maintenance of traditional skills.⁵² The *Piniaqtavut* development committee involved many Inuit educators, working bilingually, and undertook a rigorous consultative process.⁵³ Specific references to Inuit culture, “Inuit Language,” and the needs of students and communities in Baffin region set this work apart from previous educational change initiatives. Such statements—made by a primarily Inuit representative body—demonstrate that concepts found in the 2008 Act were envisioned and called for long before the creation of a new government.

As a result of the entrenchment of more meaningful local control through the regional boards of education, the Department of Education began placing unprecedented emphasis on the reinforcement of cultural identity, referring to this vision as culture-based schooling. The *Inuuqatigiit*⁵⁴ curriculum framework issued in 1996 provides clear and direct linkages with traditional Inuit knowledge and articulates the intention to incorporate Inuit traditions into schooling. At least fifty-five Elders and many more Inuit are named in the credits for the document development process, and it is strengthened

with many direct quotations from those participants. *Inuuqatigiit* offers the closest observation, articulation, and reinforcement of Inuit education in any document produced for Arctic schools until that time.⁵⁵

This combination—of parental and community control over schools with representation at the regional board level to participate in policy and decision making—offered Inuit the opportunity to envision their own system of education. They largely chose to identify and integrate those aspects of Inuit education linked most closely to the land and uniquely Arctic pursuits. Inuit and non-Inuit educators worked together with communities to develop new visions of curriculum and pedagogy within a framework of Inuit values. Made possible by the 1982 Ordinance, educators and their community partners grasped the resources and administrative mechanisms available to them and chose the path towards change. Following the milestone of 1982, and until 1999, this movement was driven by elected board members and their staff. It built capacity in education by bridging local needs within and across the regions, but occurred largely separate from the leadership initiatives of land claim negotiators and Inuit political leaders in Yellowknife or Ottawa.

Educational Change in Nunavut

In 2007 the Nunavut Department of Education published its landmark document *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum* after research and development beginning as early as 2000, and informed by earlier BDBE work mentioned above. While the topic cannot be dealt with in adequate depth through this article, changes to curriculum underway since the creation of Nunavut cannot go unmentioned. The 2007 policy document articulates a vision of education from an Inuit foundation and is now the source of all policy, curriculum, and programming undertaken by the Nunavut government concurrent with the development of the foundation document and since. It states that Nunavut educators are expected to understand IQ, how it affects the basic elements of curriculum, and what implications that has for the practice of learning and teaching in Nunavut schools.⁵⁶ It also offers a source of Inuit Elder knowledge and an application of that knowledge to the context of schooling, including following a learning continuum; integrated curriculum “strands” (meaning subject areas); cross-curricular competencies based on principles of IQ; and Inuit educational philosophies regarding inclusive education, language instruction, assessment, and pedagogies. The document credits Inuit Elders, northern and Inuit educators, community experts, and government staff contributing to answering the questions: What’s worth knowing? How

should it be taught? What are the values behind what we are teaching? In other words, this reconceptualization of education came about because curriculum developers and policy-makers within the Department of Education recognized the importance of Elder knowledge, Inuit knowledge, and the lack of source material to turn to, arguably necessary for creating real change in schools.

Returning to the theme of decision making, the creation of the Government of Nunavut may have simplified some aspects of administration through a reduced geographic scope and primarily Inuit focus, but challenges in effectively balancing a territory-wide perspective with community needs persisted.⁵⁷ The momentum of educational change and the growing expertise of the BDBE in overseeing implementation of Inuit education in schools was interrupted by the creation of Nunavut in April 1999. This partly resulted from the recommendations in the reports *Footprints in New Snow* and *Footprints 2*, published in 1995 and 1996 respectively by the Nunavut Implementation Commission.⁵⁸ *Footprints* articulated a new approach for educational administration, indeed for public government in general, which negated the justification for regional representative bodies:

The key point is that education and health boards were established essentially in response to the early physical, social and political distance of GNWT headquarters from Nunavut, and the manner in which they developed over the years was very much a function of pre-Nunavut political realities Nunavut will be a more homogenous society than the existing NWT. There will be a higher number of members in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly to represent the people of Nunavut than there are representatives from Nunavut in the current NWT Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife.⁵⁹

The report also points to fiscal savings from board closures, reducing potentially unnecessary, overlapping, or “extra” management structures.

