Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts Review of the 2013 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – Education in Nunavut Iqaluit, Nunavut April 1, 2014

# **Members Present**:

Tony Akoak
Pat Angnakak
Joe Enook
George Hickes, Chair
David Joanasie
Simeon Mikkungwak
Allan Rumbolt
Joe Savikataaq
Isaac Shooyook
Alexander Sammurtok

## **Staff Members:**

Siobhan Moss Nancy Tupik

## **Interpreters**:

Andrew Dialla Blandina Tulugarjuk Mary Nashook

#### Witnesses:

Michael Ferguson, Auditor General
Ronnie Campbell, Assistant Auditor
General
Michelle Salvail, Principal
Jo Ann Schwartz, Director
Kathy Okpik, Deputy Minister of
Education
Brad Archambault, Director of Policy
and Planning
David Lloyd, Assistant Deputy Minister
of Education

>>Committee commenced at 13:28

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 ΤΦρ. Τος Αρλος
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**Chairman** (Mr. Hickes): Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to ask Mr. Enook to lead us in a prayer, please.

>>Prayer

**Chairman**: Like I said, good afternoon. I would like to welcome Kathy Okpik, Deputy Minister of the Department of Education and, for the record, if you could please introduce your staff.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is my ADM, David Lloyd, and to my right is Bradley Archambault, Director of Policy and Planning. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you. I would like to review the agenda. Does anyone have any questions or comments? Thank you. At this time, I would like to read the opening comments from the Chair.

Good afternoon. I would like to welcome everyone to this meeting of the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts.

We have convened today to begin the Standing Committee's hearings on the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Education in Nunavut and the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Safety of Schools and Childcare Facilities in Nunavut.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to note that today's hearings are the first to be undertaken by the Standing Committee during the new Assembly, and I am delighted to welcome Mr. Ferguson and his officials back to Iqaluit.

Mr. Michael Ferguson was appointed

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Auditor General of Canada on November 28, 2011. Mr. Ferguson has had a distinguished career of public service, including a term of office as the Auditor General of New Brunswick.

As of today, Mr. Ferguson has presented four reports to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut since his appointment.

The Auditor General's 2012 Report on Procurement of Goods and Services was considered by the Standing Committee of the previous Assembly.

The reports that are being considered by the standing committee this week were tabled on the first sitting day of the current Legislative Assembly.

The Auditor General's *Follow-up Report* on Child and Family Services in Nunavut was tabled two weeks ago in the House. The Standing Committee's hearings on this report will take place prior to the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Looking ahead, I would also note that the Office of the Auditor General's current *Report on Plans and Priorities* indicates that all three territorial legislatures will be receiving reports during the spring of next year concerning their respective justice departments. Given the important responsibilities that our government has in relation to such areas as correctional facilities and probation services, I anticipate that this report will be considered with care by the Standing Committee.

I am confident that I speak for all of my colleagues when I say that we are looking forward to continuing the excellent working relationship that the Legislative Assembly has enjoyed with the Office of

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the Auditor General for over 15 years. We are very much looking forward to his continuing the practice of appearing in person before our Standing Committee on the occasion of our public hearings on his office's reports.

I would also like to take this opportunity to note that we are looking forward to following Mr. Ferguson's future reports to the Parliament of Canada that address federal programs that are of importance to our constituents in Nunavut, including his upcoming report on the Nutrition North Canada Program, which will be tabled in the House of Commons later this year.

I would note that this is not the first time that the Office of the Auditor General has reported to the Legislative Assembly on the subject of education. In 2007, the Legislative Assembly received the office's report on the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program.

It is extremely appropriate that the first two reports of the Auditor General being considered by this Standing Committee concern issues related to education. As the Auditor General will be very much aware, the new Assembly has identified education as the key priority for this government.

It is equally important to note that the statutorily-required review of the current *Education Act* will take place during the life of the current Legislative Assembly, as I'm very sure that sitting behind you, Ms. Eegeesiak, will appreciate, and I anticipate that the details of this process will be announced in the months ahead.

This week's hearings will play a

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significant role in informing the Assembly's upcoming review of the *Education Act*, which will provide the opportunity to consider the statute in detail, including consideration of what amendments to the legislation may be required, given the Auditor General's observations concerning the challenges facing the Department of Education in implementing the current statute's requirements and obligations.

Our schedule for this week anticipates that we will commence our consideration of the Auditor General's Report on Safety of Schools and Childcare Facilities on Thursday morning, following our consideration of the Report on Education in Nunavut. It should go without saying that the safety of Nunavut's children should be of paramount concern to the government.

Being mindful that the report of the Auditor General notes that both the Department of Education and the Department of Community and Government Services were formally advised in June of 2013 of his office's concerns relating to the safety of schools and child care facilities, this week's hearings will provide an opportunity for the government to publicly account for what specific actions have been taken to address the issues and concerns in the Auditor General's report.

As my colleagues are aware, Rule 91(5) of the *Rules of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut* requires that the government produce a formal response to a report of a Standing Committee within 120 days of its presentation. I anticipate that the Standing Committee's report on these hearings will be presented to the House shortly after it reconvenes for its spring

sitting next month.

I will now briefly cover some logistical and housekeeping matters.

This week's hearings are being televised live across Nunavut on community cable stations and the direct-to-home satellite services of both the Bell and Shaw networks.

Transcripts of the hearings will be produced and posted on the Legislative Assembly's website at a later date.

In order to assist our interpreters and technical staff, I would ask that members and witnesses go through the Chair before speaking.

I would also ask all members, witnesses, and visitors in the Gallery to ensure that their cellphones, BlackBerrys, and other electronic devices do not disrupt these proceedings.

I would again like to welcome Mr. Ferguson to our hearings, and invite him to deliver his opening statement. Thank you. *Qujannamiik*.

Mr. Ferguson: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to discuss our report on education in Nunavut. Joining me at the table are Ronnie Campbell, Assistant Auditor General, Michelle Salvail, Principal, and Jo Ann Schwartz, Director, who were responsible for this audit.

In this audit, we looked at whether the Department of Education had adequately managed the implementation of the *Education Act* since it was passed in 2008. The audit was conducted within five communities across the three regions

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of Nunavut.

I would like to provide you with a brief overview of the report findings.

Implementing the *Education Act* was a major undertaking. The goal of the new Act is to ensure that the vision and beliefs about education held by Nunavummiut are embedded in schools and in the education that students receive in Nunavut. This includes bilingual education for all students by 2019-2020.

We found that the department developed a plan to guide its implementation of the *Education Act*; however, it underestimated the amount of time and effort required to complete some aspects of the implementation plan. As we mentioned in our report, this contributed to the implementation being incomplete and/or delayed.

We found that the department is not meeting the Act's requirement of offering bilingual education up to grade 3. During the 2011-12 school year, only one in five schools we audited met the bilingual education requirement in those grades. At the time of our audit, only one of the five schools is expected to be in a position to meet the grade 4 bilingual education requirements.

The lack of qualified bilingual teachers in the territory is hindering progress toward meeting these requirements. Schools will face even greater challenges to meet bilingual education requirements as more and more grades need to become bilingual. However, the department has not determined how many bilingual teachers will be needed each year to meet the Act's requirements for bilingual education by 2020.

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While the department has succeeded in the development of regulations, we also found that there are still many areas where more work is required. This includes the development of teaching resources, especially those in Inuktitut, to deliver curriculum. It also includes training for teachers and student support assistants in differentiated instruction, which is a key component of inclusive education.

Mr. Chairman, based on our audit work, we identified several obstacles to the department's implementation of the Act. Among them is attendance.

Low attendance is a serious problem in Nunavut. For example, several attendance reports we reviewed indicated that students attended class less than 50 percent of the time, with attendance dropping as low as 27 percent. This is impacting students' ability to learn what is required to move to the next grade. This issue cannot be resolved by the department alone.

Further, the human resource capacity challenges faced by the Government of Nunavut also apply to the implementation of the *Education Act*.

The *Education Act* calls for a legislative review. In our view, the review by the Legislative Assembly provides an opportunity to look at the progress made on the implementation to date, as well as internal and external challenges to implementation.

The Department of Education has agreed with our recommendations and has made several commitments in its responses.

Mr. Chairman, your Committee may wish to seek details from officials about

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some of these actions. In particular, your Committee may wish to ask how the department intends to address the shortage of bilingual teachers required to deliver a bilingual education for all students by 2019-2020.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. My colleagues and I would be pleased to answer any questions that Committee Members may have. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. I would like to invite Ms. Okpik to make her opening comments.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) Today, I would like to speak to the findings presented in the Auditor General's Report on Education in Nunavut.

The Department of Education is committed to providing high-quality education opportunities to our students to help them reach their full potential.

We worked very closely with the Office of the Auditor General for over a year to help them complete this report.

The report examines what the Department of Education has done to implement the *Education Act* since it was passed in 2008. This involved examining bilingual education, curriculum, student assessment, inclusive education, attendance, and parental involvement.

The facts presented in this report clearly show what areas we need to focus on to improve our education system. We agree with all the findings presented by the Auditor General. We are committed to Λ⊅4<sup>16</sup>)Γ, CΔ<sup>1</sup>4Φ<sup>1</sup>6 Δ⊂\Δ}<sup>16</sup>4<sup>16</sup>5 L<sup>12</sup><sup>16</sup>σ δ<sup>16</sup>6 Δ<sup>16</sup>

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taking action to implement all the recommendations and have already made significant progress in some key areas of our education system.

The Department of Education supports an inclusive education system. The *Education Act* states that students must receive adequate support to meet their learning needs and achieve curriculum outcomes. To do this, teachers must use differentiated instruction. This approach means teachers need to conduct continuous learning assessments that will show the progress of each student. We have heard from teachers that implementing inclusive education is difficult because not enough training is provided to teachers and student support assistants on differentiated instruction.

We are working to determine how to mandate differentiated instruction training for all educators by reviewing best practices in differentiated instruction training in other jurisdictions. To meet our needs in this area, we will complete a three-year work plan to develop, implement, and evaluate differentiated instruction training and ensure that student support assistant training includes differentiated instruction training.

A key element of the *Education Act* is bilingual instruction. Implementing bilingual education is a major undertaking, and we underestimated the time and effort required to fully implement this requirement under the Act. Our students need to be taught by qualified bilingual educators using bilingual curriculum and materials. We need to know if we have enough qualified bilingual teachers to meet the current bilingual education requirements for kindergarten to grade 3 and determine

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the number of bilingual teachers we will need in the future. This will be a major focus for the department over the upcoming school year.

To meet our language of instruction requirements under the *Education Act*, we are developing a database to gather data on educators' bilingual capacities at all levels within the kindergarten to grade 12 school system. This database will include existing educators' training and language skill sets and where placements are needed to deliver the language of instruction models in each school.

Together with Arctic College, we are working to strengthen our education system by reviewing the Nunavut Teacher Education Program. We want to determine ways to increase Inuit language teachers and track the number of bilingual students who enter and successfully complete the program each year.

We look forward to participating in the upcoming review of the *Education Act* by the Legislative Assembly. We are prepared to consider changes to the provisions concerning bilingual education, if necessary, to provide the best education possible to our students.

Effective student assessment, up-to-date, standardized curriculum and resources and a comprehensive approach to literacy development are vital components of successful inclusive education.

Under our *Education Act*, we are required to maintain a program of Nunavut-wide assessment to assess the literacy of students in each language and their numeracy skills. We need an effective assessment framework to gather reliable

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student achievement data to improve student learning and assess the overall effectiveness of our school system.

We have researched assessment tools in other jurisdictions and discussed assessment with partner jurisdictions that have similar student populations and concluded that the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System will be very effective in Nunavut. Given this, the department has decided to adopt the assessment system for use in Nunavut schools.

