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Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* iuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

**GN Response to Standing Committee Report on the Review  
of the 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the  
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Support for High School  
Students and Adult Learners**

## ***GN Response to Standing Committee Report on the Review of the 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners***

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The Government of Nunavut appreciates the opportunity to provide responses to Standing Committee recommendations in their *Report on the Review of the 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners*.

The Auditor General's review is a very valuable tool, and the Government of Nunavut agrees with all the recommendations set out therein. The departments of Education and Family Services, and Nunavut Arctic College are committed to working together to implement the review recommendations and improve services and opportunities for high school students and adult learners.

### **Standing Committee Recommendation #1:**

**The standing committee recommends** that the Government of Nunavut provide annual stand-alone updates to the Legislative Assembly on specific actions taken to implement the recommendations contained in the *2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners*.

#### **Response:**

The Government of Nunavut appreciates the recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) as outlined in their report on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners and is working towards implementing the recommendations. The Government of Nunavut will provide updates to the Legislative Assembly on the specific actions taken to implement each of the recommendations.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College include in their Annual Reports updates on specific initiatives undertaken to address the recommendations contained in the *2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners* as well as such information as detailed statistics on dropout rates and the results of assessments conducted, the use of Nunavut Arctic College facilities to provide Nunavut Arctic College funded courses during the evenings, weekends and summer periods, and detailed statistics on the number of College graduates who succeed in gaining employment in their chosen field of study.

Response:

The Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College will include in their Annual Reports updates on initiatives undertaken to address the OAG's recommendations, as well as information on the results of assessments conducted (within the limitations of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), and the use of NAC facilities for evening, weekend and summer periods.

With regards to drop-out rates for K-12 students, Statistics Canada calculates drop-out rates for provinces and territories using Labour Force Survey Data of individuals aged 20 to 24 who have not obtained a high school diploma and are not enrolled in school. The Department of Education can report on these figures, however, they are not updated annually, and the figures do not take into account those individuals who return, or plan to return to school, or those who pursue a secondary school diploma through other pathways, such as the Pathway to Adult Secondary School Graduation Program (PASS).

With regards to College facilities and use, the College is open to including this information within its Annual Report. There are several factors that will support the expanded use of these facilities into the future. They include: Community Needs Assessment, which outline communities' direct requests for programming to be offered in the community; and the 10-year strategic plan, which will outline areas Nunavummiut would like the College to include in its own planning for future programming and delivery. Finally, the College is working with partner education and training organizations to explore ways to establish partnerships for providing to deliver a wide range of training in Community Learning Centres. The College remains committed to exploring options to diversify program delivery by partnering with territorial organizations who are working to provide education or training opportunities to Nunavummiut in the communities.

The College continues to develop its Marketing, Recruitment and Communications division. This division intends to have a dedicated to focus on developing an alumni network from the College. This will allow the College to maintain communication with its students after they leave the College, allowing for future follow up surveys once an alumni network is created, and the College can start mapping student employment after they leave the College.

**Standing Committee Recommendation #2:**

**The standing committee recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, indicate what actions have been taken to date to improve collaboration between government departments and Nunavut Arctic College to provide guidance and support to both High School students and Adult Learners to further assist them in progressing towards post-secondary and employment opportunities;

Response:

The Government of Nunavut recognizes that there are various areas where improved collaboration could support adult learners and high school students.

There are several areas in which the Department of Family Services, the Department of Education, and Nunavut Arctic College collaborate on programs aimed at supporting adult learners and high school students.