Footprints did, however, make the recommendation that the new government create one territory-wide board of education, rather than dissolve the mechanism altogether. This board would consist of ten to twelve representatives elected directly from the territorial constituencies, with a more focused mandate that “would maximize direct political control and accountability during the critical early years of the Nunavut government,” and “preserve the long-standing tradition in Canada that parents and other electors have a direct say in the running of the schools”⁶⁰

The Government of Nunavut did not accept the recommendation to amalgamate boards. Local education authorities were to remain, but all board programs and services were transferred for direct administration by the Department of Education at headquarters and regional school operations offices. The decision not to proceed with a board was in accordance with the recommendation of a Consulting and Audit Canada report commissioned in 1999, which reported that the accountability and efficiency of having no boards outweighed the responsiveness to people's needs, which could be accomplished with one territorial board.⁶¹ The associated government news release cited greater accountability expected by investing members of the Legislative Assembly with responsibility for program and service delivery, and an anticipated (but unsubstantiated) annual savings of \$4 million.⁶² The merit or accomplishments of the boards of education, and the precedent of educational control to which Inuit had become accustomed, were underestimated in this bird's-eye view of both education and health boards. The executive summary of the report recommending dissolution of the boards makes no reference to sector-specific concerns or distinct educational issues. Much was expected to change in the political context of Nunavut with the new vision of a territory where Inuit could establish consistent, culture-based policies.

In 2000, the Department of Education assumed oversight of schooling in twenty-five communities, in co-operation with DEAs. Presumably, it was expected the Department of Education could do so without leaning too far towards the centralized model that was widely criticized and ultimately dismantled during the 1980s following LTC. However, whether or not one prefers a regional or territorial focus for educational policy, a structure for parent and community input had been lost. In addition, some DEAs' capacity in terms of finances, human resources, and ability to oversee implementation of longer-term educational change and decision making suffered without the support, leadership, and development opportunities facilitated by a regional board and its staff.⁶³

At this major intersection of education and politics, the closure of regional boards of education was a dramatic administrative, political, and philosophical change, further illustrating the lack of integration between political and educational directions.

Nunavut's Education Legislation

Development of the *Nunavut Education Act* brought education to the forefront of public awareness and the centre of political dialogue in the Government of Nunavut, and between the government and Nunavut Tunngavik

Incorporated (NTI). Development of, and consultation on, the content of the proposed legislation was not easy for those in leadership positions on all fronts; it was controversial, time-consuming, and the result of those efforts did not satisfy everyone.

In 2002, Bill 1, the first made-in-Nunavut education bill, was presented to the legislative assembly. Upon review by the Standing Committee on Health and Education, which took nearly a year and involved eighteen community consultations, it was recommended that Bill 1 be allowed to fall off the order table.⁶⁴ Significant concerns contributing to this recommendation included inadequate incorporation of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, limited decision making powers for DEAs, insufficient promotion of the Inuit language, negligence of French language rights, and inadequate consultation. The second attempt at drafting education legislation was in process from 2004 to 2007, during which time the Department of Education conducted extensive community consultations with school staff, district education authorities, regional Inuit organizations, and the public, among other organizations.

In addition to consultations, the Department of Education co-chaired a steering committee with NTI and held meetings at which concerns with the draft legislation could be raised by the many parties represented (such as the Nunavut Teachers' Association). The vacuum in advocacy for the perspective of parents, created by the dissolution of regional boards, led to creation of an organization called the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities in 2006, which has since been recognized and funded by the government as a key stakeholder organization.