We have seen that the English materials are very transferable. This means we will easily be able to create parallel and equivalent reading and resource materials to allow us to deliver the benchmark assessment system in Inuktut and French.

Learning begins at birth and follows right up to adulthood. To support this, we have adopted the early years evaluation tool for our learners just entering kindergarten. The assessments can be given in the fall and spring of the kindergarten year to determine student progress and to help plan for supports for children when they enter grade 1. These assessments will be shared with parents to help them understand their child's strengths and areas that need further development.

Our multi-layered approach to assessment using formative assessments, benchmark assessments, and summative assessments will begin in the 2014-15 school year.

The Literacy Framework for Nunavut Schools will be developed in stages. The first stage focusing on kindergarten to grade 4 will be delivered in the 2014-15

school year. These materials will be available in Inuktitut, English, and French to meet our students' needs.

A major element of the literacy framework is the Balanced Literacy program. Balanced literacy is a comprehensive approach to literacy development. It involves guided reading, guided writing, and word study.

Guided reading, guided writing, and word study involve teaching by showing. Teachers will model good reading and writing skills. Students will practise what they have been shown and move on to independent learning when they are ready. Word study allows teachers to assign student activities that help them accurately recognize words and effectively use written words to convey meaning.

Teachers will receive in-depth training on literacy acquisition, giving them the skills to deliver this very effective literacy program. The reading program uses levelled books. We have purchased English language levelled books for all schools and we are working with a local Inuit publisher to produce an extensive series of levelled books in Inuktut.

A great deal of effort has been made to create made-in-Nunavut curriculum. We lack the personnel to do this work for every area of the curriculum. In some subject areas, it is more practical to adopt a curriculum from a partner jurisdiction and develop local content or strategies for the use of that curriculum.

Adopting and adapting curriculum from a partner jurisdiction provides many advantages:

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- It provides clear learning outcomes that reflect a national level of expectation.
- There are well-developed resources for teaching and assessing the curricula which better supports teachers and students.
- Common assessment strategies will exist that provide an accountability framework to help us make wellinformed decisions on the effectiveness of the study programs.

Adopting and adapting math, science, and English language arts curricula and resources from our partner jurisdictions of the Northwest Territories and Alberta will provide us with updated standard curriculum. This will ensure consistent and relevant learning experiences for all Nunavut students and help our students achieve grade levels and successfully move forward in the system.

It is important to note that the Auditor General stated that the department, parents, students, schools, and communities will need to work together in order to successfully implement the *Education Act*.

We are working with our education partners, the Nunavut Teachers Association, and the Coalition of the Nunavut District Education Authorities to help parents, families, and communities support student achievement.

In the 2011-12 school year, Nunavut's average student attendance was 71.4 percent. Parental and community engagement will give us the support we need to improve student attendance, which research shows is key to academic

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success. We have begun to work in this area with the theme "Parents motivate, Students participate, Together we can graduate."

We need to give parents, families, and communities the tools to make sure our students are in class, on time, and mentally and physically ready to learn. This is the formula for student success.

Supporting successful learning experiences begins at birth. To help our parents work with their children to develop good reading skills, we are giving all new parents in Nunavut a series of culturally relevant books, Baby's First Library.

We are also providing all licensed daycares and kindergarten classes in Nunavut with new resources that reflect our language, culture, and environment and encourage play-based learning.

This audit of education in Nunavut from the Auditor General of Canada has given us a snapshot of where we are now in implementing the *Education Act*. By moving forward with the recommendations in this report, I am sure we will make substantial progress in building an education system that helps our students achieve success in school and onward.

I look forward to answering your questions. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Any general comments or questions? Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering what prompted you to pick the Department of

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Education, seeing that it got to the point where it's at. You have done the audit, we found out a lot of things and now.... I'm just wondering, at the very beginning, how did you know that was the one to do? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. If you could clarify which witnesses you're asking before the question. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certainly, what we do when we identify areas to audit is we do a risk assessment. Essentially, what we are trying to do is focus on the areas that we think are most important to look at. Education certainly rose quickly to the top in terms of Nunavut and in terms an area that we felt we needed to look at. In particular, we also noted the timing of the legislative review. Given that it was a new Act, given that it had to go through implementation and that there was this commitment to do a legislative review, we felt that if we could bring some outside, objective view on how the implementation had gone, that that would be useful information to be used during that legislative review.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is for the Department of Education. I just want to know as well: before the audit, did you know the state of the department, like the findings that the audit found? Did you have any idea at all that it was the way that it is? If that makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

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Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, as we were starting to implement the *Education Act*, we very quickly realized that we were very under capacity in terms of developing supports, in terms of manuals, guidelines, the appeal process, and those types of things.

So to date, what we have done is we have compiled a list of things that we feel need to be reviewed within the current *Education Act*. On two different occasions previous to this government, we did provide letters to the Standing Committee indicating some areas that we felt, when the time comes, need to be explored, but we also wrote a second letter stating that it was probably best for the review to be conducted after the review done by the Office of the Auditor General. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again for the department, you did the first annual report on Nunavut's education system for 2009-2010. Was there anything in that annual report that you feel the Auditor General didn't address in his audit that maybe should have been? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) [There's] nothing we felt that wasn't addressed. However, just even going through the exercise of compiling the annual report and the reporting requirements for both principals and district education authorities, even the

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amount of time it took was cumbersome for administration, for us to be able to collect the information for the annual reports. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question, but it's directed both to the Auditor General's office and to the department. Everybody has been talking about how successful or not successful the education system is in Nunavut. I'm just wondering what your thoughts are on and who you think is primarily responsible for the success of Nunavut's education or to educate people in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you. I think, as we said in the report, there is certainly a shared responsibility. As a parent myself, I always considered it to be my responsibility to make sure my two kids met their fullest potential in the education system.

Having said that, because the Government of Nunavut and any provincial government as well, for example, but because the Government of Nunavut has determined that education is a priority and that there are specific things that the government wants to achieve, I think it's important for the government and the department to understand that they need to operate as if they had primary responsibility.

I don't think it necessarily matters where you say who has primary responsibility **>υ\^** (ϽϳϡΛησ): ʹͼͿϧͼϫϳͼ. Ϸϭͼϧͼϧηͼσ ϷʹϧͼϧϷͿϲϹ, ΛϧͼϛϪͼ ϹͿͼͿϤ ϤΓͼͼϧͼϲͿϲ ΡͼͿͼͺϫͼ. ϤͰϽ ʹϒϽʹͼͺͿͼͼʹͿ ΔϲͼϭϤʹϭϲϲϭͼ Ϸͼͼ ΠηΓϤͼ϶ϹϚ ϹϪͼͿ ϒϽʹͼͺͼͼͼ ΑͿϽͼͼϭϤͼϧͿͼ Δϲͼϧͼͼͼͼ ϤϽͿͼͼͼͼ ΔϲͼϭϤϗͱϳͼͼͼ ΔϲͼϭϤͼͼͼͼ ΔϲͼϭϤϗͱϳͼͼͼ

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As the Department of Education, yes, we have primary responsibility for the delivery of kindergarten to grade 12 education and we are also responsible for early childhood programming and licensing and inspection of daycares.

One of the big themes that we've had within Education, and it was one of our things last year, was "It starts at home." We're very strong believers that parents are the child's first and foremost educator before they come to kindergarten. We believe that we have to work very closely with parents and also the district education authorities and the communities, look at our own current programming that we have and work together. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Mr. Ferguson and your officials. Welcome. Kathy and your officials, welcome.

Before I get to the actual questions Mr. Chairman, I just want some clarification on a couple of things. In paragraph 5 of Mr. Ferguson's opening statement, it PYdoccon ΔYLITUL dnrthbale Λ৮<\richarchlor Δcadnocaled Λ৮<\richarchlor Δcadnocaled Λ৮<\richarchlor Δcadnocaled ΠΡΡΠΥΤΟΡας ΒΕΤΥΤΟΘΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΑΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙΕΝΑΙΤΟΙ

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states that "We found that the department developed a plan to guide its implementation of the *Education Act*; however, it underestimated the amount of time or effort required to complete some aspects of the implementation plan."

If I can ask Ms. Okpik, in your statement that you provided to us, you have so many responsibilities that fall back on these audits. Is it going to be just the same thing again? There are so many concerns in these audits that you need to do. Will you actually be able to do something about them this time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We expect that we want to implement all of them. A lot of them have already been done and we're working on a whole bunch more. I expect that what needs to be implemented will be. On top of everything that we said before, in terms of literacy and reading and writing, we're going to be implementing those as well. However, once we do our individual reports, we will be able to explain in more detail as to what we're doing, what has been done in the past, and how we're going to proceed forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Okpik. On page 3 of your opening comments, it states that "To meet our needs in this area, we will complete a three-year work plan to develop, implement, and evaluate

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differentiated instruction training." What does that mean? Does that mean that the status quo won't change for the next three years, as you're putting this together in the next three years? Is that what it means? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are going to be doing the three-year plan, but I can announce that we will implement something that will start in 2015. Once I get into the benchmarks, I'll be able to explain it in more detail. However, in the next coming school year, they will be implemented.

However, on top of that, we want to keep on doing some planning, and the last one that is called the Canadian Achievement Test, we want to see if it's feasible to use in Nunavut. We will have to check into that and to see if it can be translated into Inuktitut. So that's part of our three-year planning. I can say that once the new school year starts in grade 4, we will start this program right away. Also for grades 7, 8, and 9, we're going to start the benchmark assessments right away. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Also on page 6 of your opening statements, the second last paragraph states that you "concluded that the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System will be very effective in Nunavut." I'm sure you will talk about this later on. If you're going to be

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explaining it later, you don't have to answer it now, but many of us in Nunavut have never heard of the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. If you could please explain why that is the best for Nunavut.

You can answer that now if you want or you can get into it later on. I'll have another question, if she's got no response for that right now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After we did the study, we found that seven jurisdictions in Canada are using this to assess their schools. After looking at that, we thought it could be applied to us. It has already been put together. We don't have to make a new one if it can be translated into Inuktitut. Our Inuit staff have looked into it and they say that it would be very simple to translate it into Inuktitut and implement it.

We can show you what it's all about and some of the schools are already using this system. When we were doing the study, we were told that some schools have already been trying the Fountas & Pinnell system. That's why we selected it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Okpik. My final question is just a request for clarification on page 9 of your opening statements in the last paragraph, "Adopting and adapting math, science,

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and English language arts curriculum and resources from our partner jurisdictions of the NWT and Alberta will provide us..."

What I would like to know about is: haven't we already been doing that? We have heard that the higher grades are based on the Alberta curriculum. Now it's saying here that we're going to be including those. Can you explain that further, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Mr. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it has been a long time now that we have been using the Alberta curriculum. We have always been a part of what is called the, "Western Northern Canadian Protocol Curriculum." That is basically NWT, Yukon, Nunavut, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and, British Columbia. We share the Alberta education curriculum and meet and put together an education curriculum plan among us. However, we have always used the Alberta curriculum for grades 10, 11, and 12.

We were asked to make our own curriculum, to make a unique Nunavut-made curriculum. When we tried to do that, we couldn't keep up. For example, in social studies, if I can use that as an example, we always use the older teaching system, although it's from Alberta. We're planning to create our own social studies curriculum. However, because it took us so long, we decided to just use the updated Alberta curriculum while we're creating our own. We're going to be keeping a real close eye on

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curriculum development and that's how we're going to try and proceed forward more.

For example, math from kindergarten to grade 9, we're using the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol that I mentioned. We use only the framework. However, we're going to be using the whole curriculum instead. We have already purchased the math material. It's going to be standardized for all the schools so each school will have the same math program. We have purchased that already. So we're doing things like that to improve the curriculum.