Below are some highlights of actions that have been taken to improve collaboration:

- The Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College have been actively collaborating to develop a re-focused Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP). The Department of Education sits on the College's NTEP Advisory Group and meets regularly to discuss the program, including the creation of a ladderred suite of programs that will provide multiple points of entry and exit into careers in education.
  - The Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College recently had an in-depth series of meetings with Memorial University of Newfoundland (partner university for the refocused NTEP) to establish the major priorities for the program and allow opportunity to provide input into the re-design of the program.
- The Department of Education and the Nunavut Arctic College are collaborating in the development of a Student Support Assistant Certificate Program to be delivered to existing student support assistants employed by the department. Preliminary work and coordination are ongoing.
- With the transition of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) program from the Department of Family Services to the Department of Education, the two departments have been actively collaborating to ensure a smooth transition of the program, and to ensure that students can benefit from the transfer.
- The Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College staff meet regularly to discuss the PASS program. We have reviewed the PASS program together and are working collaboratively on ways to engage more Inuit men in the program. NAC and the Department of Education will be working on creating an administrative handbook that outlines the policies and procedures for PASS.
- The Department of Family Services and Nunavut Arctic College continue to collaborate closely through their work on the development and delivery of the "Getting Ready for Employment and Training" (GREAT) program. The GREAT program is a 14-week training and work experience program to prepare Social Assistance recipients for employment.

- Nunavut Arctic College collaborates with the Department of Family Services for the delivery of the Office Administration Diploma Program. The program prepares adult students for office employment in the Nunavut private and public sector including work as finance clerks, administrative assistants, and other administrative positions. The diploma builds on the skills developed in the existing certificate level Office Administration program.

The Department of Education, the Department of Family Services, and Nunavut Arctic College will continue to look for innovative ways to collaborate, specifically to meet the varied needs of adult learners.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, clarify what barriers exist that prevent interdepartmental collaboration;

Response:

The GN recognizes that despite good intentions and efforts to ensure collaboration between departments and public agencies, barriers do exist that present challenges to collaboration and coordination. The most significant barrier relates to capacity and turnover at each organization. Facilitating collaboration can be difficult without meaningful connections between staff positions built over time. When positions are not filled permanently, or staff are frequently changing, collaboration can be more challenging.

Vacancy and turnover of staff is an issue faced across the GN. In September 2019 the Department of Education had a vacancy rate of 14%, the Department of Family Services had a vacancy rate of 23%, and Nunavut Arctic College had a vacancy rate of 36%.

Despite these challenges, the departments and the College will continue to work together to collaborate in key areas to benefit Nunavummiut.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, provide a summary of where shared areas of responsibility exist between the Departments of Education and Family Services and Nunavut Arctic College;

Response:

The Government of Nunavut's mandate, *Turaaqtavut*, identifies several areas of shared responsibility between the Departments of Education and Family Services and Nunavut Arctic College. Broadly, these areas include:

Department of Education and Family Services:

- **Shared Objective:** Provision of education and training that prepares children, youth, and adult learners for positive contributions to society and for meaningful employment.
- **Shared specific outcome:** Affordable and accessible daycares that support learning and development in early childhood.

Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Family Services:

- **Shared Objective:** Provision of education and training that prepares children, youth, and adult learners for positive contributions to society and for meaningful employment
- **Shared Specific Outcome:** Local skills development and trades training which reduces our dependence on imported labour and supports employment for people with disabilities.

Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Family Services (Department of Education after transfer of FANS program):

- **Shared Objective:** Provision of education and training that prepares children, youth, and adult learners for positive contributions to society and for meaningful employment
- **Shared Specific Outcome:** Enhanced supports for postsecondary students (e.g., learning supports) and postsecondary programs (FANS, scholarships) in the territory that develop the knowledge and skills we need in Nunavut.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, provide a rationale for why the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students division is being transferred to the Department of Education from the Department of Family Services.

Response:

On April 1, 2020, the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) program will transfer responsibility from the Department of Family Services to the Department of Education.

The FANS program was originally delivered by the Department of Education; however, in 2013, responsibility for the program transferred to the new Department of Family Services.

Despite the seemingly complementary nature of FANS and Labour Market Programs, FANS clients are often different than the clients for Labour Market Programs. FANS serves Nunavummiut who have gone through Nunavut's education system, whereas Labour Market Programs largely serve Nunavummiut who are progressing outside of the K-12 education system.