During this time, parents called for reinstatement of boards, expressing that their capacity to shape the education system was better prior to the creation of Nunavut, under the administration of regional boards. The coalition argued that "many parent representatives voiced the observation that our schools were better governed 10 years ago than they are today. Ten years ago, the schools were governed by elected boards who were there because of one issue: education. Our MLAs in the Legislature have far too many important issues to be on top of—education concerns are lost in a sea of debates on bad gas, quotas, and devolution. If you need evidence of this, look at the scanty debate on the education budget when it was introduced earlier this year."⁶⁵ NTI has also held the position that re-establishment of boards would benefit Nunavut; in 2007 they released a report on the state of education in Nunavut and its relationship to Inuit culture, in which reinstatement of regional school boards is one of nine major recommendations.⁶⁶

The result of this long legislative development process was Bill 21, presented in November 2007. The legislative assembly prescribed

further public consultations by the standing committee for review and improvement.⁶⁷ It seemed Nunavut might well enter its tenth year without its own education legislation. However, having made several changes to the legislation in standing committee, the Bill was passed unanimously by the Nunavut Legislative Assembly and became the *Nunavut Education Act* on September 18, 2008.⁶⁸ The *Inuit Language Protection Act*, another unique and important piece of legislation that includes complementary requirements related to providing education in the Inuit language, was passed at the same time.⁶⁹

The passing of Bill 21 in September 2008 was a triumph on the part of the government. There was great pressure to complete the legislation, with the territory's third election coming in October 2008, and considering the length of time already consumed with consultations and legislative development. The Act includes innumerable critical requirements that the Department of Education badly needed to implement. It is certainly preferable, and entirely overdue, for schools to be operating under legislation developed in Nunavut, and which reflects the wishes of many of its constituents.

However, this accomplishment must be qualified in several ways. At no time during consultations did the government publicly address or consult on the possibility of reinstating regional boards or creating one Nunavut-wide board of education. And so we are left to wonder if stipulations of the legislation and aspects of the vision for education in Nunavut—including the roles and responsibilities of district education authorities—could be more successfully informed and implemented with the support of regional boards, or one territorial board of education. Instead, two levels of decision making and responsibility were clarified through the Act, and implementation is now being undertaken by school leaders and DEAs, with support from Department of Education personnel.

Secondly, implementation of the Act was from the outset an ambitious project and remains a significant challenge—as implementation of entirely new legislation would be in any jurisdiction, but particularly in Nunavut. Full assessment of the Act in terms of effectiveness or practice is not the purpose of this work, and indeed it would not be fair to attempt such a review now given the short time since the legislation was passed. The Act came into force on July 1, 2009 but included a schedule to allow for delay of particular provisions until either July 2010 or July 2011 to accommodate system readiness. Having worked on the implementation activities myself, I know the complexity and extensive demands involved in introducing many of the new requirements—from raising awareness amongst all staff about new expectations to in-depth training initiatives on specific topics; and from

materials design and template development to mentoring, monitoring, and reporting. In nearly every case, work must be started from scratch, it must accommodate the needs of twenty-five communities, and it is being produced in Nunavut's four official languages—a highly time-consuming prospect. The numerous and lengthy regulations required to support and make the Act work procedurally are still under development and in consultation, and will be for several years to come. Most of all, it is crucial to acknowledge that change is difficult for individuals and systems; implementation of the Act must proceed at a pace that does not interrupt the ability of school staff to do their jobs effectively and give students the attention they need as a first priority. This is not to say there is any time to waste, but rather to acknowledge the time, human resources, and financial investment required to facilitate broad and deep system change.

Lastly, Justice Berger, conciliator in the negotiations for renewal of NLCA implementation, attributed failure to reach Nunavut's Inuit employment objectives to a lack of adequate educational capital held by most Inuit.⁷⁰ Berger's recommendation in 2006 was significant investment in a more robust system of bilingual education: "There will have to be major changes in the education system in order to vastly increase the number of Inuit high school graduates; in my view a new approach is required, a comprehensive program of bilingual education."⁷¹ Significantly, he argued that a large share of the funding needed for education—over and above regular territorial transfers—should come from the federal government and be targeted for specific educational outcomes.⁷² In addition to the consultations that informed Justice Berger's report, in October 2009 the Government of Nunavut conducted a territory-wide "report card" consultation. The *Qanukkanniq?*⁷³ report and recommendations provides insight into public perspectives on the education system, illustrating both the importance of following through on changes that were imminent once the Act was implemented, as well as enhancing public relations and communications initiatives to better inform the public about made-in-Nunavut projects, processes, and resources already underway.

