

The Relationship of Bill 37 to System Performance.

There are aspects of the *Education Act* that limit the effectiveness and efficiency of our education system that should be changed with the objective of enhancing performance.

For example, the current inability for the Minister to provide mandatory direction to schools with respect to the delivery of the bilingual models, for things like program of study time allocations and the assignment of language of instruction to a specific program of study, creates significant inconsistencies in delivery across the territory. This issue is something that was identified by the Special Committee as a priority, and for good reason: inconsistency in delivery impacts negatively on how we develop and produce curriculum, assessments and resources. Bill 37 aims to address that issue, which will improve system performance.

With respect to DEA impacts on the Education Program, Bill 37 also brings significant clarity to the role and purpose of Local Education Program Enhancements (called “Local Programs” in the 2008 legislation). The role of the Minister in supporting this programming is also more clearly set out. Development and implementation of this programming is vital in ensuring that local cultural, linguistic and economic priorities are part of what is learned in local schools. The opportunity to do so has been underutilized by DEAs to date, which makes this proposed change a positive improvement that aims to increase the potential for local impact and ensuring that school is relevant and adaptive to the priorities of students, their parents and communities.

Bill 37 establishes the DEA Council, an important addition to the legislation, and gives that organization the role of DEA support and training—allowing DEAs to control their own training and support priorities, while having the funding needed to run programming. Improving the delivery of support and training to the DEAs will have a clear positive impact. Bill 37 also addresses the ongoing confusion around the purpose of mandatory long-term planning between DEAs and the department, by setting out the topics that the planning sessions with the proposed DEA Council should cover. By changing this, we have the opportunity to improve how the DEAs can impact on the work of the Department and schools.

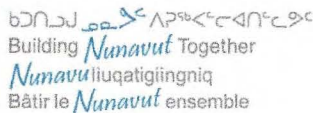
These are just a few of the positive aspects of Bill 37 that I would like an opportunity to discuss with you.

Additional Non-legislative Discussions

As you know, improving our education system involves both legislative and non-legislative approaches. Therefore, in addition to discussion of Bill 37, I would be more than happy to discuss the positive improvements to programming and resources that my department has made in recent years, including:



- The development and implementation of the Education Program Plan directive for principals to support reporting on language of instruction capacity in schools;
- The ongoing review of the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, with the aim of increasing the number of Inuit graduates and, importantly;
- The design and development of a certificate program for Student Support Assistants;
- The launch of a literacy initiative and its attendant professional development opportunities such as in-service training and courses for principals and learning coaches that have been offered to support implementation of the framework;
- The successful creation of positions and hiring of Learning Coaches for all schools in Nunavut to work on literacy skills with students;
- The development of a guided reading system for Inuktitut which includes the development of over 300 Inuktitut books as part a guided reading program in Inuktitut and accompanying teacher resources;
- The initiation of a guided reading system for Inuinnaqtun which will parallel the Inuktitut system;
- Updated and improved K-6 Inuktitut Language Arts curriculum, developed and soon to be introduced in schools;
- The work with linguists, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, contractors, educators and other experts to identify additional supports required to assist education staff towards language instruction;
- On-going work to improve the delivery of inclusive education and the development of a new student assessment framework;
- The establishment of an Educator Development division within the Department of Education to better support and train school employees;
- The plans for an Inuktitut focused version of the Certificate in Educational Leadership in Nunavut program to be held this year;
- The ongoing collaboration with NTI on the development of an ambitious new Inuit Employment Plan targeting the training, recruitment and retention of Inuit educators across all grades;
- Producing bilingual graduates prepared to use Inuktitut as a language of instruction.



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Office of Minister Paul Quassa
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As a final thought, I urge the Standing Committee to consider the fact that this legislative project has involved an enormous amount of time and effort on behalf of the government and education partners.

I am confident that compromises can be found, so that further delay and expenditure of resources is not necessary before we can address the major operational challenges that have been identified since the passage of the 2008 *Education Act*.

My staff and I remain available to continue this discussion regarding issues that are of vital importance to the social and economic future of Nunavut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert J. O'Connell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "O".

Hon. Paul Quassa
Minister of Education

Cc. Premier Peter Taptuna
Kathy Okpik, Deputy Minister of Education
Members of the Legislative Assembly