Clients of Labour Market Programs often require more support in their educational journey than do FANS clients. Typically, the transition from Income Assistance to employment requires the development of life skills and employability skills, in addition to upgrading of essential literacy skills, prior to actual employment training. Consequently, resources have focused on Labour Market Programs rather than FANS.

The transfer of FANS back to the Department of Education will ensure that the program is located in the department that better suits the program's mandate; and is able to better leverage the program to advance Nunavut's social and economic goals through integrating FANS with other advanced and adult education initiatives.

### **Standing Committee Recommendation #3:**

**The standing committee recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, address what options and related timelines are being considered to deliver alternative or multiple graduation options for High School students across Nunavut;

#### Response:

The Department of Education recognizes the importance of offering high school students a variety of graduation options that suit their skills and interests.

Currently, high school students in Nunavut have choices with regards to the paths they take to graduation and beyond. For example, in order to graduate, a student must complete a minimum of 100 credits, from a combination of course subjects.

Courses are designed for various pathways after high school such as university, college, apprenticeship, and the labour market. For example, students wishing to go to university should take Grade 12 English 30-1, whereas, students wishing to go to college, or into trades require Grade 12 English 30-2.

To support students in determining their career paths, the Department of Education

has developed the Career Program Planning process (CPP) embedded in the Aulajaaqtut curriculum. CPP modules lead to high school course selection, career awareness, pathways to post-secondary training, as well as a career portfolio practicum assessment. CPP modules also involve parents in the process to ensure that students can make informed decisions leading to high school completion and successful transitions to post-secondary training or the labour market.

To support students' transitions between grades, through graduation paths, and on to training or the labour market, the Department of Education has established a Transitions Team within its Curriculum Development division. The Transitions Team will be working to update CPP modules, with a particular focus on Grades 1-9, to start students thinking about potential career paths from an early age.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, indicate what specific options for hands-on or pre-trades training are being considered for future delivery in Nunavut's schools;

*Response:*

While there are limitations in the options for hands-on or pre-trades training that the Department of Education is able to offer, the department is working to ensure that our students have as much access to hands-on and pre-trades experience as possible.

Limited capacity and the lack of skilled Journeypersons available or willing to take on an apprentice, hands-on learning opportunities and workplace experiences have been limited. However, the Curriculum Development division is working to incorporate more experiential and hands-on learning opportunities such as co-ops and work placements into made-in-Nunavut curriculum.

Additionally, the Transitions Team has been reviewing Career and Program Planning to promote career awareness for Grades K-12. Part of this work involves the review of Career and Technology Courses which are directly related to apprenticeship and skills training.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, indicate what specific hands-on or pre-trades training have been delivered in Nunavut's schools, including such information as what partnerships have been established to deliver hands-on and pre-trades courses and how much funding has been allocated to hands-on and pre-trades courses;

Response:

Several alternative scheduling scenarios, offering more support to students and employers embarking on work experience, are being field tested in Baker Lake. The pilot project is designed to inform the development of Career and Technology Courses within Nunavut's curriculum. Participants in this work experience program will be asked to track their hours, which then may be applied to future Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification as offered by the Department of Family Services.

The Department of Education is developing an Experiential Learning Handbook in order to provide current information to schools and educators as to how to support hands-on and alternative learning opportunities and build partnerships, and therefore capacity, within communities.

Further tools and resources will be revised and developed in collaboration with departmental staff, post-secondary training institutions, and other GN departments and future employers to strengthen the ability of schools to offer timely, appropriate work experience opportunities in all types of communities.

The department has also engaged with Mining Matters, a charitable organization dedicated to educating young people to develop knowledge and awareness of earth science, to provide two-day hands-on workshops to schools in the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq. This specific initiative is intended to broaden students' understanding of the role that rocks, minerals, metals, and mining play in everyday life.