Conclusion

Education barely figured in the Nunavut land claim, and while the first Nunavut government called for revised education legislation, consensus could not be reached quickly and the school system's administration was destabilized by the dissolution of boards of education. Rather than capitalizing on the momentum of board-administered decision making and educational change before the creation of Nunavut, the nascent government moved

towards centralized oversight. It is remarkable that boards of education were dissolved without more systematic public consultation, despite the *Footprints* recommendation for one Nunavut-wide board, and in the context of the government's own decentralization policy. The recommendations of the *Learning: Tradition and Change* report regarding dispersed administration, informed by Inuit parents, were relegated to history. Even more remarkable, the government did not respond to calls from parents and communities to reconsider the matter during the consultations leading up to the *Nunavut Education Act*. While the creation of Nunavut placed significant emphasis on government becoming more responsive to Inuit and substantial changes in education have been brought forward in that regard, the fluctuation seen in educational administration and decision making structures suggests that there are other factors at play. Further analysis should examine to what extent Nunavut's post-Education Act oversight of education provides meaningful local control, meaningful parent decision making, and the supports necessary to facilitate effective relationships between the central government and the dispersed communities it serves. This sort of dialogue is critical to self-determination and political mobilization as much as it is to school system improvement.

During the early years of Nunavut, the structure and responsibilities of district education authorities were in question as part of the development of the Education Act; DEAs were adjusting to administration without leadership and facilitation from boards, and the Department of Education and the Nunavut Legislative Assembly were all equally occupied establishing new government administration. In the case of the latter, as mentioned above, members of the Legislative Assembly have demonstrated they do not have the information, time, attention, or inclination necessary to devote to managing detailed education issues, as was claimed would be the case when boards were dissolved—nor, I would argue, is that their role. This was not an easy context for educators to navigate, let alone parents or community members resident in communities hundreds or thousands of kilometres from the capital Iqaluit. It resulted in uncertainty around the trajectory of parental and community decision making in education, as well as around the level of DEA support and development previously provided by board staff.

We will never know what more could have been done over the past decade if the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* had included stipulations about the education system for Inuit, or if direct federal funding had been possible. We can, however, celebrate that the Act now mandates a high quality bilingual education system based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Passage of the Act also brought some additional funding to the school system from the

Nunavut government. Fortunately, as this history demonstrates, educators in Nunavut have been working hard over many years to integrate aspects of traditional Inuit education into the schools, indeed since the transfer of administrative responsibility from the federal government to the Northwest Territories government in 1970, and especially after 1982. Such efforts have intended to improve the quality of programs and the extent to which they are relevant for Inuit students and their choices about ways of living. Prior to Nunavut, district education authorities and regional boards were active in making these decisions about educational change in their jurisdictions.

Considering the inherent potential of education to reflect, sustain, and perhaps even lead Nunavut—a place where Inuit can develop and exercise self-determination, as well as protect and promote their language, culture, and relationship with the Arctic environment—the intersection of education with politics through the 2008 Act was long in coming. As the NLCA and creation of Nunavut government did not facilitate adequate public discussion of the vision, terms, or importance of education to Inuit, the significance of the *Nunavut Education Act* is even greater. The Act is a comprehensive, made-in-Nunavut piece of legislation that presents a clear vision for the future and is better oriented to Inuit language, culture, and ways of living in the Arctic. The current form of educational leadership in Nunavut—school-level leadership, district education authorities, department of education administrative staff at regional school operations offices and Iqaluit headquarters—are now progressing with determination to implement the Act, realize the mandate of education, and meet the needs of students. Education is now seen as one of the Nunavut government's most important priorities. This is well worth recognizing in the history of education in Nunavut, and in Canada as well.

Acknowledgements

I thank Penney Clark, Michael Marker, Ruth Sandwell, Fiona Walton and several others for their feedback on earlier drafts of this article. I also very much appreciate the input received from peer reviewers, and from Deanna McLeod during the editing process. Any remaining inaccuracies are mine alone.

Author

Heather E. McGregor is a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia.