For example, if we talk about different types of curricula in English, there are different kinds of resources that go into those curricula. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is to the Department of Environment. On page 3 of your opening comments, it talks about.... Education, I mean.

## >>Laughter

...the inclusive education system and that each student has to be assessed and a progress report on each student.

I believe that if you have special needs students, they get another person to help out like it is one-on-one teaching, but if a student is not doing well due to non-attendance or other factors, there's no support given to the teachers, just the teacher has to do more work and be better at their job. Just a clarification, please.

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Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, you just explained it correctly. Handicapped, deaf, or blind students usually have one-on-one instruction in the school and some other students as well, not just handicapped people. We have a five-part way of assessing a student to see how much that student needs help. It's called Tumiit 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, and they each have criteria as to how the students are put into categories.

Attendance is very important to us. We know that it can be very hard for the teachers. When we talk about differentiated instruction, it's a teacher teaching different things to the same class. Each student has a different speed of learning and each student has to be looked at properly and reviewed by the teacher. We're going to try that out first in the 2014-15 year.

With the literacy programs, reading and writing programs, it would be based on the students' learned ability, like the grade 3 curricula. It would be from A to E. Kindergarten would be "A." If they don't learn "A," they can't go onto "B." Under "A," they have certain reading material. Once it's set up like that, we will be able to support it better and we will be able to assess their reading and writing proficiency at the same time. That will be the first.

As we implement the report, we expect that we will be able to say a student is in this particular category of grade right now. Do we need that student's **Δ৬/«▶ርና** (ጋጎ.⊁በJና): የ<mark></mark>ժአ° ً ፲ ት ፲ ኒር ኣልቴርናь. ፲<sup>៶</sup> ▷•ለь.

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curriculum or does that student need more help? We will be able to say things like that. For example, very recently, last week, we had more than 30 staff taught how to do the assessments.

Also in November, we're going to be teaching the principals and student support teachers, those who help in the schools, about assessments as well to see how else they can help in the schools.

In October, we're planning to have 75 different school leaders and staff members meet to see how a student can be helped more through literacy intervention strategies.

We have done some heavy planning on those things. If we're going to be implementing these in Nunavut schools, then our staff and principals, vice-principals, our staff have to learn about all of this, and we will just continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying on the same topic, the staff need more training. Has the Department of Education been talking with Arctic College NTEP program to get this training right as part of their teacher training program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Department of Education, in conjunction with Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Family Services, has an

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adult learning partnership committee and we also have an NTEP partnership committee, where we sit down and discuss such things as where will the next NTEP program be, for example, or will there need to be a foundation year.

We have those discussions with Nunavut Arctic College. We have met with them and advised them of our use of Fountas & Pinnell benchmark assessments and the balanced literacy approach. Their intent is to ensure that the students that are going through the NTEP know of the direction that we're taking and the curriculum that we're actually going to be using. We do have a very good working relationship with Nunavut Arctic College on these areas.

Maybe to add a little bit more information to your previous question on inclusive education, we're currently undertaking a review. We have a philosophy that where we promote inclusive education within our school system, regardless of a child and what their needs are, we have the duty to accommodate them and to provide an education to them.

We're hoping, through this review, that we will be able to address the gaps, whether it be gaps to supports that we provide to students, but also gaps to possibly teacher in-servicing on different areas. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A last question on the opening comments. On page 10, it says that the attendance rate for Nunavut was 71.4

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We do have a directive out on attendance and how attendance is to be calculated. Previously, taking attendance was a paper-based activity. In that time, we only had a database system that was for grades 10, 11, and 12 by subject area.

However, at the start of this year, we have implemented a student information system where it tracks attendance. For example, if you have students who are in grades 10, 11, and 12 that are on a subject, so if they take six subjects a day, their attendance is taken by subject. Let's say that they attended only two out of the six classes, that attendance will be reflected that way. For students who are in K to 9, their attendance is inputted directly everyday through the student information system.

I can provide more expanded information on what the student information system can do because it tracks more than attendance. It tracks report card capabilities. It's so much more enhanced for the whole K to 12 system rather than the previous system that was only grades 10 to 12. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from Gjoa Haven, Mr. Akoak. Ρ<'b'C''σ'\* 4'-CP&ιL\*ib'\*? Δc-σσ4%Π</p>
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Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is to Mr. Ferguson. I'm just wondering how the audit is done. Is it done throughout all of Nunavut, and how do you audit? Do you talk to all the principals or educators, or how does that work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe, for example, we state in paragraph 29 of the audit that we audited eight schools covering kindergarten to grade 12 within five communities from all three regions of the territory. We did try to make sure that we were getting a broad view of the system. In the course of our work, again, I think you can see throughout the report where we talked to a number of people, whether it be at headquarters or regional offices or teachers themselves.

What we would have done in terms of actually doing the audit work was, for each item, put together an audit plan that identified what level of audit evidence that we needed in order to conclude. Again, I think you can see that it was across Nunavut and at various different levels and aspects of the education system in order to get the information that we needed.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you for the answer. My next question is for Ms. Okpik. In your opening statement, you said you have purchased some English language levelled books. I'm just wondering if you're translating all these into every

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Akoak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The quickest answer is no. The 25 different communities and 25 different dialects would just be prohibitive in costs. We have signed a contract with a company called Inhabit Media, who will be developing the material for us.

When we talk about language and language of instruction, I welcome the Members and this government to have a bigger discussion about language in general. Since Nunavut has been created, there has been no direction in terms of a standard type of dialect that will be used within and across government and within Nunavut. I know each community is very passionate about their own dialect.

In the absence of not been given strong or clear direction on the type of dialect to use, we rely on the contractors that are out there and the dialects that they use, and also with the interpreters and translators that we have and the dialects that they have. As well, we have a lot of our teaching resources, which are written by educators in different dialects, and we respect each of those dialects when they come in.

I think it would be much easier for the Department of Education if we had said this is a standardized dialect that we're going to use because it would make things so much easier for us. We have done some work in the Nattilik dialect, not much, and also some work in the Inuinnaqtun writing system as well.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment. We all know that we could say one word the same way, but it means totally different in other areas. That was my concern about not seeing some documents translated into Nattilingmiut any time soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Just a comment, Mr. Akoak. Member from Rankin Inlet South, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: In your opening remarks, you indicated that the *Education Act*, since it was passed in 2008, does involve examining bilingual education. This is on page 2. You went on to say on page 4 that you will "need to know if we have enough qualified bilingual teachers to meet the current bilingual education requirements for kindergarten to grade 3..." It is now 2014 and you knew about this five years ago. How come you need to do an assessment if you have enough bilingual teachers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just to give a bit of history in terms of the implementation plan. When the *Education Act* was finished in 2008 and came into implementation July 1, 2009, the implementation plan was for the first set of bilingual graduates to come out in 2019. From 2008 and onwards, you

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added a grade each year. So that's the implementation plan.

I can say right now for this fiscal year, we're to have implemented bilingual education in kindergarten to grade 4. I can tell you that in a lot of our schools, we're not compliant because we do not have enough Inuktitut-speaking educators to be able to fill that demand.

If we were to fully implement bilingual education by 2019, then 100 percent of our educators, obviously, would have to be bilingual. So education has the legislative requirement for bilingual education, but we do not have the programs, even though we provide financial contributions to the Teacher Education Program. We're at the supply of the Inuktitut-speaking teachers.

As we go on, I would like to be able to provide Members with some information on language of instruction and the language models that we have, the percentages that are required for each of those language models, and how the district education authorities determine which language model they wish to use. What's happening right now is schools are using Inuktitut speakers on a letter of authority to meet the requirements of bilingual education. You have individuals on the letter of authority who do not have a Bachelors of Education that are expected to teach in our schools to fulfill this language of instruction mandate.

We have some schools and some DEAs that have made the decision not to use individuals on letters of authority, therefore being non-compliant with language of instruction legislation, to ensure that they have educated teachers who are going to be teaching their

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students. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from Baker Lake, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the opening comments, first of all, I have a question to Ms. Okpik. In your opening comments on the fifth page, in the middle paragraph, it states that "We look forward to participating in the upcoming review of the *Education Act* by the Legislative Assembly."

We need to have the best education possible. We have different dialects and different writing systems. Where are you at now? Are you working on the language, on bilingual education or literacy or proficiency stage? That's my first question.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would be implementing them phased in, literacy and reading. I will be able to talk about them in detail later on. If he wants me to get into the detail, I can do that.

As to how we will be implementing these or how we will be phasing them in, let us also be aware that each community in each region has selected which model they will be using because there is a difference between Qulliit and immersion programs. The DEAs select from the three models.

For example, in the communities that are using the Qulliq model, from

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kindergarten to grade 3, they will be instructed in the Inuktitut language from 85 to 90 percent. Also, in the English stream, perhaps 10 to 15 percent, that's the remaining percent, be taught in the English language. Also, for immersion model, likewise, 85 to 90 percent from kindergarten to grade 3 and also the remaining portion for English language and also a dual model, like for example, in Iqaluit.

As Iqaluit residents, we have Inuktitut language of instruction and also for the English stream for those who have their first language as English. The instructions are different for their mother tongue, so they would have different instructions. For the Inuktitut language, the language of instruction would be 85 to 90 percent. For English, from kindergarten to grade 3, likewise in the English stream, if it's their mother tongue, it's from 85 to 90 percent and the remaining part would be taught in the Inuktitut language from kindergarten to grade 3.

Again, for the high grades, possibly starting from grades 4 to 6, and if they have chosen the Qulliq stream, they would need 70 to 75 percent in Inuktitut and the remaining 25 to 30 percent would be in English. With the immersion model, it's likely bigger with Inuktitut at 80 to 85 percent and the English language of instruction would be the remaining 15 to 20 percent. There's a slight difference there.

With the immersion program, it would mean that each community would choose either teaching more in Inuktitut. If we look at that from grades 7 to 9 and if they're using the Qulliq model, it would be 55 to 65 percent Inuktitut and the

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remaining 35 to 45 percent would be in English. With the immersion model, the Inuit language would be at 65 to 70 percent and the remaining 30 to 35 percent would be in English.

Again, from grades 10 to 12, whether they're using the Qulliq model or the immersion model, the Inuit language is 15 credits and the English would be 15 credits also. However, each DEA has the right to choose either the Qulliq program or the immersion program. They either have to have a public meeting first to conclude whether they're going to be using the Qulliq or the immersion model. That's in the plans and has been implemented.

When they're at grades 10 to 12, we're looking at 50-50, Inuktitut as the language of instruction at 50 percent and the other 50 percent in English. However, due to the lack of Inuktitut teachers, we are going through a lot of problems in our schools right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from Baker Lake.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much for your response. That was very interesting. With the 25 communities, there will be consequences without a doubt. We have our different dialects in each individual community.

I would like further information on page 6 of your opening comments regarding (interpretation ends) the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. When will that come into force? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr.

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Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From kindergarten to grade 4, we plan to implement this ystem in the next school year. When schools reopen in August and some in September. We will use this assessment system at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from Baker Lake.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question on another subject regarding education in general and proficiency in Inuktitut and English. You assessed five schools and one school met the bilingual education requirement in the *Education Act*. With five schools, I would like to know who helped you when you were doing that assessment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: I'll ask Ms. Salvail to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Salvail.

Ms. Salvail: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we did visit the schools, we talked to the principals and teachers, but also every school, as a matter of fact, is expected to produce a staffing report, how they intend to deal with the bilingual requirements and how, from year to year, they expect to have more bilingual teachers. We looked at all these reports, and then we corroborated these reports with the people we visited in each of

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these communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you very much, Ms. Salvail. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Another additional question on No. 6 again regarding that is: out of the five community schools, were they all outlying communities or were any of the schools a regional hub? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Salvail.