Currently, the department also supports a variety of opportunities to increase awareness of employment and education opportunities available to students, including the Nunavut Health Careers Camps held in Iqaluit, a proposed STEM Careers camp to be held in Cambridge Bay, career fairs across the territory, and the annual Take Your Kids to Work Day.

The Department of Family Services, through its Apprenticeship Certification Unit, is responsible for the certification of trades training in Nunavut. The department continues to explore alternate models of trades certification that might be better suited to delivery of trades training in Nunavut.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, state its position on re-introducing a revised version of the Nunavut Early Apprenticeship Training (NEAT) program in Nunavut schools;

Response:

The Government of Nunavut, through the Department of Education supports the re-introduction of a revised Nunavut Early Apprenticeship Training Program (NEAT).

This aligns with the GN's commitment in Action 43 of the Blueprint for Action on Housing, to review lessons learned from the NEAT program to assess the feasibility of program re-establishment.

The Department of Education's curriculum division conducted a preliminary review of the NEAT Program which indicated capacity issues, both at the school level with an absence of technology teachers, and at the community level where journeymen and/or Red Seal workers may not be available or willing to take on an apprentice.

The GN is committed to a full review and update of the NEAT Program which will require involvement from multiple departments including the Department of Family Services, to identify areas for collaboration related to apprenticeship.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, provide a breakdown of the anticipated costs of establishing a food program in all of Nunavut's schools including the costs associated with staffing and space allocation in order to support students to stay in school;

Response:

The Department of Education understands the connection between food security, health, well-being, and academic performance. Nunavut has school food programs serving all of its 44 schools. Food programs are supported by Community Wellness Plans, funded by the federal government through the Department of Health, and administered by sponsoring agencies such as Hamlets and some DEAs.

Every Community Wellness Plan must allocate funding for a school food program in their community, and the amount of money allocated is determined by the community. The total Wellness Plan funding for school food programs across the territory is approximately \$3.5 million. Some schools and DEAs also seek other third-party funding to supplement their food programs.

School staff and community members volunteer their time to support breakfast, snack, and lunch programs. School food programs vary widely depending on the capacity and resources available. Some schools offer breakfast only, while others also offer snack and lunch programs. It is at the community's discretion as to how Community Wellness Funds are spent.

The Committee has asked for a breakdown of the anticipated costs of establishing a food program in all of Nunavut's schools including the costs associated with staffing and space allocation. Based on the information available at this time, the Government of Nunavut estimates the approximate cost of providing food for a school lunch program to be \$400 per student, per year which amounts to nearly \$4 million based on the number

of students in Nunavut. It should be noted that this is a preliminary estimate only based on information from Iqaluit, and does not include staffing, storage and other operations and maintenance costs.

The Department of Education is committed to further exploring the feasibility, cost, and the need for, increased funding for school food programs.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, provide a breakdown of what specific activities are being undertaken in order to improve school attendance and encourage students to stay in school;

Response:

The Department of Education is committed to promoting school attendance by supporting the development of safe schools and communities and supporting student social-emotional learning and development. As part of this commitment, the department is drafting a Safe and Caring Schools Framework. This made-in-Nunavut framework will outline processes in schools to foster *tunnganarniq* and be open, welcoming and inclusive, as the territory focuses on strengthening *inuusivut*. This framework is being developed through consultation with key stakeholders such as Elders, youth, District Education Authorities, school staff and the Nunavut Teachers' Association.

Further, it is a requirement under the *Education Act* that each District Education Authority (DEA) and the commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut (CSFN) develop a Registration and Attendance Policy and oversee implementation of the policy in their school(s).

In an effort to improve school attendance and encourage students to stay in school, the department is currently working, in consultation with DEAs/CSFN, on a Family Engagement Strategy and a Registration and Attendance Policy Toolkit to support DEAs/CSFN in carrying out related responsibilities.

Family and community engagement in a child's learning is an important factor in key education statistics, such as attendance and graduation rates. The department will support the DEAs/CSFN in implementing the Family Engagement Strategy and in using the Registration and Attendance Policy Toolkit.

