

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS JUNE 13-16, 2023 | KUUJJUAQ

As a follow-up to the requests for access to data that would guide policy decisions, the commissioners were able to review the progress made in the creation of a first dashboard of youth sector data (student population, staff and student absenteeism, school and class closures, graduation rates, etc.). While further work will be required to guarantee data validity, the dashboard as it currently stands allows the general administration to identify areas where issues need to be addressed.

The project's initial objective was to have a first set of youth sector data available in real-time as of the start of the 2023-2024 school year. This date will be delayed due to staff turnover.

Until December 2023, the immediate next steps of the project will include gathering and assessing data from additional sectors of the school board. Between December 2023 and June 2024, a last phase of the project will tailor data access to employees' needs and roles within the organization.

With the 2016-2023 Strategic Plan ending on June 30, 2023, the commissioners reviewed an evaluation of the Plan's implementation. They also approved the proposed next steps for the development of a new plan that will guide the work of Kativik Iisarniliriniq.

The evaluation report identified areas where progress was made and objectives reached. Nearly 65% of the departments' objectives were met or were still being worked on. Staff turnover remains a challenge in ensuring a consistent approach to planning and reporting at all levels of the organization.

The next steps approved by the Council of Commissioners include a stakeholder consultation to inform the development of the plan. This approach would help avoid the pitfalls of the top-down approach that characterized the development and implementation of the 2016-2023 Strategic Plan.

The commissioners were briefed on the on-going negotiations of Kativik Iisarniliriniq's budget rules with the Ministry of Education, which have shown no progress since March 2023. The school board's current budget rules were approved at the end of 2019 and expired on June 30, 2023. In parallel, work is still on-going on the preparation and submission of a recovery budget for the 2023-2024 school year.

Jean-Paul Besner, the new Director of Finance, informed the commissioners of an accumulated deficit of \$18 million, in addition to a deficit expected to exceed \$16 million for the 2022-2023 school year. The deficit reveals the need for new budget rules that will provide Kativik Iisarniliriniq with adequate funding.

Warren Thomson, the new Director of Education Services, presented an update on the department's organizational development priorities for the coming school year: 1) reinforce structure and communications with all stakeholders, 2) empower school teams while ensuring appropriate support and 3) foster and actively support the development of learning communities.

Improved internal communications will allow the department to maximize the impact of school visits by pedagogical consultants. Work on youth sector educational programs continues. This includes the finalization of pathways to accommodate better students' diverse needs.

The empowerment of school teams will allow the department to leverage school initiatives at the regional level. Combined with professional development support, this approach also aims to strengthen staff and expertise retention.

The Council of Commissioners mandated Post-Secondary Student Services to research and assess Kativik Iisarniliriniq's capacity to manage the offer of post-secondary education in Nunavik.

The Council was briefed on the progress of work initiated in 2021, and undertaken by Kativik Iisarniliriniq (KI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The overall goal was to assess the feasibility of offering post-secondary education in Nunavik.

A feasibility study was commissioned by the MEQ, following an April 2022 call for tender. A final report was expected in July 2023. The Commissioners had the opportunity to hear the initial findings and recommendations identified by MEQ external consultants.

In parallel, in April 2023, KI launched a series of needs assessment consultations. The process aims to clarify Nunavimmiut's vision for a Nunavik post-secondary institution. The concrete form that a Nunavik post-secondary institution has yet to be defined.

The commissioners stressed that Nunavimmiut have repeatedly expressed the need for a post-secondary institution in Nunavik, at least formally since the 2006 Saputit consultation. This desire was also reiterated in the Plan Nunavik and Parnasimautik consultations. As such, the Council demanded that time and resources be concentrated on assessing KI's capacity to take on this project, which would result in the creation of a new service sector for the organization.

The Council extended its congratulations to the Nunavimmiut who completed a program of study in 2022-2023. Across all sectors, a total of 142 students graduated this year.

Across Nunavik, 76 people obtained their Secondary School Diploma (71 in the youth sector and 5 in the adult sector). In the youth sector, 8 students also obtained their Pre-Work Training Certification.

On the vocational training side, 5 people obtained their Diploma of Vocational Studies in various trades. Among them, the Northern Heavy Equipment graduate is the first Nunavimmiut to obtain a diploma through the Recognition of Acquired Competencies process (RAC).

Our Teacher Training program continues to be successful, with 16 Inuit teachers having obtained a Certificate in Education, including 6 from McGill University and 10 from UQAT University.

A total of 37 beneficiaries from Nunavik also completed professional training, a college program or university program last spring (including 9 Nunavik Sivunitsavut students).

The commissioners were briefed on the progress of fast internet access for Nunavik schools, centres and offices. All schools now have access to Starlink Business Edition, replacing Tamaani satellite links.

The high-speed internet solutions implemented by Kativik Ilisarniliriniq combine access to:

Low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites (Starlink and OneWeb);

Fibre optic network in villages where it is offered by Tamaani.

OneWeb is installed in the 10 villages where Tamaani fiber optic is not yet available. Every new fibre activation in a village will replace the OneWeb service currently in place.

The Council of Commissioners was briefed on the progress of work related to a total of 58 capital investments and renovation projects in Nunavik communities. The current status of each project varies (on-going, contract awarded, needs assessment, plans and specifications, call for tender, etc.).

Out of the **58** capital investment and renovation projects:

- **11** are major school renovation projects: Ajagutak School (Tasiujaq), Pigiurvik School (Salluit), Iguarsivik School (Puvirnituaq), Innalik School (Inukjuak), Kiluutaq School (Umiujaq), Asimauttaq School (Kuujuaraapik), Administrative offices (Montreal) and Nunavik Sivunitsavut (Montreal).
- **16** are minor renovation projects of buildings in Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq, Tasiujaq, Aupaluk, Kangirsuk, Quaqtuaq, Kangiqsujuaq, Salluit, Ivujivik, Akulivik, Puvirnituaq, Inukjuak, Umiujaq, and Kuujjuaraapik.
- **31** are capital investment projects across Nunavik, including the construction of garage warehouse spaces, temporary classrooms, housing units, student residences, administrative office enlargement, and school and adult education centre enlargement.

In addition, multiple maintenance projects are on-going in nearly all communities to replace heating oil tanks, conducting soil decontamination, leveling houses and setting up warehouses in their new buildings.

The Council was briefed on the recommendations and findings of the Tatigiilluta Working Group, by Annie Popert and Mary Kay May. The reports highlight areas where services have been identified as recommendations for Nunavik to move forward as a region. The Commissioners expressed their hopes that the working group would continue its work to follow-up on the implementation of its recommendations.

The Director General requested a copy of the report to review recommendations relevant to the education sector, and to take them into account in the planning of program delivery.