

A photograph of two young girls with long dark hair, smiling and sitting at a blue table. The girl on the left has a pink bow in her hair. The girl on the right is wearing a grey patterned shirt. Other children are visible in the background.

STRATEGIC PLAN

DEFINITIONS

Definitions for the following terms are provided at the end of this document: holistic education, healthy communities, Inuit language, culture, worldview, values, organizational values, self-sufficient, empower, student success, stakeholders, strategic plan, strategic direction, strategic objectives.

We invite you to consult them.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To provide the people of Nunavik with educational services that will guide and enable all learners to develop the qualities, skills, and abilities they need to achieve well being and self-actualization.

OUR VISION

Nunavimmiut are empowered, proud, and self-sufficient members of healthy communities grounded in Inuit values, language, and culture, where they are inspired to achieve their full potential within a global context.

OUR APPROACH TO EDUCATION

At the school board, we approach education from a holistic perspective. The services we deliver—as well as the curriculum and programs we develop—are rooted in the Inuit definition of *Inuguiniq*, an education process that seeks to develop the human being as a whole through direct engagement with the environment and the community.

Our objective is to provide students with access to learning based on Inuit values, culture, language, history, worldview, and approaches to pedagogy.

WHO WE ARE

The Kativik School Board (KSB) was created in 1975, under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). Over the following three years, the schools of the region that had been administered by the provincial and federal governments were transferred to us.

By 1978, we became the sole provider of educational services to the Nunavik population. The school board's programs are now offered in the 14 Nunavik communities. Teaching is done exclusively in Inuktitut, the mother tongue, from kindergarten to Grade 2. English and French are introduced as second languages in Grade 3, while Inuktitut continues to be taught as a subject. The school board currently operates 17 primary and secondary schools. Five adult education centres offering courses and vocational training in Inuktitut, French, and English are also under the authority of the school board.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is important to remember the historical context in which the Kativik School Board was created under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) in 1975.

The JBNQA was negotiated after a major hydroelectric project in James Bay received opposition from us, the Inuit of Nunavik, the James Bay Cree, and other Aboriginal groups. We filed for, and won, an injunction to stop the project, which was quickly overturned by the Quebec Court of Appeal.

In this context, the Cree and Inuit took part in the JBNQA negotiations. At the same time, work on the La Grande project continued to advance, destroying the Inuit and Cree territory.

Section 17 of the JBNQA states that the KSB has jurisdiction over and responsibility for elementary, secondary, and adult education. This jurisdiction applies to all of Nunavik (the Quebec territory north of the 55th parallel), including non-Inuit residing in Nunavik.

The JBNQA also provides that the teaching language in Nunavik will be Inuktitut.

The JBNQA is a protected treaty under the Constitution of Canada.

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE

Protect,
maintain, and
develop the
Inuit language,
culture, and way
of life

OUR SERVICES

Like any other regional school board, we provide educational services to all residents of a designated territory; in this case, to all Inuit and non-Inuit Nunavik residents (the Quebec territory north of the 55th parallel).

The Kativik School Board, however, differs from other non-Aboriginal school boards in the province. Indeed, under the JBNQA, we are granted the power and jurisdiction to develop and deliver specific educational services and programs consistent with Inuit culture.

The mission of the KSB is therefore twofold. On the one hand, we act as a regular regional school board for all Nunavik residents. On the other hand, we also act as an exclusive Inuit institution with unique powers and jurisdictions that aim to protect, maintain, and develop the Inuit language, culture, and way of life.

These unique powers are at the core of what we do as an organization. For example, they provide the legal and constitutional ground for the KSB to develop culturally appropriate educational programs in the mother tongue of Inuktitut and in the second languages of French and English.

Lastly, the KSB is regulated by the Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons (SRQ I-14), whereas the Education Act (SRQ I-13.3) applies to all other non-Aboriginal school boards in the province.

The services we offer to Nunavik learners can be summarized as follows:

- Development and implementation of trilingual curriculum, educational programs, and services that mainstreams Inuit culture, language, and identity while developing literacy and numeracy skills.
- Kindergarten to Secondary 5 education.
- Adult education and vocational training services.
- A sponsorship program for post-secondary beneficiary students.
- A teacher training program for Inuit teachers to obtain their teaching certification from the Quebec Ministry of Education and/or to pursue further post-secondary education.

OUR CLIENTELE

Overall, 30% of Nunavik residents are direct users of our educational services. This includes: kindergarten to Secondary 5 students, adult education and vocational training students, KSB-sponsored post-secondary students, and Inuit teachers enrolled in the KSB teacher training program.

In addition to students, our target clientele also includes parents, who represent at least 85% of the Nunavik population.

