

RESPONSE TO PETITION

1-12(3)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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Petition tabled by Mr. John Ningark on November 25, 1992

Response by the Honourable Richard Nerysoo
Minister Responsible for Education, Culture
and Employment Programs

EXTENSION UP TO GRADE 10 OF THE PELLY BAY SCHOOL

The support of parents for the education of their children is critical both for the success of individual students in their studies, and for the success of the education system as a whole. I appreciate the fact that the parents of Pelly Bay want to extend schooling in their community to grade ten because they want their children to succeed.

Over the past year all Divisional Boards of Education have been preparing long term plans for the delivery of senior secondary education, grades ten, eleven and twelve, in their jurisdictions. Boards have been consulting with their Community Education Councils, and representatives of post secondary education, industry and government, to ensure that the plans they develop are in the best interest of their students and their regions. I anticipate receiving these plans soon.

In the development of plans for senior secondary education Boards consider available community facilities, and numbers of students as well as the needs and desires of communities. I understand that in Pelly Bay the Kugaardiq School is at 86% capacity with the existing kindergarten to grade nine program, and that the Community Education Council has been requesting additional space for the past few years. Any space available in this school will likely be needed by the growing number of kindergarten to grade 9 students in Pelly Bay over the next four to five years.

Also, the numbers of students expected to enrol in grade 10 in Pelly Bay over the next several years are too low to offer a viable grade 10 program. The enrolment projections of grade 10 students in Pelly Bay are one student in 1993-94 and three students in both 1994-95 and 1995-96.

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I understand that, in the early stages of the development of the Kitikmeot plans for senior secondary education the communities of Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak had proposed working together to deliver high school grades. I do not know whether the final plans will include this early proposal, but the plans for the Kitikmeot, like the plans from any other Divisional Board, will have to reflect fair and reasonable consultation with communities. I also recognize that some compromises will have to be made between communities in many Divisional Board jurisdictions to ensure that strong and successful high school programs will be developed and delivered.

I encourage the parents of Pelly Bay to work through the Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education in their efforts to extend high school grades. The Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education is finalizing its high school strategy, and any new grade extensions proposed for the Kitikmeot should be a part of this strategy to make the best use of resources. I hope that the parents petitioning for grade ten in Pelly Bay have advised their Community Education Council and the Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education of their concerns and desires so that they can be considered in the development of the Kitikmeot's comprehensive plans for the delivery of senior secondary education.

I assure you that my Department and the Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education appreciate the concerns and desires of Pelly Bay parents and students. I am forwarding a copy of the petition and my response to Mr. Sam Inaksajak, the Chairperson of the Kitikmeot Divisional Board to ensure that the Board is aware of the issues identified, and that the Board has considered them in the development of their plans. I will also review the final Kitikmeot plans for senior secondary education with the concerns and desires of Pelly Bay parents in mind.