**Ms. Salvail**: I didn't get the last part of the question of these five schools.

**Chairman**: Mr. Mikkungwak, could you rephrase your question, please.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The five schools that were audited, were they all outlying communities or were any of them regional hubs from the Nunavut territory? We have three regional hubs. Were any of the regional hubs taken into the audit or were they all outlying communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you for that clarification. Ms. Salvail.

Ms. Salvail: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The five communities that we visited, first of all, we chose them because we went into the three regional offices of the Department of Education. So we went Pond Inlet, Baker Lake, and Kugluktuk. Also we took the opportunity to visit smaller communities as well while we were visiting the regional offices. We also went to Kimmirut and Taloyoak.

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/\*** (ጋጎ/>Ոሀና): Γ<sup>1</sup>ጋ ΓΡ<sup>α</sup>\*ህላ<sup>16</sup>, ▷'b<sup>1</sup>በላ<sup>6</sup>b<sup>2</sup>σbΔ<sup>2</sup>α-<sup>26</sup>, ላለ<sup>16</sup>dበ<sup>1</sup>.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Salvail. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that answer. Seeing that the capital of Nunavut is here in Iqaluit and you have three schools here, English, Inuktitut, and French, what's your comment on bilingual education? How does that affect the capital, seeing that when we look at bilingual, you could consider English and Inuktitut, English and French, Inuktitut and French? That would be my question here. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you for that, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we do an audit, what we do is look for... You know, we can't look at every school and we can't look at every region, so we have to decide on which areas that we can look at that will help us understand the situation in general.

So when have put together our audit plan and we selected the five communities that Ms. Salvail mentioned, that's our process for identifying how we understand the system sort of in its broad range. Also, of course, we did work at headquarters here in Iqaluit and would have gotten information from that avenue as well.

When we're doing an audit, we don't have to look at all schools or all regions. We're looking for a variety, I guess, of areas to get an understanding for the situation. So that's why we would have chosen five communities and why we looked at eight schools because we're

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working on a sample basis rather than having to look at everything.

**Chairman**: Thank you for that answer, Mr. Ferguson. Member from Baker Lake.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the answer. My last question for now, I guess, would be on the auditor's opening comments, No. 10, "Low attendance is a serious problem in Nunavut." When you guys did your audit on that.... We understand that attendance is a critical issue when it comes to education, but my question here is: were seasonal conditions taken into factor and also in-service sessions by teachers? Were those also taken into consideration before they closed off their report on attendance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In our audit, when we were looking at attendance, what we would have been doing is simply looking at the attendance that had been recorded in the individual schools. It was simply a matter of, were the schools recording the attendance, what level of attendance was there. I think that you can see sort of from the opening statement that in some places, attendance was quite low. I believe we also say in the chapter that with the current attendance rate, students may be missing up to three years of school over their whole school life. When we were looking at this issue, what we were looking at was simply how attendance is recorded.

If the schools were taking into account the factors that you were talking about, it  $\Lambda \subset \Lambda$ 

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would have been reflected in the numbers. So we weren't trying to sort of judge, was it reasonable for students not to be in school on a certain day. That would have been something that we would expect the department or the schools themselves to make that judgment that if it was a day that students couldn't attend school, then that would be considered in their attendance numbers. All we were looking at were the attendance numbers as they were recorded in the schools.

**Chairman**: Thank you for that answer, Mr. Ferguson. Hon. Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I sort of understand, but would like to direct my question to Ms. Okpik. The way I understood it, the Act was implemented in 2008 and that the Department of Education is behind its plans as well as the lack of teachers. Is it due to not having enough trained teachers that you lack teachers? Education is extremely important but lasks resources.

Tony said earlier that even though language is precious to us, I also understood that there is a lack of funds. Sometimes we feel that as long as we don't lose the language, we can also improvise. Considering this consequence, maybe we may need to have a more properly planned approach to preserve our precious language in preparation for funding as soon as it is available?

My concern is even though we take pride in our language and there is no funding available, this creates obstacles. We tend to just accept these facts and that is my real concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Shooyook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The *Education Act* was presented in 2008 and implemented on July 1, 2009. We also believe that the Inuit language has to be protected. This is the very first Act that has been implemented in Canada where an aboriginal language has been protected by law. However, we have a lack of teachers that are proficient in Inuktitut.

They don't just teach the Inuktitut language; there is math, science, and environment that fall into what they have to teach. They have to learn what they have to teach. They have to be able to pass the Teacher Education Program and you have to go through that if you're going to teach in Nunavut. You need to get the Bachelor of Education. However, there are 73 Inuit teachers in all three regions. They all work and use the program.

What he is talking about are not actual teachers that come and support the schools. They do the functions of teachers, but they're not actual teachers. They have been trained. The DEAs have selected these language teachers to be put into high school classes. So the kindergarten classes won't be the only ones learning that. They have said that it should be included in grade 12 as well. These language instructors that I'm referring to, I can't say how we got that number, but we will be looking into that more. If we need to add to that, we will.

Once the Act is reviewed, we have been told that as the education department, we will have to produce some documents about that. If we're going to implement it

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all, how are we going to implement it? How can we encourage people to become teachers? We will be looking into things like that and how much it will cost or if we need to have more money in our O&M budget.

Right now, if we were to look at student teachers in training from the 25 communities, there are 11 communities involved in the program. The department, through Nunavut Arctic College, spends over \$5 million in training teachers every year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Shooyook.

Mr. Shooyook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In addition, education, reading the material, we are not even close to catching up to what's planned for 2020. What's keeping education slow? I know it's slow. Something is keeping it back. I'm not a teacher, but on school days, we want to make sure that students, especially boys, don't forget about hunting and we take them out hunting during the school year. The girls as well. If I don't go to a meeting like this, then I won't know what's expected of me. That's the same thing that the students go through.

We have been told that if you go hunting, it won't affect your schoolwork. That can't be because if you're not in school, if you're out hunting, then you will fall back in your schoolwork. With this situation the way I understand it, there are things holding education back. Why can't we keep up? Those of us in the Standing Committee here have to try and help Education catch up and do something about the things holding it back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Shooyook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I should explain this better. What's holding it back is language, language of instruction, or language of teaching, language education. From kindergarten to grade 4, they are required to learn a certain amount according to the Act, and on top of that, like I said, from kindergarten to grade 3, they would have 85 to 90 percent Inuktitut instruction.

However, maybe we should be examining the grades 2 or 3 levels. They could be learning only half of the Inuktitut language they should be learning. We realize that we are not compliant with the Act already. We will have to re-examine these points. Regarding what you stated, about the fact that we are behing progress or have not kept up with language programs, that confirms the facys. Due to the lack of Inuktitut speaking teachers, we are not up to par with the Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask some questions along the line that Mr. Mikkungwak was asking earlier based on the Auditor General's opening comments. I will direct my question to the Department of Education.

Concerning the bilingual education up to grade 3, the Auditor General stated that five of the eight communities, the schools, will not have met the bilingual

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requirements for those grades, and a majority of the schools that were done in the audit were larger communities. I'm just wondering, if you compared that to the smaller communities, what percentage of all our schools are presently meeting the requirements for K to 3 bilingual education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Rumbolt. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.(interpretation ends) I don't have that cumulative information here, but it is interesting to note that one of the smaller communities actually met the bilingual education requirements and another small community of equal size didn't. The names of the schools were already identified where the audit took place. I want to indicate that the selection of three language models, the dual model, the immersion model, and the Qulliq model, is up to the district education authorities. They do extensive consultation with the community first.

When the Act first came out, we gave monies for two years in a row for every DEA to have a language committee in each of their communities. We provided a very extensive consultation guide on how they should consult with the communities to a point where there was a minimum standard of accepted consultations to a maximum standard of accepted consultations, the types of consultations that they could do, and how they could document the consultations.

Out of that, by motion, every district education authority selected a language model. The Act also states that the district education authority cannot change Ċ°α Lcus hspshus, dsije de Lspede

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their mind. It has to be in place for five years to get that model a chance to work. As I previously stated, we have some teachers on a letter of authority, without any teaching experience, so therefore, not having their Bachelors of Education to meet the requirement of bilingual education. We also have some district education authorities that have made the decision not to issue language of authorities.

We had one such DEA out of the five that were mentioned where they actually had given us a motion where they had chosen the Qulliq model. However, they indicated in their motion that they wanted to do a phased-in approach using strategies and elements of the dual model and the immersion model. They used this combined approach because they knew they didn't have the number of bilingual educators to meet the language compliance of the Qulliq model. They had known that they would have needed eight qualified bilingual educators. Again in 2012, this same DEA confirmed the same approach for the same reason.

Here in 2012-13, 12 of 47 of their educators in the schools have bilingual capacity and could teach in Inuktitut. Of those, only eight were qualified teachers. The DEA could have put those eight qualified teachers in the eight classrooms at the K to 3 level. If they did, they would have been compliant. However, it would mean there would be no other bilingual educators on staff to teach Inuktitut to students in grades 4 through 12, and that students would abruptly go from Inuktitut being taught 85 percent of time in K to 3 to zero percent in grades 4 to 12. So because of this, the other option for the DEA would have been to hire more unqualified people who could speak

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Inuktitut to teach at the grades 4 to 12 levels. The DEA chose not to follow this course and chose instead to follow the original plans and over time, as NTEP graduates come into place, to phase in the Qulliq model.

So in that one community, in the two schools, 12 of 47 teachers have bilingual capacity, eight are qualified educators, three aboriginal language specialists and one on the letter of authority. So that was the decision of the district education authority to implement that model. Here is a DEA that knows that they're not compliant, but they also realized that they needed to meet the needs of their community with respect to Inuktitut instruction all across the board. So it's not just as dry as being compliant and non-compliant; we also have to look at the staffing plans of each of the schools and the community. Their focus was high-quality instruction and so they didn't meet the compliancy.

They have to distinguish compliancy in two different ways. When we talk about compliance, from K to 3, are we compliant in having enough Inuktitut educators? But the other area of compliancy that we also have to note is for kindergarten to grade 3, regardless of which model you're using, whether you're using the Qulliq model or the immersion model, it calls for 80 to 85 percent instruction in Inuktitut. If you're not reaching 80 to 85 percent instruction in all subject areas in those grades, it would still mean we're non-compliant.

We're developing an HR data system that will gather the credentials of all our educators, their language proficiencies. Under the collective agreement, there are four levels of language proficiency, and

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also look at documenting what grades they teach, whether they teach in Inuktitut and English, because we also do have some Inuktitut-speaking teachers who are not instructing in Inuktitut, and to build that strong database for us to be able to project better and to track better. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Member from South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At Nunavut Arctic College from the NTEP program, do you know how many students are currently enrolled and the number of graduate teachers teaching in Nunavut schools from this program? This is my first question. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Joanasie. Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): There have been 213 NTEP graduates from 1981 to 2013. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you. Also, it is known that some graduates of this program do not always remain as teachers. Does that include these qualified teachers in the 213 or is the number lower? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Joanasie. Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of the 213 graduates of the NTEP program, at this time, I can

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I can tell you that there are many students who have graduated from the NTEP program. Perhaps after taking a year or two of NTEP program, after they graduate, there are agencies and governments that want to hire them because of their skill sets. They are hired by other departments and surely some end up in managerial positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also, thank you for the response. One of the objectives for the year 2019-2020 is to deliver bilingual instruction as part of education. Being that it is only six years away, I don't think the department may achieve this goal. What have you thought about in order to make adjustments to this or which direction in terms of years would you gear towards? I hope this is clear. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Joanasie. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're behind at this time, but I do expect that once the policy is reviewed for education, we will have to discuss this in detail because the

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- (°a)  language of instruction in schools does not only impact us; it has an impact on other people. I have spoken to other Deputy Ministers in regard to language of instruction. It has an impact at Arctic College, especially when we're trying to hire either interpreter/translators, or it has an impact on the departments of Human Resources and Culture and Heritage when they're trying to implement the two language legislations.