The department is also developing a family engagement website which is set to be made public before the end of the school year. The new website will include resources for students, parents, and teachers to support life-long learning, and strengthen our ability to help our children grow. The department will obtain feedback to ensure the content and resources available on the website is relevant and

valuable to families, DEAs/CSFN, and school communities.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, clearly explain why current school funding formulas are based on attendance data and not enrolment data and what alternatives school funding formulas are being considered;

Response:

The current Student Educator Ratio formula (based on school enrollment data and adjusted for attendance) was intended to create a fair distribution of funding to schools across the territory based on need and demand. The department recognizes that the current Student Educator Ratio formula creates some challenges. For example, fluctuations in funding from year to year based on enrollment and attendance can impact staffing and staff housing. In addition, the existing formula does not include all school staff positions, resulting in an inequitable distribution of some positions such as Student Support Assistants and Language Specialists.

For this reason, the department is developing a revised formula intended to capture all school staff positions and ensure a more consistent and equitable distribution of staff across schools. The department will be proposing details of its revised formula in the 2021-22 business cycle.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, provide a cross-jurisdiction summary of how school funding formulas are determined in other jurisdictions across Canada;

Response:

As part of its review of the current student educator ratio formula, the Department of Education conducted a scan of school funding formulas used in other jurisdictions.

The scan looked at jurisdictions in Canada, as well as in other parts of the world to identify innovative approaches and best practices. There are many different methods used to determine class size and student to educator ratios. Below is a summary of key findings from the research.

**Alberta**

In Alberta, there are 25 different funding grants that a school authority may access. 98% of all grants are “flexible,” meaning that school authorities have the discretion to

allocate funds as they see fit within their schools.

Base funding is provided to all schools, and is the largest portion of school funding and covers teacher salaries and classroom materials. Kindergarten to Grade 9 is funded on a per-student basis, while Grades 10-12 are funded based on the number of credits taken.

Funding for differential factors is also provided, and includes extra funding to support students with disabilities, English as a second language, and northern allowance funding based on zones.

## **British Columbia**

In British Columbia, the province's *School Act* establishes maximum class sizes in each grade category, as follows:

- Kindergarten: 22 students
- Grades 1-3: 24 students
- Grades 4-12: 30 students

Provincial funding is provided to school boards to allocate as they see fit. Like Alberta, British Columbia allocates base funding on a per-student basis, representing about 79% of all funding. Additional funding is then available to support unique student needs such as vulnerable learners, Indigenous learners, and English as a second language learners. Unique districts, such as small communities and communities with low enrolment, can also receive additional funding supports.

## **Ontario**

Ontario's *Education Act* and Class Size Regulations set out both an average class size and class size limit. The Class Size Regulations establish the following:

- Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten: Average class size no more than 26, class limit of 29 students
- Grades 1-3: Maximum of 23 students, 90% of all classes must have less than 20 students
- Grades 4-8: Average class size no more than 24.5
- Mixed grade classes: Average class size no more than 23
- Grades 9-12: Average class size no more than 22

The Government of Ontario funds school boards in four core areas as follows: classroom funding (i.e., for teachers and classroom resources), school-wide funding

(basic school resources such as administrators and support staff), local system management funding (i.e., for boards), and strategic priorities (e.g., supporting students with special needs).

Ontario's approach to funding is very complex and includes 19 separate grants available to school boards. The two main grants are the Pupil Foundation Allocation, which is calculated on a per-pupil basis, and the School Foundation Allocation, which funds principals, vice-principals, and office support staff positions, as well as administrative supplies. The 17 other areas of funding for Ontario school boards include:

- Special education allocation.
- Language allocation.
- Indigenous education supplemental allocation.
- Outlying schools allocation.
- Remote and rural allocation.
- Rural and northern allocation.
- Learning opportunities allocation.
- Safe and accepting schools allocation.
- Continuing education and other programs allocation.
- Cost adjustment and new teacher induction program allocation.
- Transportation allocation.
- Administration and governance allocation.
- Debt charges allocation.
- Interest on capital debt allocation.
- School operations allocation.
- School renewal allocation.
- Pupil accommodation allocation

## **New Brunswick**

In New Brunswick, classroom size is established in the collective agreement between the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation and the province. The class size requirements are as follows:

- Whenever reasonably practicable the normal class size shall be twenty-six (26)

pupils. No class size shall exceed twenty-nine (29) pupils.