Nunavik is home to 10,755 Inuit, 98% of whom speak Inuktitut as their mother tongue (source: Statistics Canada, Fact Sheet for Nunavik, March 29, 2016). In Nunavik, 58% of the total Inuit population is less than 25 years old (source: Statistics Canada, Fact Sheet for Nunavik, March 29, 2016). All of our regular sector students belong to this group, as well as the vast majority of their parents.

Number of Nunavimmiut who are using our services (source: Kativik School Board, 2015-2016):

- Regular sector (kindergarten to Secondary 5): 3,252
- Adult education and vocational training: 420
- KSB sponsored post-secondary students: 127
- Teacher training: 40% of our Inuit teachers hold a teaching certification issued by Quebec Ministry of Education.

30% of Nunavik residents are direct users of our educational services



OUR WORKFORCE

The Kativik School Board employs managers, support staff, professionals, and teachers in the 14 Nunavik communities.

- Total number of employees: 942 (out of which 51.49% are Inuit)
- Total number of employees per category:
 - Support staff: 295 (out of which 75.59 % are Inuit)
 - Professionals: 95 (out of which 54.74 % are Inuit)
 - Teachers: 462 (out of which 36.58% are Inuit)
 - Managers: 90 (out of which 45.56% are Inuit)
- 89.60% of the total KSB workforce is based in Nunavik

(Source: Kativik School Board, 2015-2016)

The department of Education Services is located in Kuujjuaq, where all curriculum development work and pedagogical support are coordinated. Support to schools, teachers, and students is also provided from Kuujjuaq, by the School Operations and Complementary Services departments.

Administrative and support services are also located in Montreal (including the Human Resources, Material Resources, Finance, and Payroll departments), in addition, the school board's department of Adult Education and Vocational Training Services.

It is important to note that the territory under our jurisdiction covers approximately 500,000 km². The Nunavik communities where our schools, adult education centres, and offices operate are located along the Ungava and Hudson Bays. These coastal communities are accessible by plane only.

Since the Kativik School Board was established, the various leaders of our organization have worked to obtain funding from the Quebec Ministry of Education to relocate all offices to Nunavik. In 2001, the school board was able to implement the Phase 1 and 2 of a 5-Phase relocation plan. At that time, we moved the following departments to a newly constructed building in Kuujjuaq: curriculum development, school operations, teacher training and complementary services.

In March 2015, the Council of Commissioners of the Kativik School Board demanded that Phases 3, 4, and 5 of the relocation plan be completed. The Council further resolved that future plans for the relocation of the Montreal office be developed on the basis of resolutions CC449-97/98-18 and 19. These two resolutions identify Kuujjuaq and Kuujjuaraapik as host communities. In addition to funding, the completion of the school board relocation would require the construction of office and housing infrastructures.



WHY A STRATEGIC PLAN?

The Nunavik education system reflects the efforts made to adapt a Western education model to a traditional Inuit educational model

As we strive to fulfill our mission as an organization, the strategic directions, objectives, and 2-year targets outlined here will help us monitor progress and gaps to be filled. They will also ensure greater institutional cohesion and accountability. Ultimately, the KSB aims to develop a modern education system, adapted to the specific language, identity and cultural needs of Nunavimmiut, that prepares Nunavik youth for success in a global world.

The KSB is a young organization. Established in 1975, we took over complete management of the Nunavik school system in 1978, 39 years ago. This is a relatively short period of time, given the complexity of the task at hand.

Indeed, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) protects our right as Inuit to be educated in our language, Inuktitut, through programs and teaching materials adapted to our culture.

When the KSB started operating in 1978, it inherited a fragmented school system comprising federal and provincial schools. The school board worked to develop an education system for Nunavik that would, on the one hand, standardize the pre-existing education systems, while, on the other hand, incorporating instruction in Inuktitut and programs that reflected Inuit culture.

Crafted over a period of nearly 40 years, the resulting Nunavik education system reflects the efforts made to adapt a Western education model to a traditional Inuit education model. This in itself is a tremendously complex task, which requires constant adjustment to the rapidly evolving needs of our younger generations.

The KSB operates its schools and education centres in an environment with a very specific set of challenges. The cultural, political, social, and economic systems that have been placed upon the Inuit of Nunavik by the governing society have had enduring repercussions on our communities. As we strive to provide Nunavimmiut with high-quality educational services that are consistent with traditional Inuit education and values, we continue to face the impact of a history of colonization and cultural oppression.

This situation has a direct impact on the needs of our students, the services we offer as a school board, and, more generally, the operation of our schools. Through a holistic approach to education, our main responsibility is to support the mental, physical, and emotional health of all students. Our students' ability to succeed remains closely tied to their mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

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The education-specific challenges that the KSB seeks to tackle through this strategic plan include the following:

1. A low student graduation rate of 25.9% (Source MEES, 2015);
2. A high student dropout rate of 73,3% (Source, MEES, 2015);
3. The urgent need to instill a strong sense of cultural identity and pride in our youth.