I believe that we need all Nunavummiut to deliberate or discuss the matter of Inuktitut language of instruction, not only by the Department of Education. Sometimes our students go into an education stream not being able to speak Inuktitut. In the Early Childhood Program, we have set aside some funds for them.

The Inuktitut language starts at home and language starts at home. Parents and Nunavummiut need to discuss this in detail. We expect them to deal with the language of instruction, how we will be instructing, how we will be testing the students, and what kind of curriculum we should have. It should have an impact on that, but we expect that during the legislation review, we will need to look into that in-depth. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the opening comments on page 8, you stated that "A great deal of effort has been made to create made-in-Nunavut curriculum." Also that they, "lack the personnel although work has been done for Nunavut-made curriculum." Are they assessed how useful they are to students

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and its methods? Does my question make sense?

(interpretation ends) How effective has the made-in-Nunavut curriculum been? Do they assess it on a regular basis? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Joanasie. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me use an example from the grades 10 to 12 curriculum. The first program is called the Aulajaaqtut curriculum, Inuktitut language arts for grades 10 to 12. It is very difficult for them to acknowledge the curriculum we made because Arctic College has to recognize the curriculum outside of Nunavut.

For the Aulajaaqtut curriculum that was used to train students and for language of instruction for grades 10 to 12, we have provided that curriculum to 25 different colleges and they have accepted that program for entrance requirements. It's very difficult and we have to meet with each and every one of them, and they have to review each and every one of them to make sure that they're proper and to make sure that they could use those to access Arctic College or universities.

For example, the residential school curriculum for grade 10 was established or tabled last year. We hired a consultant indefinitely to review the curriculum and how the adjustments could be approached. Former teachers surveyed users of the curriculum which resulted in recommendations where some were shortened and some were lengthened. Recommendations were analyzed and presented back to us for consultation.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. I've got a couple of questions, but I'll leave the floor to Mr. Enook, the second round.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I appreciate it. (interpretation) I know, Mr. Chairman, that we are doing a review, but I have one final question that I would like to pose and I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity.

In Mr. Ferguson's opening comments, item No. 10, it indicates that low attendance is a serious problem and it has an impact on the students' ability to learn what is required to move to the next level. Mr. Ferguson can respond to the question or possibly Ms. Okpik, if she would like to respond.

We all know that in Nunavut, we have heard on numerous occasions that the children or the students are advanced in their grades and in English, they call it social promotion. We know that the government says that there's no such thing as social promotion in the education system, but we know that it's otherwise.

In Mr. Ferguson's opening comments, he stated that it's impacting some of the students' ability to learn what is required to move to the next grade.

It seems like there are differences of opinion in what Mr. Ferguson indicates and what the Department of Education indicates. So I would like to know if Mr. Ferguson can give me an idea on exactly what this means. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Mr.

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Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think I can really get into the question of social promotion. I think that's a question that the department will have to answer.

We did identify, of course, attendance being a significant factor and a challenge that the department faces, and I think the Deputy Minister has also stated that as well. Obviously, when children miss significant amounts of time from school, their ability to learn, particularly the complex subjects, is going to be affected.

How that then impacts and how that sort of moves into when they get moved onto the next grade, it isn't something I can speak to. That's something that again I think the Deputy Minister would have to speak to. I think all I can go back to is reiterate that the low level of attendance that we saw, particularly in some specific instances, was concerning and is a significant issue for the children to be able to learn what they need to learn in the school system.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. (interpretation) Possibly Ms. Okpik can respond to that also. It indicates here that it impedes the students' ability to learn. It's impacting the students' ability to learn, but there are a lot of people in Nunavut who think that there is social promotion happening in their schools. How do you understand paragraph 10 of the Auditor General's opening comments? If you may ask, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding low attendance in their schools, it's a serious concern to the Department of Education and it's at 71.4 percent if we look at the entire school population in Nunavut. For example, if we stay on that same average and if you look at the whole school, it's like missing three years.

With the attendance dropping as low as 27 percent in one school and approximately half of them attending school, it is a challenge to our department. It's something that we are trying to do as much as we can in order to turn around. We are looking at how we can have a better working relationship with the parents so that we will get a higher attendance.

Regarding social promotion, we hear it, but I think it was last year when we put in student placement retention to look at what the teacher, the parent, the school principal, and the assistant can do. If the student can't go up to a higher grade, then keep them in the same grade. These individuals have to work together in order to arrive at whether the student is going to pass.

There is the student support teacher, the school principal, the student's teacher, and the parent if they so wish, especially if the parent would like the student to pass or stay in the same grade. That's the school team that would decide whether the student is going pass the grade or not. We have changed the wording so that the teachers will have an option of whether the student will be going onto another

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level or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Let me take this opportunity to ask a couple questions that I have as well. Mr. Ferguson, when I look at the scope and the approach of the audit on education, I agree with every one of the key elements that are mentioned in there. I think that one of the gaps that have been identified in Nunavut is the early childhood component of it. I'm just wondering why the early childhood aspect within the *Education Act* wasn't looked at under the scope of the review. Thank you.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, the overall objective of the audit was to look at how the department was managing the implementation of the *Education Act*. We simply had to settle on looking at certain elements. We couldn't look at everything.

We did settle on the six key elements that are identified in the report, those being attendance, student assessment, bilingual education, inclusive education, curriculum, and parental involvement. Really, in terms of why other things were left out, it was simply because we had to pick what we could do within the timeframe that we had. We identified these six areas as being important areas.

Early childhood education is obviously also another important area and is, I suppose, potentially something that we could consider for a future audit, but it was not something that was covered in this audit.

**Chairman**: I appreciate those comments, Mr. Ferguson. I have another question for Ms. Okpik. With that in mind, in your

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opening comments, you were stating that "Learning begins at birth and follows through right up to adulthood" or, I believe, cradle to the grave, as a former Minister of Education has coined it.

While I appreciate the earlier evaluation tool for learners entering kindergarten, there is also a lot of scientific evidence to prove that the learning abilities of children begin much earlier than that. I understand you're doing the assessment at that stage, and I appreciate the Baby's First Library. One of the questions I do have is what type of resources are being provided to licensed daycares and kindergarten classes to encourage earlier learning than just before kindergarten. Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We love the early years. We say it starts at home.

The Department of Education has the responsibility for early childhood programming both within a licensed daycare and day homes. Through our early childhood offices where you're going to get to know more about later on in the week when we do the second report, they're responsible for inspecting and licensing all daycares. We spend a little over \$2.6 million for those nonprofit societies. In the past, we have done supports to them by providing any type of resource that we have developed. To date, we have published four different theme units, star ships, boats, and there is a fourth one, in all four languages to go to all daycare facilities, but every early childhood program out there.

In addition to that, under the *Education Act*, there are the legal requirements for

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district education authorities to provide early childhood programming. We provide an annual contribution to all DEAs of \$1.6 million. How they do that is they work with existing early childhood programs in their communities. So they have it open for those early childhood programs to provide proposals to the DEA, and the DEA decides who they're going to support through that.

In addition, we have seven Aboriginal Head Start programs funded by the federal government, which we license and inspect. A lot of our DEAs have partnered with them to provide them additional funding to expand the number of programming for them.

One of our focuses for early childhood programming is reaching out to parents who don't participate in early childhood programming. So in communities, under the Healthy Children's Initiative, which is another pot of funding that we have, where local community groups can apply for money to hold different types of early childhood workshops, whether it be moms and tots, for example, or different types of things like that, those types of programming take place as well at the community level.

We're also looking at developing resources, whether they be at a lending library or things to take home for parents who don't participate in early childhood programming because that's one of our target clientele as well so that children can take advantage of reading materials and whatnot.

The other thing that we're really interested in and looking at is a preliminary review of our *Child Day* 

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Care Act. It was inherited from the Northwest Territories. We have some immediate minor amendments that we would like to take with respect to safety, but overall, we would like to look at the Child Day Care Act as an Early Childhood Act that encompasses all of our programming, but also bringing it into line with the Inuit Language Protection Act.

We did some reorganization and we're also looking at strengthening the mandate of our Early Childhood Division.

That's just a few of the things that we're doing, but I'm sure that with the introduction of the second report, we can elaborate more on supports that we're providing, things like purchasing computers, sort of like a mini office for every daycare, for example, because that way, we can centralize information and provide information for them. That's getting into a bit of detail that I wish to share in the next couple of days. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. I look forward to seeing some of those suggested amendments to the Daycare Act. I have been looking it over a little bit lately and it's due for a review.

At this time, I would like to recognize the clock and we will take a 15-minute break and return with comments on the paragraph-by-paragraph review.

>>Committee recessed at 15:32 and resumed at 15:47

**Chairman**: Welcome back, everyone. I hope everyone is feeling a little healthier than they were when they left. At this time, I would like to go into the

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paragraph-by-paragraph review of the 2013 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut – Education in Nunavut. Are there any questions on the main points, page 1? I have no names on my list. We will go to the introduction, paragraphs 1 through 5. Any questions or comments? Mr. Joanasie.

Mr. Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is for the Auditor General, Mr. Ferguson. In paragraphs 4 and 5 of the report, it identifies a number of social factors which complicate the delivery of education across Nunavut. I'm just curious if your audit identified any specific areas where school-based programs, such as breakfast programs, did have an impact on attendance rates or student assessments. Did you look at that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Joanasie. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We didn't look at those specific types of programs that the department might have in place to try to deal with some of those issues. This is the introduction section of the report. What we were trying to do was put the whole school attendance issue into context. We recognized that the there was the issue with school attendance.

We say in paragraph 3 again and it has been said that by the time the student with this attendance rate graduates from high school, they will have missed the equivalent of more than three full academic years. In paragraph 4, really, what we were trying to do was to put that into context, but then we didn't audit specifically activities that the department

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might be doing at a detailed level to try to manage the attendance issue.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Any more? Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the introduction section, No. 3, the last sentence there, "By the time students with this attendance rate graduate from high school, they will have missed the equivalent of more than three full academic years." So when they have their graduation, does that affect their diploma or their certificate? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Attendance certainly affects student achievement. When we get to the grades 10, 11, and 12 years of schooling, we have what we call summative assessments, which are the departmental exams. So that determines whether or not they graduate. Because we follow the Alberta model, you need a minimum of 100 credits to be able to graduate with the English 30-1 or 30-2 departmental exam. So that's the requirement in order to graduate.

When we start looking at the differentials, which are also referred to, we know that non-attendance has a significant impact. If you look at the current graduates who do graduate, they're the ones who are with the highest attendance. So the ones who aren't graduating have obviously missed out on their education or have not attended. Our graduates typically have about 85 percent attendance or more when they graduate. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr.

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Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Mikkungwak, if you could also please highlight which panel of witnesses you're directing your question to.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure who I'm going to ask this one to. On that same aspect but in the introduction, No. 4, "Delivering education in Nunavut is complicated by other factors, such as..." and then they highlight the housing shortage, household food insecurity, but I noticed that some of the bullets that are pointed out do touch another department aside from the Department of Education. What recommendations would they have?

As we are all aware, there is a housing shortage across Nunavut, which we are trying to deal with as MLAs and as an Assembly. When it comes to social problems, which touches on Family Services, my question would be to the Department of Education. When you have social problems surfacing with school students, how does that impact the education of the students in school? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) First and foremost, within the education system, we have student support teachers in every single school. The other things that we have are school community counsellors in all of our schools as well. The school community counsellor is the conduit through the families and through the schools. If there are chronic attendance issues, then the school

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community counsellor makes contact with the family. Those are the first types of supports within the Department of Education.