- Kindergarten – Grade 2: Maximum class size of 21
- Grade 3: Maximum class size of 26
- Grades 4-6: Maximum class size of 28

Provincial funding to school boards in New Brunswick, as follows:

- Funding for teacher salaries based on enrollment, program, and class sizes
- Other funding at various rates for:
  - Staff absenteeism
  - School Secretaries – minimum of 1 per school
  - Educational Assistants and Library Assistants
  - Transportation
  - Facilities – at a cost per square foot
  - District Management
  - Operating expenses – All other operating expenses are funded at the same rate per student for all Districts

The scan of school funding formulas also included two systems outside of Canada: the Australian system, and the New Zealand system.

## **Australia**

While the Government of Australia provides funding to states and territories for education, ultimately the states and territories themselves have control over funding to education districts and schools.

The Australian government uses a funding formula for allocations to the states and territories. The formula is composed of a base amount for primary students and a base amount for secondary students.

The base amounts only represent the total amount per student that a community may receive if they are unable to contribute towards the school's operating costs themselves. In other words, those communities that have a greater capacity to fund their schools' operating costs receive less from the Australian government while those with less capacity receive more.

Additional funding is added based on the identified needs of the student population across several categories, including:

- Students with Disabilities
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Students
- Students from a Low Socio-economic Status Background
- Low English proficiency
- School Location
- School Size

## **New Zealand**

In New Zealand, the matter of class size or student to educator ratios is covered in the country's Maximum Average Class Size Policy. This policy stipulates that schools with fewer than 176 students must have a curriculum staffing (classroom teachers) ratio of no more than 25 to 1.

90% of school funding in New Zealand comes from the Government of New Zealand and 10% from locally raised funds. Government of New Zealand funding is provided directly to the boards of trustees of state which are typically responsible for one school each.

With regards to school staffing, every board of trustees receives what is referred to as "entitlement funding," which is funding to be used towards the employment of teachers, including guidance and school administrator staff.

New Zealand is the only example amongst those jurisdictions reviewed to provide both funding grants for the operations of schools and school staff allocations, like Nunavut's current formula.

Funding for staffing is based on student enrolment at each grade level with a specific formula for each of the following 3 components:

1. Curriculum Staffing
2. Management Staffing
3. Guidance staffing

1. *Curriculum Staffing* (in-class instruction) is further broken down into:

- a. Primary curriculum staffing (Grades 1-8)
- b. Technology education staffing
- c. Secondary curriculum staffing

2. *Management Staffing* is the component of the funding formula which allocates for school administrator positions. This staff allocation is based in part on student enrolment, and in part base staffing or professional leadership staffing, depending on the type of school.

3. *Guidance Staffing* is funded in secondary schools based on a percentage of an FTE teacher position for each of the grade levels 9-13 offered.

Other operational funding is also provided across a range of categories, including:

- Administration Grant,
- Base funding,
- Maori Language Programme Funding,
- Normal and country model schools per pupil funding (help with extra operating costs),
- Per-pupil funding,
- Relief teacher funding,
- Special education grant,
- Targeted at risk funding (students at risk of underachievement),
- Targeted funding for educational achievement (low socio-economic students), and
- Targeted funding for isolation/remoteness.

In New Zealand, operational funding can also be used for school staffing, provided that certain conditions are met.