Notes

1. Government of Nunavut, *Nunavut Education Act*, S.Nu. 2008, c. 15, section 1(3).
2. Eight principles of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* are recognized by the Government of Nunavut and Department of Education. See: Government of Nunavut, “Guiding Principles,” accessed 2 June 2011, http://www.eia.gov.nu.ca/files/IQ_Principles_2010.pdf.
3. The territory is home to 33,330 people in 25 fly-in communities at a density of one person per 59.6 sq. km.
4. District education authorities (DEAs) are seven-member elected councils that oversee K–12 education within their community. They receive funding from the Government of Nunavut, largely based on student enrolment, and are accountable to the minister of education and their constituents. DEAs were formerly called local education authorities in the NWT.
5. Thomas R. Berger, *Conciliator’s Final Report: The Nunavut Project* (Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Implementation Contract Negotiations for the Second Planning Period 2003–2013, March 1, 2006), i. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated oversees implementation of the NLCA and ongoing management of Inuit benefits.
6. I use the term “boards of education” to refer to the Baffin, Keewatin, and Kitikmeot Divisional Boards of Education, which were later legally known as “District Education Councils.” In common speech, these organizations were referred to as boards and they held the functions of boards of education. I also use this term to avoid confusion with district education authorities, the term now used for community-level parent councils but which differ significantly from the role of the former District Education Councils.
7. See also: Heather E. McGregor, *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), x–xi.
8. Decolonization is used here primarily following Linda Smith’s explanation of the term: “struggling to make sense of our [Indigenous] own world while also attempting to transform what counts as important in the world of the powerful.” See: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Dunedin, NZ: Zed Books, 1999), 39.
9. Marie Battiste, “Maintaining Aboriginal Identity, Language, and Culture in Modern Society,” in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, ed. Marie Battiste (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), 192–208; Marie A. Battiste & Jean Barman, *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995); Verna J. Kirkness, “Our Peoples’ Education: Cut the Shackles; Cut the Crap; Cut the Mustard,” *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 22, vol. 1 (1998): 10–15; Verna J. Kirkness, “Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Retrospective and a Prospective,” *Journal of American Indian Education* 39, vol. 1 (1999): 14–30.

10. Michael Marker, "'It Was Two Different Times of the Day, But in the Same Place': Coast Salish High School Experience in the 1970s," *BC Studies* 144 (Winter 2004/05): 91–113; Michael Marker, "Economics and Local Self-Determination: Describing the Clash Zone in First Nations Education," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 24, vol. 1 (2000): 30–44.
11. Michael Marker, "Teaching History from an Indigenous Perspective: Four Winding Paths Up the Mountain," in *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada*, ed. Penney Clark (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 97–112.
12. Frank J. Tester and Peter Keith Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939–63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994).
13. Frank J. Tester and Peter Irniq, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Social History, Politics and the Practice of Resistance," *Arctic* 61, no. 4 (2008): 48–61.
14. McGregor, "Introduction," and "Inuit Education in the Traditional Period," *Inuit Education and Schools*, 1–16 and 37–53.
15. See: Naullaq Arnaquq, "Uqaujuusiat – Gifts of Words of Advice: Schooling, Education and Leadership in Baffin Island" (master's thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Prince Edward Island, 2008).
16. "Inuit Language" is the term used in Nunavut legislation to refer to Inuktitut, including various dialects of Inuktitut, and/or Inuinnaqtun.
17. For example, the Act affirms French minority language rights in Part 13, and allows for teaching of different moral and spiritual practices (with community permission) in section 11(3).
18. *Nunavut Education Act*, sub-sections 102(1)–(4).
19. *Ibid.*, section 84.
20. For histories of Inuit residential school experience see: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, *A Brief Report of the Federal Government of Canada's Residential School System for Inuit*, prepared by David King (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2006); Legacy of Hope Foundation, *We Were So Far Away: The Inuit Experience of Residential Schools* (Ottawa: Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2010).
21. See: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Interim Report* (Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012).
22. Department of Education, Curriculum Division, *Elementary Education in the Northwest Territories: A Handbook for Curriculum Development* (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1972); and Department of Education, Programme Development Division, *Learning in the Middle Years: A Handbook for Curriculum Development* (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1973).
23. Department of Education, *Elementary Education in the Northwest Territories*, 10.
24. Department of Education, *Survey of Education*, ed. B.C. Gillie (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 29 February 1972), 9.