In addition, we work with Family Services and the Department of Health. We have a terms of reference for multidisciplinary or complex.... It's a terms of reference between Justice, Health, Education, and Family Services. If we have to look at a case-by-case issue with a student, we're revitalizing that and just finalizing and reviewing the terms of reference.

We also have interventions right with the school team, if need be, and then we also work with the RCMP in cases where we need to work with them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my other question here would be directed to the Auditor General on No. 4 again, the health status of Nunavummiut, which is significantly below the national average. When we look at the health status, is that mentioning the mental health status or the physical well-being status by nutrition? If I can get clarity on that. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, what this paragraph in the report is doing is it's trying to point out some of the factors outside the direct education sphere that can have an impact on education.

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I think that when you look at government programs, you can almost look at them essentially as a series of overlapping circles and you can put any government program you want in the middle. For example, if you say that education is what we're trying to deal with, then there would be other sort of things that overlap on that, health being one of those, housing being another, food being another, social problems; they're all factors that overlap and can cause part of the problem in terms of education.

When we're talking about health status, it's just general. I don't think we were being specific as to whether it was mental health, physical health, that type of thing; just in general that the health status in Nunavut has different challenges in other areas and those types of challenges can, therefore, also affect the job that Education has to do.

This is isn't an area that we actually audited and we have a number of findings about; this is just trying to put in context the issue that the department has to face in implementing the *Education Act*.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I asked that question, I guess I wanted clarity if it's focusing more on mental health wellness or nutritional diet focus that may affect the school students in properly getting their education. At the same time, when we look at the health status of Nunavutmiut, we do have some challenges also in our territory with some illnesses. I guess that's where I wanted some clarity. During the springtime, we've got the

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spring flu which surfaces out of the blue or in the fall time. I guess that affects the education of the students, whether it be by attendance or by health. So if they can elaborate on that a little bit more, I guess. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr.

Chairman. I really can't bring much more clarity to it because we didn't delve down into the different aspects of health. What we are saying is, just in general, when you look at the health status of people in Nunavut, that there are challenges there, it could be on the mental health side or on the physical health side. We didn't break it down between those two.

We just recognize that anytime that there are health challenges, be they mental health challenges or physical health challenges, they can have an impact on education. The reason that I can't give you anything more specific is because we didn't delve down into it to determine how much of this might be a mental health issue versus a physical health issue.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Mikkungwak.

**Mr. Mikkungwak**: Thank you. On page 4, No. 7, the last....

**Chairman**: Sorry, Mr. Mikkungwak. That's paragraphs 1 through 5.

**Mr. Mikkungwak**: Okay, I'll wait until we get there. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

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Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is for the department. Paragraph 2 of the Auditor General's report to the Legislative Assembly indicates that 36 percent of Nunavummiut students graduate from high school. I was wondering if you can describe what has changed since the implementation of the new *Education Act* in 2009. Has that changed anything? Have you noticed anything since the implementation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think that one of the biggest changes is we have a young population that's quickly growing, so that's one of the factors that we have to take into consideration as our demographics grow. When we talk about just the almost 9,000 students out of a population of 32,000, we know that we have a lot of students. So therefore, it's going to put a lot of pressure in the future on supports to attend post secondary and college.

If I could just maybe give you a few numbers, in 2013, we had 215 graduates, 55 percent were female, 95 percent were Inuit, and they were mostly 18-year-olds, which is good because we know, historically, students were having to go through high school up to the age of 21. So it was really interesting to see the majority of the graduates who were at 18 years of age. For the 2013 year, there were 10 percent fewer graduates than the previous year, when we had 240 students who graduated. Our net graduation rate for 2013 is 35.7 percent, which is an increase from 34.28 percent in 2012.

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There are always fluctuations in the numbers of graduates.

Besides the small drop, we've had positive growth in the number of graduates and the overall graduation rates. We do acknowledge that graduation rates in Nunavut are lower than in other jurisdictions, but our rates have steadily increased. We're hoping, with the implementation of our Literacy for Life, our Balanced Literacy Program, our assessments, that it will further strengthen our system. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that in some communities, they do different incentives to try and get children to school. I'm talking about non-attendance here. I'm wondering if anything sticks out with you. Has some community come up with a real interesting and unique incentive to get kids to go to school? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the majority of our schools have stay-in-school initiatives. The Inuuqatigiitsiarniq policy and also the monies provided to district education authorities can be used for stay-in-school activities and targeting students at risk that are at risk of dropping out. I have been to schools where they have separate meal programs or they will have specific after school programs for individuals, whether it be from taking part in exercise,

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sport, or different avenues.

Right now, we're just compiling some best practices. We're going to be coming out with parental engagement guides to be used in schools and how to look at parental engagement both at the community level with parents, what teachers can do, and what the school can do. We also have a very active campaign that will be coming out soon. You have probably seen the ads on TV, what I said about "Students participate, Parents motivate, Together we can graduate." That's our slogan.

So we have a lot of things that we will be doing this spring and also this fall. I could provide more detail when we get to that page on parental engagement. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering about low attendance rates. Do you feel that Nunavummiut really have a good understanding as to the implications of non-attendance of their children in school? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

**Ms. Okpik** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Obviously, they would know if their child is not at school.

I think when we see graduations happen at the community level, it becomes a major community event, a celebration. One of the first things that you will hear ŰΔΡ
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students say when they're at the graduation is "Thank you, mom and dad, for waking me up." or "Thank you, mom and dad, for looking after my child," because we do have a population of students out there that come to school with young ones. This is going to be a part of the parental engagement campaign as well.

We're interested in possibly going out and having round tables in communities. We are also working with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami on a parental engagement campaign. There will be some very targeted parental campaign engagement from ITK as well that we will be partnering.

The other thing too is it's more than parents; it's the whole of the community. So if we see children that are school age going into a coffee shop or going into a store, communities can take actions. Businesses can take action and say, "I'm sorry. You need to be at school. You're not allowed in here at this hour." Those types of things and those types of supports, I think, would be very beneficial for us. We wish to engage in having the discussion with parents as well and the community. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thanks for that, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering what your feelings are and if you think this nonattendance problem is a problem of the '90s or the '80s or is it just now. How long has this been going on? I hear stories of in the '70s, everybody went to school. You were told to go to school and you went to school. Now it doesn't really

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seem that way and I'm just wondering what your opinion is on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think, if you look at my generation and the generation around the table, when we went to school, there were no ifs, ands, or buts. You had to go to school. I wonder too where the shift has been. Maybe the mindset changed.

One thing that we also attributed too is very young parents. We have a high population of very young parents, so we need to be doing outreach to young parents for the importance of sending their children to school. I don't think it's just a Nunavut issue; I think it's a Canadian issue. We have a lot of young parents that we need to target.

One of the other things that we have put in place is the residential school curriculum as well so that students who are taking that piece of curriculum can understand where their parents and grandparents came from. We have been told that there's resistance sometimes to send kids to school because of the residential school era, but I don't think it is one single factor. I think there are a number of factors that play into this.

We had really low graduation rates in the days when we had, let's say, the regional high school here in Nunavut, when it was here in Iqaluit, and often, a lot of students didn't go to high school. We have to remember that education is, I think, very young in Nunavut, where we went from students being sent from their home

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communities to Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Yellowknife to attend high school to where now we have high schools.

In the beginning, it was just K to 9 schools. I think that in 1980, Pangnirtung was the very first community to get a four-year grades 10 to 12 class. That was in 1980. Our last community to get a high school was in 1993. So if you look at, from '93 to now, 2013, the amount of time has not been significant.

There are many factors, but I truly believe that we really need to reach out to the youth and let the youth know how important it is for their children to participate in school. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: My question is to the Department of Education, paragraph 4, the last bullet, social problems, such as high rates of teenage pregnancy. Has the department done anything in regard to slow down the teenage pregnancy and substance abuse at the schools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: I don't think the Department of Education alone can slow down the pregnancy rate. However, in conjunction with the Department of Health, we have developed a sexual health framework. With them also, we have provided sexual health kits to all schools. So there's that sex ed. component and again, they have to notify the parents and get parental consent and have meetings with parents.

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With that also, we have done a Respect Ed program. We're working with Sport Nunavut, for example. We're doing major influx on some of our first aid, the supplies that we provide to schools, and the training that can happen at the school level for first aid. We're working very closely with the Embrace Life Council and the Red Cross, where we're actually going in and doing K to 3 Healthy Touch, Bad Touch, without getting into all that terminology, but also looking at the older grades on being respectful and what is respect and respecting each other and respecting each other's bodies right, and that whole bit.

I thought maybe, if you would indulge me, I can ask Mr. Lloyd to elaborate on the RespectEd and the work that we're doing with the Embrace Life Council as well as some of the work we're doing around the mental health aspect. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Absolutely. Mr. Lloyd.

**Mr. Lloyd**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think she just wanted to put me on the spot and get me a chance to answer questions.

With respect to working with other

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departments and agencies, we are very actively engaged in a variety of fronts. For example, the Suicide Prevention Strategy, we're sitting on that. We're doing a lot of work in the area of Mental Health First Aid, suicide prevention through a variety of initiatives. We're reviewing our curriculum in this area in the middle years. The RespectEd program is a nationally recognized program that's created by the Red Cross, and we're now putting that into all of our schools.

I'm sorry, I forgot to slow down for translation.

Once again, the RespectEd program, as a national program, covers a wide gamut of areas. It talks about everything from cyber-bullying and dealing with social pressure to healthy relationships. We're doing that in conjunction with the Department of Health and the Department of Family Services. It's also a program that is rooted in the communities. It has been offered in many communities by sporting organizations as well as by the RCMP. So we're working very closely with other partners to try to address some of these issues.

It's important to note that with respect to areas such as this, the district education authorities have a significant amount of authority in making determinations as to what types of programs are put into place in some of their schools, particularly in the areas of sex education, where it's a bit of a sensitive topic. So that's something that needs to be recognized as well.

In the areas of tobacco reduction, food security, and breakfast programs, we are working more closely with the other departments and actually hoping to staff

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Lloyd. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Education has offered the Young Parents Stay Learning Child Care Subsidy to schoolage children for a number of years. How many parents are currently being provided with child care subsidies under the Young Parents Stay Learning program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For the 2013-14 fiscal year, we allocated \$133,000 for the Young Parents Stay Learning program and I can say that as of January 10, 2014, a total of 69 applications have been approved for this program; 20 in the Kitikmeot region, none in the Kivalliq, and 49 applicants within the Qikiqtani region. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Any reason for...(inaudible).... I'm just wondering why Kivalliq never got approved. Is there a reason for that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Sammurtok.

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There have been some technical difficulties. I'll give the gentlemen credit for trying to keep up to us. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It's application-based, so we wouldn't know why there weren't any applications. It's something that we can check with our early childhood officer to see what the reason is. We can look a little bit further and respond directly to the Member. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is to the Auditor General. On paragraph 2 of your report, it notes that "educational achievements and outcomes in Nunavut are lower than other jurisdictions in Canada." Other than graduation rates, how did you evaluate Nunavut's educational achievements and outcomes against other jurisdictions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have to check to see the level of detail, but we didn't do an audit of a number of different areas or a number of different jurisdictions to do the comparison. Certainly, when we looked at graduation rates and the 36 percent of Nunavummiut students who graduated from high school in 2011, it was a lower rate than other jurisdictions in Canada.

