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Article Title

Working Together to Support Inuktitut Education in Nunavut

Teaser

Agreement between Government of Canada, Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated will strengthen education in the Inuktitut language across Nunavut.

Tweet

#GoC, @GOVofNUNAVUT and @NTunngavik working together to preserve and strengthen #Inuktitut in #Nunavut: #IndigenousLanguages #Inuktitut

Minister Name(s)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault

Departments/Organizations

Canadian Heritage

Geographic Region

Canada

Article Body

IQALUIT, March 8, 2021

Inuit are best positioned to reclaim, revitalize, strengthen and maintain their language.

The Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated welcomed the signing of a memorandum of understanding to support and strengthen the Inuktitut language and education across Nunavut today. The Government of Canada is reaffirming its commitment to invest \$42 million over five years to support this agreement. In addition to the significant contribution that this funding will make, further funding of approximately \$12.3 million for this initiative has come from the Nunavut Implementation Panel Article 23 fund, which will support both Governments' efforts to pursue a representative Inuit workforce in Nunavut.

The Government of Nunavut will expand Inuit educator training through Nunavut Arctic College's Nunavut Teacher Education Program in communities across the territory beginning in 2021–22.

The agreement is expected to:

- Increase access to Inuktitut-language instruction in Nunavut;
- Increase and maintain the number of proficient Inuktitut-speaking Inuit educators in Nunavut;
- Increase the number of fluent Inuktitut speakers in Nunavut;
- Create supports for educators;
- Promote Inuktitut revitalization and Inuit rights related to language and education; and

- Support the Uqariuqsatittijit Initiative and innovative measures for Inuktitut education and Inuit educators.

The partners in this agreement will work toward these goals by establishing collaborative approaches that reflect Inuit priorities in a respectful, open and transparent way.

This collaboration is one of the first agreements implemented under Section 9 of the *Indigenous Languages Act*, which was granted Royal Assent in June 2019. The act aims to support the efforts of Indigenous peoples to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen their languages.

Quotes

“Language is at the very heart of our identity. It also defines our sense of belonging to a larger community. I am honoured to make this significant investment in Inuktitut language activities and education in Nunavut. In the spirit of reconciliation, we are collaborating in a respectful, open and transparent way to strengthen the use of Inuktitut in the territory. Through initiatives such as this, we are ensuring that educators have the resources, skills and experience they need to teach Inuktitut and strengthen Nunavummiut pride in their shared linguistic heritage.”

—Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada

“Today’s announcement represents an important step forward in preserving and strengthening Inuktitut in Nunavut. This is a testament to what we can accomplish by working together, in partnership, to preserve Inuit languages and cultures, today and for future generations. This announcement furthers the objectives of the *Indigenous Languages Act*—a significant milestone in our shared responsibility to support Indigenous peoples in protecting their languages. Furthermore, this will also support the goals set out in the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework of protecting and building strong, healthy families and communities.”

—Honourable Daniel Vandal, Minister of Northern Affairs, Government of Canada

“I am proud of the collaboration between our government, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Canada through the Nunavut Partnership Table on Language and Education. It is through shared vision and coordinated approaches that we will strengthen and revitalize Inuktitut in our territory. I look forward to more initiatives through the Nunavut Partnership Table on Language and Education to ensure the long-term success of our language.”

—Honourable Margaret Nakashuk, Minister of Culture and Heritage, Government of Nunavut

“Through our collective tripartite efforts, we will create a new generation of language champions for our schools and communities, and increase our capacity to educate our children in Inuktitut. I am proud that this agreement and investment will ensure that the Nunavut Teacher Education Program will have the capacity to meet Nunavut’s goal of a bilingual education system.”

—Honourable David Joanase, Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Government of Nunavut

“This is great news for Inuit students. Increasing the number of Inuktitut speaking teachers will realize our expectation of Inuktitut language of instruction in our schools.”

—Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

Quick Facts

[Budget 2019](#) included an investment of \$333.7 million over five years, with an annual budget of \$115.7 million afterward, to support Indigenous languages community-based projects.

Education in Nunavut is administered by the Government of Nunavut under its *Education Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act*, which require a bilingual education with Inuktitut at its core, as well as Inuit educator training through Nunavut Arctic College.

Nunavut Arctic College will receive \$34.7 million over five years to support the development of updated Inuktitut curriculum for the Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP), expand the delivery of NTEP into additional communities in Nunavut, and provide wrap-around supports for students.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated coordinates and manages Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Agreement and ensures the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations.

Of the \$42 million, NTI will be receiving \$7.3 million over five years to facilitate the development of innovative measures urgently required to enhance Inuktitut education and create opportunities, resources and tools to support Inuit educators on the front lines of the education system.

Related Products

Revitalizing and Strengthening Inuktitut in Nunavut	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2019/09/revitalizing-and-strengthening-inuktitut-in-nunavut.html
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Associated Links

Government of Nunavut	www.gov.nu.ca
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated	https://www.tunngavik.com/
Joint Statement by Ministers Guilbeault, Bennett, Miller and Vandal on the Importance of Indigenous Languages	https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2021/01/joint-statement-by-ministers-guilbeault-bennett-miller-and-vandal-on-the-importance-of-indigenous-languages.html
Arctic and Northern Policy Framework	https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1560523306861/1560523330587
Indigenous Languages	https://www.canada.ca/en/services/culture/canadian-identity-society/languages/indigenous.html
<i>Indigenous Languages Act</i>	https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-91/royal-assent

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