25. M. J. Macpherson, *Dreams and Visions, Education in the Northwest Territories from Early Days to 1984* (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1991), 280.
26. See: Jack Cram, "Northern Teachers for Northern Schools: An Inuit Teacher-Training Program," *McGill Journal of Education* 20, no. 2 (1985): 112–131.
27. Department of Education, *Survey of Education*, 105.
28. Markusie Inuaaluk, Letter, *Inuit Today* 5, no. 8 (September 1976): 10.
29. Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), *An Ordinance Respecting Education in the Northwest Territories [Chapter 2]* (Yellowknife: Council of the Northwest Territories, 1977).
30. "ITK Origins," Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami, accessed 2 June 2011, <http://www.itk.ca/itk-origins>.
31. Inuit-Eskimo Association of Canada, "Coppermine Conference Report July 14–18, 1970," ed. Norman R. Dunne, partially reproduced in *Nunavut Sivuniksavut Course Readings: Inuit-Government Relations* (Ottawa: Nunavut Sivuniksavut, n.d.), 55–115.
32. Only since the year 2008 has education been featured as among the most important of Inuit issues addressed by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, culminating in the publication: *First Canadians, Canadians First: National Strategy on Inuit Education 2011* (Ottawa: Published for the National Committee on Inuit Education by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2011).
33. This document was called "Agreement-in-Principle as to the Settlement of Inuit Land Claims in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory between the Government of Canada and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada." See: R. Quinn Duffy, ed. *The Road to Nunavut: The Progress of the Eastern Arctic Inuit Since the Second World War* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 236.
34. Duffy, *The Road to Nunavut*, 240.
35. *Ibid.*, 245.
36. Jack Hicks and Graham White, "Nunavut: Inuit Self-Determination Through a Land Claim and Public Government?" in *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of their Lands and Their Lives*, ed. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks and Peter Jull (Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2000), 57.
37. Jose Kusugak, "The Tide Has Shifted: Nunavut Works for Us, and It Offers a Lesson to the Broader Global Community," in *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of Their Lands and Their Lives*, ed. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks and Peter Jull (Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2000), 20.
38. In 2005, for example, Inuit made up about 38% of teachers working in Nunavut, and 45% of the government workforce, whereas the overall population is about 85%. Aarluk Consulting, *Final Report: Evaluation of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program* (Submitted to the Government of Nunavut Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College, 8 September 2005), 19.

39. Berger, *The Nunavut Project*, 20–22.
40. Thomas Suluk, quoted in “Negotiators Reach Wildlife Agreement-in-Principle,” *Nunatsiaq News*, 30 October 1981, accessed 16 June 2011, http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/april0199/nvt90401_14.html; see also: McGregor, *Inuit Education and Schools*, 158.
41. Derek Rasmussen has offered evidence that Inuit land claim negotiators were blocked by the federal government on the topic of education. As I have not reviewed the evidence he draws on, nor had the opportunity to conduct my own in-depth research, I have not included further comment on the issue. Derek Rasmussen, “Forty Years of Struggle and Still No Right to Inuit Education in Nunavut,” *Our Schools, Our Selves* 19, no. 1 (Fall 2009): 67–86.
42. Darnell and Hoem, *Taken to Extremes*, 167.
43. Special Committee on Education, “Education in the NWT: Its history and The Special Committee on Education,” *Inuit Today* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1982, 10–11): 10.
44. Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, Special Committee on Education, *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories* (Yellowknife: Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, 1982), 40.
45. *Ibid.*, 42.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Darnell and Hoem, *Taken to Extremes*, 158.
48. Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, *An Ordinance to Amend the Education Ordinance* (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1982).
49. Baffin Divisional Board of Education, incorporated in 1985 (later referred to as Qikiqtani Region); Keewatin Divisional Board of Education incorporated in 1988 (later Kivalliq Region); and Kitikmeot Board of Education in 1989.
50. Darnell and Hoem, *Taken to Extremes*, 167.
51. Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE), *Our Future is Now: Directions for Education in the Baffin* (Iqaluit: Baffin Divisional Board of Education, 1987), 2.
52. Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE), *Piniaqtaout: Integrated Program*, (Iqaluit: Baffin Divisional Board of Education, 1989), i.
53. Most households in every Baffin community were surveyed regarding the knowledge and skills they would like students to learn, and a draft of the BDBE document was circulated to all district education authorities for consideration.
54. “...*Inuuqatigiit*, means Inuit to Inuit, people to people, living together, or family to family. It implies togetherness and family unity between people...” Department of Education, Culture and Employment, *Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective* (Yellowknife: Government of the Northwest Territories, 1996), 3.