Again, this whole area of the audit is part of the introduction. We didn't audit graduation rates of other jurisdictions, but

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when you look at the graduation rates of other jurisdictions, the rate here in Nunavut obviously comes out quite low.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is now to either one that can answer me better. With a 36 percent graduation rate, it states in paragraph 2 again that a smaller percentage of graduates go on to post-secondary school. Would either one have the numbers in terms of the percentage that do go on to higher education after graduating? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Since the transfer of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Program has been moved to Family Services, we don't have that information. We can work with Family Services to get that information for you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll do a follow-up to my colleague's question on the introduction, section 4 again. He asked a question about the Department of Education offered the Young Parents Stay Learning. Maybe if the department can elaborate for some communities that don't have an early childhood officer where they can get this application, whether it be some government official, or would that request have to be from the district

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education authority. That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It is proposal-based. Just to give you an idea, we have four early childhood officers across Nunavut; one in the Kitikmeot, one in the Kivalliq, and two in the Baffin. They assist with these applications. They review them. The school community counsellor or the principal can assist if there is an application. Where you will see a lot of students who are attending school, it's most likely in a daycare that's attached to school because they're given first preference.

Just to let you know, here is the eligibility, and we had changed it over the last while. In order for the candidate to be eligible, they must have a satisfactory attendance and have evidence of satisfactory progress in school, and submit an application form signed by the school community counsellor or the principal, so that's who helps them facilitate this. They would sign an agreement to attend full time and to commit to progressing in their studies, and then prepare a letter of why the subsidy is important to them. They have to be enrolled in a full-time program of study for middle or high school in Nunavut or be under the age of 18 and enrolled in a full-time post-secondary study program in Nunavut. They have to be the parent or the legal guardian of one of more of the children needing care, and they must not receive a current daycare user subsidy funded by the Department of Family Services or a regional Inuit association, which is responsible for the

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asset funding.

For those communities that don't have available space at a licensed child care facility, they can go to a private unlicensed caregiver, but it's only with approval from the department when licensed child care space is not available. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Not to derail your train of thought, Mr. Mikkungwak, we're going to take a five-minute break to deal with some of the technical issues that we're experiencing. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 16:29 and resumed at 16:32

**Chairman**: Thank you for your patience, everyone. We will reconvene with Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In reference to the Department of Education offered Young Parent Stay Learning child care, I would like to thank Ms. Okpik for the answer, but in our community of Baker Lake, there is no early childhood officer, so maybe they can pass on the information to the district education authority. In addition to that, is the child care subsidy a fixed rate for the whole year or does that fluctuate? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have that level of detail with me right now, but when we go into the report of the safety of child care facilities and

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schools, I'll make sure that I have that information for you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you. Now to switch gears. I'll focus on to Auditor General. On page 3 of the introduction on 4 again, "...social problems, such as higher rates of teenage pregnancy and substance abuse than the rest of Canada." My question to your office is: were there any positive impacts that you took into consideration? For example, in our schools we have the breakfast programs. Was that taken into consideration or how to do you think that affected the student assessments or attendance rates? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, education and delivering education is a complex topic with many things that affect how education is delivered.

Some of the things that the Member is mentioning are, of course, important factors in terms of delivering education, but they weren't the focus of the audit. We didn't look at things like breakfast programs and that sort of thing. What we were looking at doing was not so much how education is delivered, but how is the department progressing with implementing certain key aspects of the *Education Act*.

Again, I think it will just come back to there are many things in education that can be looked at through audits and some  $\Delta$ 6790C66.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to point that out. This is not really a question, I guess, but when you look at the report that they submitted under 4 and their second bullet, "household food insecurity," that's why I brought up the breakfast program. I think the breakfast programs and communities across Nunavut that provides the breakfast program in the schools sort of alleviates the household food insecurity matter. I just wanted to point that out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Did you want to comment on that? Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If you want me to just elaborate, possibly just on breakfast programs within our school system, all of our schools in Nunavut offer a breakfast or snack program, but the thing to understand is the funding is mostly from third party organizations, such as Brighter Futures. The Department of Education doesn't fund directly for breakfast programs. The third party funding that they do get looks at purchasing nutritional food. You will see a lot schools do sealifts and also provide for hiring of staff to prepare breakfasts.

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The breakfast programs are universal in nature, so they're open to everybody. Whoever comes in can participate in the breakfast programs. Where funding is not adequate, school staff and community members volunteer their time to fundraise and prepare breakfasts. This is not considered the duty of a teacher.

Again, Brighter Futures and Breakfast for Learning are the two main funders. We also say that it's most beneficial for the community as a whole to run the programs rather than the schools doing it alone because this will ensure teacher and student focus on learning.

In the past, as a K to 12 system, we have been bartered by different outside agencies, "Can you teach this curriculum for us? Can you do this?" There are different things they have asked us to do. In recent years, we have pushed back a little because it takes away from one-on-one instruction time between the students and the teachers. If our focus is to teach math, reading, and writing, then we need to make sure teachers have that time to do it adequately.

So that's why we encourage community participation in breakfast programs. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Mikkungwak.

**Mr. Mikkungwak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I'll rephrase what I said.

I was just being proactive and I have seen it from my past, being a DEA chair in the past, the breakfast programs that are provided in our schools do have a ĊჼჃላ ላርጐዮናስላኈጋበና የትዕ፫ኒናበላውና, LጋΔጐኒናቴናርኈጋና. Δ፫ኒልኒ Δረጐጋውና σሲቴርኦልኦተጐናርጐጋና. ቮሲኦኦትዮና፫ ላΓሁንተሁΔኒር, Δ፫ኒልኒና Δ፫ኒልኔና ላኒ ውሷቴቴስጐዮና ቮሲኦንትኒኒሀበና ቮሲኦትσና ውላኒልናቴርኦታ ህኒናተና ላኒ ኦና፫ንናናር፫ኦናቴርኦነጋበና. Δ፫ኒልኦውና የረላው ርጐሲ Δሜቴልኦጐዮር Δ፫ቦንኦበርኦጐቦናጋኈ Δሜቴልኦትዮው ውና.

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positive impact. That's why I wanted to do a comparison. How do you see household food insecurity impacting the school students when there are breakfast programs that are offered in our schools?

When I as a DEA chair, I noticed that once the breakfast programs came into place, it really had a positive impact on children attending school and their attendance rates. I just wanted to point that out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. I didn't really hear a question in there. Did you wish to comment, Ms. Okpik? Thank you, Ms. Okpik. I have no more names on my list.

I have a question for Mr. Ferguson. With the 2009-2010 audits done on the Northwest Territories and the Yukon respectively, I realized the scope of the audit wasn't exactly the same as the one we have here, but there has been a number of comments bringing forward the issue of residential school systems still impacting our students today. For the foreseeable future, I think there will continue to be an impact.

Through those previous audits, I'm sure they have been dealing with a lot of similar issues that we have been dealing with our education system here in Nunavut. Do you have any suggestions for us, as legislators, on how we can help make improvements to the system? Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Recognizing that this particular audit was looking at the implementation of the *Education Act*, throughout the report, we have made a number of recommendations.

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Really, if you start with the *Education Act* as being the overall ambition of Nunavut, if you want, for what it wants to do in education, then I think what needs to happen is there need to be plans with the milestones. I think what this report has indicated is the original milestone of 2019-2020 was perhaps overly ambitious and some of the interim milestones can't be met.

Having that type of a plan with milestones, with the department reporting on its progress, and with hearings on it making progress, I think that's really the key to pushing this file forward, if you want. The *Education Act* lays out what the ambition is. The department has to work within that to try to determine what it can do and when it can do it. As long as there is a good dialogue and reporting back on whether it's being able to be successful or not, then if not, why not, adjustments can be made and I think progress can be made on this file.

In the other audits we have done, we have noticed in the -other territories similar issues in terms of attendance and graduation rates. We do note in paragraph 4, which there has been a lot of discussion about, that there are a number of factors that complicate the problem here. Even something like the household food insecurity question, we're not in any way saying that the breakfast programs don't work. What we're saying is in Nunavut, there are those types of issues, which means there are programs that need to be put in place to try to deal with those issues, as well as just delivering straight education.

That again all comes back to understanding what the factors are and understanding what the obstacles are.

Having the overall plan that was laid out in the *Education Act* and then knowing that there is a way to actually implement that and monitor that implementation, I think that's the way forward.

Chairman: Thank you very much for that response, Mr. Ferguson. A similar question to Ms. Okpik. Has there been any type of communication with other jurisdictions who are living through some of the same challenges that we've had with the legacy of the residential schools on how to overcome some of the challenges? Has there been any type of research done on how we can get the mindset of our students and the parents of those students to move on? We will never forget it, but I think our students are still suffering today with that legacy. Have there been any best practices or any meetings with other jurisdictions at your level to discuss some of the issues and how to counteract some of them? Thank you. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On a number of occasions, because education is a provincial/territorial/jurisdictional responsibility, there is no federal minister of education. However, since the early '60s, there has been a Council of Ministers of Education Canada where all Ministers of Education meet twice a year.

Starting about two years ago, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission made a presentation to what we call CMEC, which is the acronym for this council, and there was a lot of dialogue about residential school and what was happening in different jurisdictions. At the pan-Canadian level, we have an idea of what's happening and/or what's not happening.

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As a result of that, Nunavut started working very closely with the Northwest Territories to develop residential school curriculum. Not this past year, but the year before, we in-serviced the curriculum and launched it in Yellowknife with all social studies teachers from both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. From there, we did a review of the piece of the curriculum for any adoptions that need to be made to that piece of curriculum.

We were very honoured to host the very first CMEC meeting here in July in Igaluit. Our previous Minister of Education, Premier Eva Aariak, did a presentation to all the members and it was so very well received that they came up with the agreement that the rest of the jurisdictions would follow suit and introduce mandatory residential school curriculum. So that's where the statement was made that the first two jurisdictions were Nunavut and the Northwest Territories to create mandatory curriculum. We look forward to seeing what other jurisdictions are doing in terms of implementing.

That's the piece of work that we have done specifically with residential school. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: I very much appreciate that answer. I just had a name added to my list. Mr. Enook.

**Mr. Enook** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can go back to No. 9 on page 4.

**Chairman:** We're still on 1 to 5. Thank you, Mr. Enook. That being said, any general comments or questions on

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paragraphs 6 through 9? Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want clarification on No. 9 from Mr. Ferguson. On paragraph 9, you state that "Approximately 85 percent of Nunavummiut speak an Inuit language..." I also know that you looked at the *Education Act* and the progress of implementation.

However, in Nunavut, we have the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. Section 8 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* specifies the rights of children enrolled in Nunavut school programs receive Inuktitut language instruction. They have the right to Inuktitut language instruction from K to grade 3.

Now, I know that you audited the Act. However, did you also look into the *Inuit Language Protection Act* when you were doing your audit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the short answer is no, we didn't look at that other piece of legislation. Certainly, as is obvious from this audit report, the bilingual education aspect of the *Education Act* was a significant component of what we did look at under the *Education Act*, but we did not look at the *Inuit Language Protection Act* during this audit.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Enook.

**Mr. Enook** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Okpik, I would like to ask you: how does the *Inuit Language* 

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Protection Act in Nunavut affect the implementation of the Education Act? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we look at the *Education Act* and also the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, we look at them as the same. We don't differentiate between the two. One protects the other. In our mandate, we protect it as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Mr. Enook.

Mr. Enook (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The *Education Act* states that the elders have to be more involved in education. The fact that our elders have to be more involved in the schools, it's written there. We want our cultures, traditions, and values of Inuit taught in the schools. Right now, in your department, while trying to include the elders into our school system, what is the biggest hindrance to involving elders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Enook. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have funding available to the local DEAs in the amount of \$1.6 million for elder involvement. It's explained in the Act that a Minister can certify an elder. They can use that, but it's not limited to that. If a DEA wants to hire an elder, then they can access some of that \$1.6 million.

