

ክልላዊ ኮሌጎች ለግንባታና ለሥራ ማሻሻያ ለውጤት ለማሳደግ ለሚችሉ ሁኔታዎች ላይ ማቆም ይገባል።

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ብድር፣ EDU IEP ለውጤት ለማሳደግ ለሚችሉ ሁኔታዎች ላይ ማቆም ይገባል።

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November 4, 2020

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
Premier
Government of Nunavut
JSavikataaq@gov.nu.ca

Hon. David Joanasie
Minister of Education
Government of Nunavut
DJoanasie@gov.nu.ca

Dear Premier and Minister Joanasie,

re: Amended Bill 25/Department of Education's Article 23 Inuit Employment Plan

On November 2, 2020, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) was provided notice from Minister Joanasie's office that the Standing Committee on Legislation has reported to the Legislative Assembly on Bill 25, An Act to Amend the *Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act*. The Bill will be on the order paper for Committee of the Whole on Wednesday November 4, 2020.

I last wrote to the Standing Committee on March 11, 2020, copy attached. At that time, I urged the Standing Committee and the Department of Education (EDU) to embrace NTI's proposal to jointly develop mutually acceptable amendments to the *Education Act*. In particular, I pointed out that an effective EDU Inuit Employment Plan (IEP) is central to achieving the *Education Act and Inuit Language Protection Act* Inuktitut language of instruction (LOI) goals.

Following that letter, and notwithstanding Article 32, the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the recently signed *Katujjiqatigiiniq Protocol*, and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission's Recommendation 15 to develop and implement an Inuktitut and Inuit-based curriculum, there was no outreach to NTI to address the education issues facing Inuit together.

This silence is deafening in light of the June 2020 *Towards a Representative Public Service* report. *TRPS* reported that Inuit employment in the education sector has now plunged to 49% of filled positions -- a level *lower* than before the Department completed its 2017 IEP. As you know, the EDU IEP is central to effective *Education Act* amendments. An adequate IEP, with an ambitious timetable and training plan for Inuktitut-speaking educators, is essential to an evidence-based Inuktitut LOI timetable in the Act.

Yet, the EDU IEP continues to fail, and Bill 25 remains substantially the same as the first version introduced in June 2019. The Department continues to pursue its plan to reduce Inuit rights in relation to Inuktitut, by largely limiting Inuktitut to a classroom subject status, rather than developing it as the primary language of instruction.

When Inuit created the Territory of Nunavut in 1999, we had high hopes of a school system primarily based on Inuktitut, and a government workforce primarily consisting of Inuit fluent in our language. The latest version of Bill 25 must be judged against a backdrop of continuing language erosion and loss. For the past twenty years, Inuktitut has been declining steadily in the school system and the early childhood education system, generating loss of pride and sense of belonging for our youth.

Enactment of Bill 25 will have marginal impact. Student achievement rates will continue to decline as they have for the past twenty years. It will be much more difficult to fulfill an Inuit representative government workforce without students being able to graduate from high school proficient in both Inuktitut and English or French.

Bill 25 was primarily drafted to relieve the Department of responsibilities mandated by the *Inuit Language Protection Act* --- in short, to let the Department off the hook. The Bill sidesteps accountability for a decline in attendance and student achievement rates and its lack of services for inclusive education.

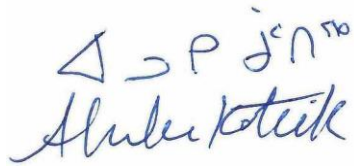
Faith in Nunavut's education system has been faltering since the 2008 *Education Act*. Inuit have worked hard to restore confidence in the education system through the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs and District Education Authorities. Every single District Education Authority in Nunavut raised its voice and fundamental concerns, in 2007, in 2016 and in 2019, and made proposals to address and overcome those concerns. Yet Bill 25 does not meet or deal effectively with those concerns and proposals.

There is an unfortunate lack of political commitment and priority with respect to the language of the Inuit majority in Nunavut, while Inuktitut is thriving in Greenland and Nunavik. The elected leadership in the Nunavut legislature is failing us.

Before the MLAs vote on the passage of Bill 25, NTI invites you to carefully consider the aspirations of Inuit in our communities, to recognize the strong Inuit belief in the central role a reformed education system must play in ensuring the vibrancy of the Inuit language for future generations. Our students deserve better chances for success in seeking quality education along with cultural and linguistic respect.

NTI would be happy to meet with yourselves or any members to discuss this further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Aluki Kotierk
President

Cc: Members of the Legislative Assembly
Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities
Nunavut Tunngavik Board of Directors