#### **Recommendation #4:**

**The standing committee recommends that** the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, indicate what consideration has been given to providing financial support for adult learners taking Adult Basic Education core programs;

#### **Response:**

Currently, adult learners who have enrolled in the Adult Basic Education or the Adult Basic Education: Essential Skills program offered through the Community Learning Centres are eligible for Adult Learning and Training Supports (ALTS). This stream of funding is specifically for training and education programs that are below diploma level programs and therefore receive funding through the Financial Assistance for Nunavut

Students (FANS) program.

The College is working to provide its students with information on funding supports from across the territory and beyond, including governmental, and non-governmental. The College plans to make this information available to its students throughout its academic cycle.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut identify and act to remove barriers that prevent adult learners from accessing learning opportunities;

*Response:*

The Government of Nunavut remains committed to supporting adults seeking to gain training or attain educational goals. These supports include providing funding supports for the adult learner, but also in ensuring training and options for learning maximize the potential learners to continue their learning.

Through its Learners Services division, Nunavut Arctic College provides supports for students attending one of the three campuses, which may help address barriers to accessing learning, such as housing and food. While the supports provided to students are currently not consistent across all three campuses, the College is working towards that goal. Some examples of supports provided to students include: single and family accommodations; security services for campuses; counselling services; a food bank, and student tutoring. Some Community Learning Centres offer a breakfast program for their students. The College is working towards providing other learner supports to Community Learning Centres in the future.

In addition, the College is seeking to develop programming that is adaptive to student life choices and circumstances. For example, the Adult Basic Education Program is provided in modules, allowing students to work at their own pace and as their schedule allows. Other courses directed at adult learners include the PASS program, which is offered online, and students are provided Internet modems and a computer to support their participation in this course.

The GREAT program, a 14-week program that includes a 2-week work placement practicum, providing its students with work experience in the community, allows students to gain meaningful work experience in their own community.

At the degree level, the College's NTEP program is being revised as a ladder program, allowing students multiple entry/exit points within a program. For example,

students who complete a year of the program receive a Nunavummi Inuktitut Uqariuqsatittijunirmut Ilinniarniq certificate, while students who complete the entire 150 credits of the NTEP will obtain a Bachelor of Education.

The College hires Elders and Inuit with cultural competencies to support the adult educator in the communities, and to deliver culturally specific components of the programs on various essential or life skills. This strategy has supported various Community Learning Centres in getting students into the College to explore programming offered in their community.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut, in its response to this report, describe what financial assumptions are preventing the allocation of dedicated core funding for the delivery of Adult Basic Education core programs including the costs of staffing, space and programming and indicate what the actual cost of delivery of Adult Basic Education Core programs would be.

Response:

The Adult Basic Education Program is core funded through Nunavut Arctic College. This dedicated funding provides all Community Learning Centres with an adult educator, a janitor, and expenses connected to supporting the faculty.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut consider providing more options for part-time adult learners with the addition of evening courses, summer courses and other alternative program delivery options;

Response:

The Government of Nunavut remains committed to supporting learning in a variety of formats and schedules.

Focussing specifically to training and education provided through Nunavut Arctic College, the College remains committed to exploring options to diversify program delivery by partnering with territorial organizations who are working to provide education or training opportunities to Nunavummiut in the communities.

The College currently offers a wide range of programming at its Community Learning Centres. Programs range from certificate level, diploma, degree, or record of achievement. Specific programming includes: Adult Basic Education, Adult Basic Education: Essential Skills, Office Administration, College Foundation, the GREAT program, Nunavut Teacher Education Program, and Environmental Technology Program.

The College, through its Adult Educators, maintains a consistent presence in the community, and receives feedback from the community about possible college programming. This is completed through the College's Community Needs Assessments. It is through this process that the College can keep track of a community's request for programming. Aside from Adult Basic Education, several factors are considered when making decisions about non-base funded programs in the communities, such as the availability of third-party funding to support the program, interest from potential students, and other resources needed to deliver the program.