In some communities, I have heard from

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**>•Λ•**: 'dϧ·α΄ι, Δυνθρόι. Ραργσι Lσιαριστου απουστου απ two communities, they no longer have any elders left. That's what we have heard. I think that's one of the biggest problems with that program. They also have to fill out forms to access the funding if they want to hire elders, and then they have to go through a criminal records check. Sometimes they delay things. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one question for the department. It talks on No. 7 here about, in the olden days, "the Eastern Arctic operated under the mandate of three Inuit school boards, which were equivalent to school boards in the provinces." When 1999 came around, they got rid of those school boards and amalgamated the system into one. I'm wondering: in your opinion, do you think that had a negative impact in the delivery of education here in Nunavut? Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It's kind of hard for me to provide an opinion because I wasn't an administrator within the days of the divisional boards. I can only speak to what happened after the divisional boards were dissolved. The one thing I can say, though, is that there was a major disconnect between district education authorities and the Department of Education during that time. So there's a bit of history.

The very first government mandate, a made-in-Nunavut *Education Act*, that mandate was given to the Department of

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Education on that day. In 2002, the *Education Act* died on the order [paper]. The intent was to create an Act right away, but the boards were dissolved, so all of a sudden, you had the 25 district education authorities that were out there operating without cohesion. Even though there were regional school operations, it was a totally different way of functioning. So all of a sudden, you had regional school operations that were starting up and operating under a different structure that wasn't a board structure.

By the time 2008 came and all the consultations that took place, we heard a lot of feedback from DEAs that they really felt that there wasn't the unity that they had previously and being represented. Hence, just before the *Education Act* was passed, there was the creation of the coalition of district education authorities, which ended up getting embedded into the *Education Act* and getting funded.

So even though their role has changed significantly, our approach to the powers and responsibilities for district education authorities differed with the new *Education Act*. In essence, they had more authority at the local level than they do now. For example, because we're the Department of Education and there's no more board, we have responsibility for hiring and firing teachers and principals. For the hiring of principals, the *Education Act* states that the majority on the hiring panel can be made up of district education authority members. So that's one difference.

Although I can't comment about the dissolution of the three boards, the one thing that I have been working on over

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If you look at the pros and cons of that and looking at it at a national level, the other thing that we're hearing from DEAs right now is they're having capacity issues with the implementation of certain provisions of parts of the Act. We have heard that very clearly with respect to the implementation side. I can't speak or give an opinion on is it operating better today than it was back then.

The other thing we have to remember is that there has been a significant shift in how education has been delivered in the north. I think I alluded to it a little bit earlier where, previously, we had residential schools and we had three regional high schools to where instruction was, in my generation and before the NTEP program came around, primarily all in English.

Once the NTEP program came in and we started graduating teachers with bachelors in education, we had a shift where we had some communities that were teaching K to 3 only in Inuktitut and we had some communities that had K to 6 only in Inuktitut without any type of English as a second language.

So we hit the point where either they got to grade 4, grade 5, or grade 6 and that was the first time they were introduced to English. By the time they get to grade 10,

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we're going to assess them based on the Alberta exams where they probably didn't have that amount of time to get caught up. Hence, here is the bilingual education model, where we have the duel, the immersion, and the Qulliq model.

I think though during the review of the *Education Act*, we would like to see the review of the actual percentages, for example, to see if there needs to be some type of change. For example, right now, you can't teach math as a subject in K to 3 because of the requirement for the percentage of Inuit language, because that 10 or 15 percent has to be English language arts, unless you turn the math into an English language arts component along with math and Inuktitut. Those were some hiccups that we're finding out along the way as we go.

Somebody talked about dialects and having 25 different dialects. Even though we do have a glossary of math terms, at the end of the day, you probably have 25 different communities using 25 different terminologies for math in Inuktitut. Of course, when there is math literacy and they get into grades 4, 5, and 6, it's a whole new literacy and terminology that they have to learn.

So it's either learning it together or learning math as an English subject, but again, currently the K to 3 language provisions and the language of instruction model does not allow us to teach math in English because there has to be an English language arts component. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

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**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Ms. Okpik.

Ms. Okpik: That is very open-ended in terms of changes. I look forward to a review of *Education Act*. I think that's where we can get right into what's working and what's not working, the planning and the reporting phases of some of the responsibilities for DEAs and principals, and possibly looking at the roles and responsibilities of DEAs themselves. Some have come to us and say, "We are volunteers. Don't ask us to write a policy for us." I'm just using those types of things that we have heard.

Doing the whole student-educator ratio, for example, where it's legislated, where we're supposed to be better than the national average, this may cause fluctuation in the number of staff within every school. If you want to have continuity of a program and you have a fluctuation in the number of teachers, it's really hard to have continuity of a program if you have fluctuation in the number of teachers within your school. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Okpik. Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This question is for Mr. Ferguson. How often do you think we should be reviewing our education

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system? Obviously, education has been identified as one of the top priorities. How often do you think we should be reviewing this? What more needs to be done to ensure, in your opinion, that we're developing a good education system that's right for Nunavut, but also comparative to other provinces to make sure it's on par? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One thing that I would turn to, for example, is paragraph 73 in our audit where we're talking about external reporting. In there, we are saying that we found that as of June 2013, the department had submitted only its 2009-2010 report, which was more than a year late.

I think one of the critical aspects is for the department to be providing good reporting on its performance and whether it's meeting its milestones and doing what it should be doing. So I think good annual reporting will help people understand the challenges the department is facing, what it's trying to do, and whether it's able to do those things.

I think the other thing is that you don't want to be reviewing the legislation every year because, obviously, legislation is a complex process, but I think it's very critical to make sure that the five-year reviews of the legislation are done and are done on schedule. In this particular instance, you have the audit as a component that can be used in that assessment of the review. You might want to consider that, go through a review of the legislation. If the legislation

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has to be reviewed in another five years, you might want to consider having some sort of reporting, I don't know whether it would be from us or from somebody else, on what's the status at that point in time before going into the next review of the legislation.

Good external reporting on an annual basis from the department as well as making sure that those five-year reviews of the legislation are done on time, I think those are two critical components.

**Chairman**: Thank you for that response, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. I'm just wondering: is the audit that you just did for education in Nunavut something that's done across Canada in the different provinces? Is that what your department does as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are the auditor for each of the three northern territories, so we do audits in each of those territories. I don't have, off the top of my head, when we have done education in each of the territories, but we have done education audits in all three of them. This audit, of course, is very specific because it's looking at the *Education Act* in Nunavut and the implementation of that Act. What we would have been looking at in education audits in the other territories would have been different.

At the provincial level, those types of audits on education would be done by provincial auditors general, not by us. I Δ΄, ÞԺ•ḃ፫-ÞºበላቴኑሮፕԺ፣ ¿፫በናበ°Δº ጳፕኣቨርቪº Δ፫-ԾጳፕԺ፫ሲት ዕ° Διμω CΔνdላ ጳፕኣቨΔº C°፫μΔ° ἀυΔ<<ር, የΡΓ٬Ργροσιστούς ρυδονδιούς.

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>Ġ&ºᲙơႠ, ᠘፫ºᠣᡏᡃᠥᠸᡅᠥᡃ᠋ ᢗᡃ᠋ᡶᡥᡟ᠘ᡃᡕ᠌᠌᠌᠌ᢣᡠᢁᢗᡐᡠ ᢗᡃ᠋᠘ᡥᡟ᠘ᢞᡟ᠈ᠪᠬᡃᡆᡣᢉᡃ᠈ᠪᢣᠴᡕ, ᠈᠙ᡣ᠘ᡥᡳᡳ᠑ᡥ. ᢗᡃ᠋᠘ᡥᡟ᠘ᢣᡥ᠈᠈᠖ᠰ᠐᠘ᡣ᠘᠘᠘᠂᠘᠙᠘᠘᠙᠘ know that when I was Auditor General in New Brunswick, one that comes to mind was that we did an audit on standardized testing in New Brunswick. I'm sure that if you looked at auditors general reports from across the provinces, you would find a number of audits on different education issues. It wouldn't be the same issue as this because, again, this was looking at the Act, which is very specific to this jurisdiction, but would touch on a number of other education issues.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering about bilingual education. If you have done audits on the other two territories, has this issue come up in your past audits in other territories? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Ms. Angnakak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm told that the issue of bilingual education was not the focus of any of the audits that we have done in the other territories. That's not to say that I don't know whether it's an issue or not in the other territories or whether it's to the same extent, but it's not something that we have done an audit on in those territories.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. The last name I have on my list for today, Mr. Mikkungwak.

**Mr. Mikkungwak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question will be to the Auditor General of Canada regarding No. 7. What is the basis the whole thing goes

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right back to the 1980s? What is the basis for that whole paragraph? That's my first question.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Mikkungwak. Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This really is just, again, setting some context about the history of how the education system has operated over the last number of years. A person can get everything they need out of this report without reading that paragraph. On the other hand, I think that what it does is just try to help, in a very short paragraph, just try to remind people of some of the history in terms of how the education system has been governed over the last number of years. It's purely background information.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I'll dig a little bit deeper. When you look at that whole paragraph, it goes from, when you look at the education system in Nunavut, it has gone through various phases prior to us becoming a territory and how the education system did with operating the past within our communities. One of my additional questions on this is: is there not a reasoning why you put that paragraph, considering the fact that you have seen a substantial change in education, whether it be the graduation rates, or was there a substantial difference?

**Chairman**: Thank you for that question. Mr. Ferguson.

**Mr. Ferguson**: Thank you, Mr.

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Chairman. I think that when you read paragraph 7 and paragraph 8 together, you see the evolution and the number of changes that have gone on during the history, and then in paragraph 8, there is "a proposed made-in-Nunavut Education Act failed to receive the approval of the legislature."

I think, really, what it's describing is that there have been a number of changes over the last number of years and really, the current *Education Act* seems to be a good starting point for having set out what the ambition of the territory is in terms of education. I think it's trying to, really, describe that having that current Act in place is a good starting point, but then if you read further into the report, the ambition that's set out in that current Act needs to be implemented in order to achieve what it's intending to achieve.

I think these two paragraphs are really just trying to show that there have been changes. Things haven't just been one steady model over the last number of years. The current *Education Act* is a good description of the ambition for the territory, but actual implementation of that Act would be the next piece and the important piece.

**Chairman**: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A follow-up question would be: when you look at paragraphs 7 and 8, combining the two, and when you look at the department that dissolved the boards and replaced them with regional offices which had to re-create the services of former boards, how much of an impact has that placed in the education system in your opinion?

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Chairman: Thank you, Mr.

Mikkungwak. I think that would be more directed.... The Legislative Assembly dissolved the boards at that time. I'm not sure what response Mr. Ferguson could further that with, but I will appreciate it and maybe allow him to comment.

Mr. Ferguson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Really, all I can comment is that again, we're still in this section of the audit. It's still the introduction section of the audit, so we haven't actually got into our observations and recommendations, which starts in paragraph 22, I believe.

We didn't audit the dissolution of any boards or the impact of that. Again, this is just my way of background and letting people understand that there have been a number of changes in let's call it the governance structure of the education system in Nunavut over the last number of years. Really, the new Act is supposed to be a starting point for bringing forward what the ambition is and trying to implement that. The implementation is important.

Again, what this is, is it's really just trying to help people who don't have the full history of the education system in Nunavut to understand that the governance structure has changed a number of times.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Ferguson. At this time, I would like to recognize the clock and continue tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. with No. 8 on our agenda, paragraph-by-paragraph review of the 2013 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly in Nunavut – Education in Nunavut. See you all tomorrow morning at 9:00. Thank

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