In addition, certain organizational challenges must also be acknowledged. They include the following:

1. A high employee turnover rate;
2. Linguistic and cross-cultural communication challenges related to a multicultural work environment;
3. An ongoing lack of a Inuit workforce with postsecondary education.

Lastly, it remains a significant challenge to ensure the transmission of Inuit values, culture, and language when Inuit employees represent only 51.49% of the KSB workforce.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Appendix 1 puts forth four strategic directions that outline the priority areas where the school board seeks to make changes. Under each strategic direction, a number of objectives are defined in the form of actions to achieve these changes. For each objective, specific goals have been determined for periods of 2, 5, 10, 20, and 25 years.

The school board's strategic directions were determined through a series of consultations involving the school board leadership, managers, and school administrators. Initiated in 2014, this process continued during the 2015–2016 school year. In October 2016 and February 2017, employees at all our schools and offices were consulted on the content of the strategic plan. In March 2017, the objectives were revised and adjusted to reflect the feedback received during these consultations.

As the strategic plan was taking form in 2016, the school board leadership introduced these strategic directions to other regional organizations.

DEFINITIONS

Holistic education: Holistic education is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, the natural world, and spiritual values (Source: Ron Miller, 2000). *Inuguiniq* (the Inuktitut term for “education”) reflects this approach. *Inuguiniq* seeks to develop the human being as a whole, through direct engagement with the environment and the community.

Healthy communities: Communities where individuals are able to realize their aspirations, satisfy their needs, change or cope with their environment, and experience physical, mental, and social well-being (Definition adapted from: World Health Organization (1984) and Ontario Healthy Community Coalition).

Inuit language: The Inuit language is Inuktitut. The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement specifies that, for education services provided by the Kativik School Board, the language of instruction is Inuktitut.

Culture: At the Kativik School Board and in the context of the Nunavik, the term culture refers to the Inuit way of knowing, to the system of knowledge shared by the Inuit as a group of people. It includes the way of life, behaviours, beliefs, and values that Inuit passed along from one generation to the next (Definition adapted from: Merriam-Webster).

Worldview: Conception of the world derived from a specific standpoint, which is formed of elements such as one’s culture, personal, and collective experiences.

Values: The moral principles and beliefs or accepted standards of a person or social group. Values constitute the foundations for coexistence in a community and relations with others. They regulate our behaviour to the benefit of collective wellbeing (Source: Juan Carlos Jimenez, 2008). In the context of Nunavik, Inuit values would be the moral principles and beliefs or accepted standards shared by the Inuit as a group. The Kativik School Board has undertaken concrete steps to define and identify Inuit values. This process is ongoing as of January 2017. It will guide all our curriculum development work and serve as a basis to define the school board’s organizational values. A school board publication dedicated to Inuit values is planned for the 2017–2018 school year.

Organizational values: In an organization, values serve as a framework for the behaviour of its members. These values are based on the nature of the organization (its purpose), why it was created (its objectives), and its projection into the future (its vision). To this end, they must encourage the attitudes and actions required to achieve the organization’s objectives (Source: Juan Carlos Jimenez, 2008).



DEFINITIONS

Self-sufficient: Capable of providing for one's own needs; having confidence in one's own ability or worth (Source: Merriam-Webster).

Empower: To enable, to promote the self-actualization of someone, to make someone stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their right (Adapted from: Merriam-Webster).

Student success: The Kativik School Board defines success as the ability of students to engage in learning to reach their goals for the future, share their worldview, and contribute to the development of their communities and the rich culture of Nunavik, Quebec, and Canada.

Stakeholders: In education, the term stakeholder typically refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including the administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials such as school board members, municipal officials, and state representatives. Stakeholders may also be collective entities such as local businesses, organizations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets, and cultural institutions. Organizations that represent specific groups are also stakeholders, such as teacher unions, parent-teacher organizations, and associations representing principals, school boards, or teachers in specific academic disciplines. In a word, stakeholders have a "stake" in the school and its students, meaning that they have personal, professional, civic, or financial interest or concern (Source: The Glossary of Education Reform).

Strategic plan: A strategic plan is a tool used by an organization to set priorities, guide decision-making, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment (Adapted from: Balanced Scorecard Institute).

Strategic direction: A priority area towards which the school board concentrates its resources, energy, and actions (Adapted from: Business Dictionary).

Strategic objectives: Strategic objectives help convert a mission statement from a broad vision into more specific plans and projects. Strategic objectives set the major benchmarks for success and are designed to be measurable, specific, and realistic translations of the mission statement (Adapted from: Business Dictionary).