The College's Board of Governors are working to complete a 10-year strategic plan. This plan is being informed through a community engagement process. Responses from the community, including suggestions for alternative program delivery options, will inform the College's Strategic Plan and will be the basis of its action and focus going forward to 2030.

**The standing committee further recommends** that the Government of Nunavut ensure that all Community Learning Centre's have enough space to adequately accommodate community needs;

Response:

Nunavut Arctic College appreciates that requests related to capital must go through the capital planning process. The College works with the departments such as the Department of Community and Government Services to conduct assessment. The College continues to explore options for additional funding to supplement any future development.

**The standing committee further recommends that** the Government of Nunavut strengthen the linkages between Income Support programs and the delivery of Adult Basic Education programs;

Response:

The Government of Nunavut continues to explore opportunities to strengthening the linkages between Income Assistance programs and the delivery of Adult Basic Education Programs.

"Productive Choices" is a requirement of the Income Assistance program for all recipients other than Elders and people with disabilities. The focus of Productive Choices is to encourage Income Assistance recipients to participate in community opportunities such as wellness programs, education, training, volunteering or work experience to gain and maintain a greater degree of self-reliance and financial

independence. Adult Basic Education Programs are considered a productive choice.

Income Assistance clients work with an Income Assistance Worker to develop a Productive Choices plan by identifying positive activities that will help them move toward self-reliance.

Once a Productive Choices plan is in place, the Income Assistance Worker and the client sign a Productive Choice Agreement. This agreement outlines how financial assistance can support the client in accessing the activities they have chosen. The Productive Choice Agreement may be changed at any time if it is in the best interest of the client's progress.

It is expected that the client will participate in a Productive Choice, or combination of Productive Choices, for a combined minimum of 20 hours per week. As a Productive Choice is a requirement of the Income Assistance program in Nunavut, a client's benefits may be reduced by 50% for a period of two months, or until such time as the participant actively engages in a Productive Choice, if he/she refuses to actively participate.

**The standing committee further recommends that** the Government of Nunavut provide real alternatives to the Income Support program to adults in Nunavut's communities.

Response:

The Income Assistance program remains a last resort for Nunavummiut who are unable to earn sufficient income to meet their basic needs. To encourage alternatives to income support, training allowances available through the ALTS program are higher than Income Assistance rates for singles and families of up to four members. Adult learners who have enrolled in the Adult Basic Education or the Adult Basic Education: Essential Skills program offered through the Community Learning Centres are eligible for ALTS.

Support through the ALTS program requires a commitment from the individual to attend classes and to make progress in their learning. Clients who do not demonstrate sufficient commitment and effort will not be funded for subsequent learning opportunities.

**The standing committee further recommends that** Nunavut Arctic College enhance its outreach activities by displaying its promotional videos in Income Support offices in order that Income Support clients may be informed of College programs while they wait for their appointments with the Income Support Worker.

Response:

The Marketing, Recruitment and Communications division continues to build relationships with various contacts in the communities, including schools, Career Development Officers, and Government Liaison Officers. The division is also in the process of updating its promotional information for the full range of NAC course offerings. Once the updated promotional items are completed, the College is committed to providing this information to a wide variety of community contacts, including Income Support Workers.

## **Recommendation #5**

**The standing committee recommends that** the Government of Nunavut provide the Standing Committee with the information items that were committed to during the course of the hearing on September 25 and 26, 2019, at the earliest opportunity.

### Response:

Appended to this response is a letter containing the additional information committed to by the Department of Education. This letter was provided to the Standing Committee on October 28, 2019.

Many of the commitments for information made by the Department of Family Services require access to the FANS database, which has only recently been restored post-ransomware. The department expects to respond to all the information requests, for which it is able to access information, no later than the end of March 2020.

The Government of Nunavut is grateful to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts for their review of the 2019 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Support for High School Students and Adult Learners. We look forward to updating the Committee with our continued collaborative progress on the recommendations provided by the OAG and the Standing Committee.







































