55. This is particularly because of the regional and local implementation components, including the BDBE-specific implementation documents and a planning and community-visioning process. Baffin Divisional Board of Education, *Our Future is Now ... Implementing Inuuqatigiit* (Iqaluit: BDBE, 1996), 3.
56. Nunavut Department of Education, *Inuit Qaujimaqatigiit: Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum* (Iqaluit: Nunavut Department of Education, Curriculum and School Services Division, 2007), 3.
57. Public debates emerged such as whether the territory should adopt one time zone or locate the capital in the geographic centre of the territory, and how to be inclusive of the Kitikmeot region, which is only accessible on commercial airlines by flying through the NWT.
58. Nunavut Implementation Commission, *Footprints in New Snow: A Comprehensive Report from the Nunavut Implementation Commission to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated Concerning the Establishment of the Nunavut Government* (Iqaluit, NWT: Nunavut Implementation Commission, 1995); Nunavut Implementation Commission, *Footprints 2: A Second Comprehensive Report from the Nunavut Implementation Commission to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Government of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Concerning the Establishment of the Nunavut Government* (Iqaluit, NWT: Nunavut Implementation Commission, 1996).
59. Nunavut Implementation Commission, *Footprints in New Snow*, 26–27.
60. *Ibid.*, 27.
61. Consulting and Audit Canada, “Executive Summary,” *Accountability and Structural Options for Nunavut’s Education, Health and Social Services Boards* (April 1999), 14.
62. Government of Nunavut, “Government of Nunavut to Phase Out Health and Education Boards,” News Release (Iqaluit: Government of Nunavut, April 22, 1999).
63. Sara Minogue, “DEAs Clamor for More Control Over Decisions,” *Nunatsiaq News*, 24 February 2006, accessed 11 August 2011, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/archives/60224/news/nunavut/60224_08.html; and John Thompson, “DEAs Dump on GN,” *Nunatsiaq News*, 25 August 2006, accessed 11 August 2011, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/archives/60825/news/nunavut/60825_01.html.
64. Legislative Assembly of Nunavut, “Hansard: 6th Session, 1st Assembly, Day 46” (Iqaluit, March 20, 2003): 2996–3003.
65. Jeeteeta Merkosak and Christa Kunuk, “DEA Coalition Explains Their Demands,” *Nunatsiaq News*, September 22, 2006, accessed 10 Jan 2008, <http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/60929/opinionEditorial/letters.html>.
66. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, *Saqqiqpuq: Annual Report on the State of Inuit Culture and Society – Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education in Nunavut* (Iqaluit:

- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, 2007); Jim Bell, "Entrench Inuit Education Rights, NTI says," *Nunatsiaq News*, November 24, 2006, accessed 10 Jan 2008, http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/61124/news/nunavut/61124_05.html.
67. "In the Legislative Assembly: Language Laws, Education Act Under Review," *Nunatsiaq News*, 7 March 2008, accessed 15 March 2008, http://www.nunatsiaq.com/news/nunavut/80314_1014.html.
68. Government of Nunavut, "Nunavut's New *Education Act*," Backgrounder, 18 September 2008.
69. Government of Nunavut, *Inuit Language Protection Act*, September 18, 2008.
70. Berger, *The Nunavut Project*, iii.
71. *Ibid.*, iv.
72. *Ibid.*, 41.
73. North Sky Consulting Group, *Qanukkanni? The GN Report Card*, October 1, 2009, accessed 10 July 2012, <http://www.gov.nu.ca/reportcard/>.