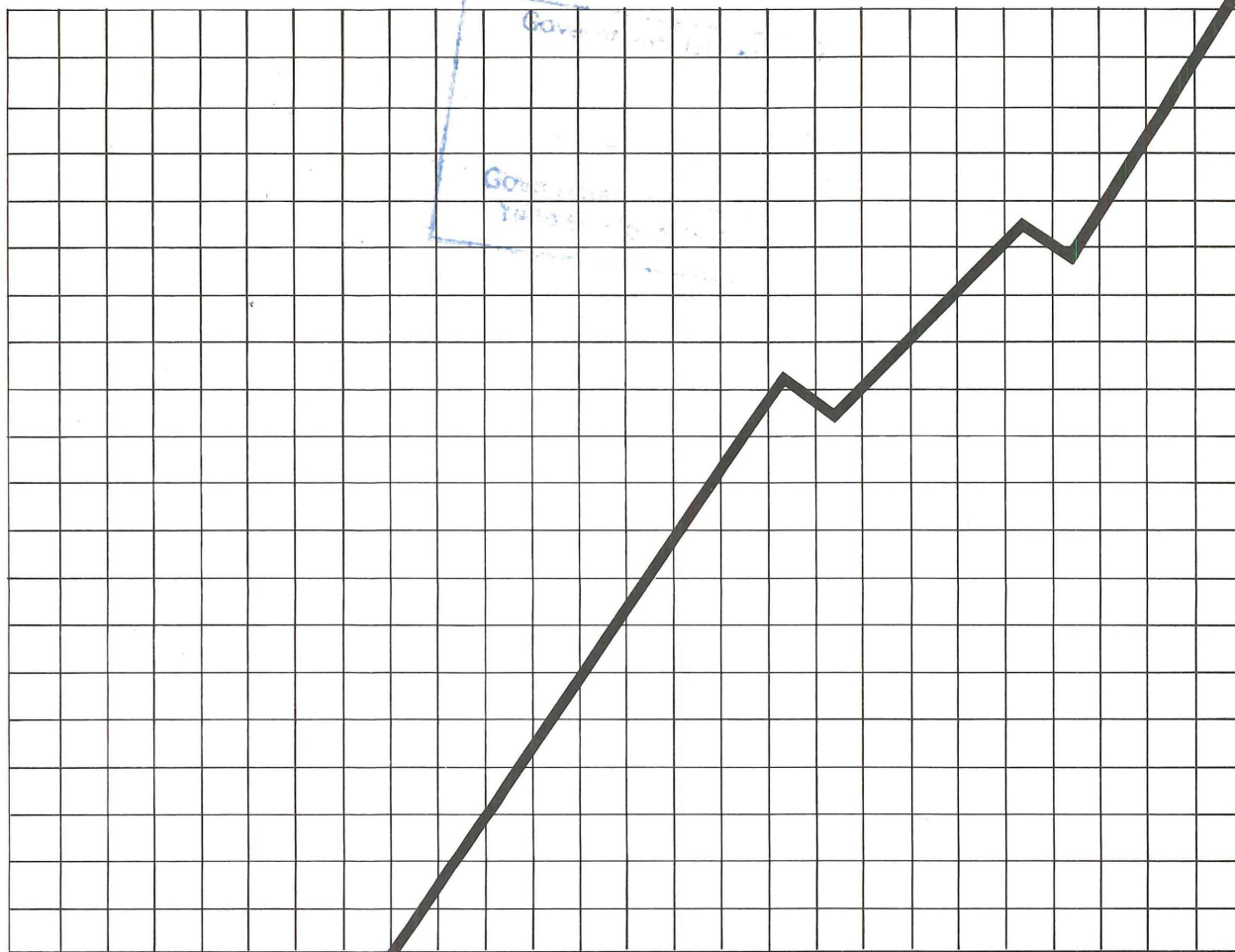


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IMPROVING GRADES

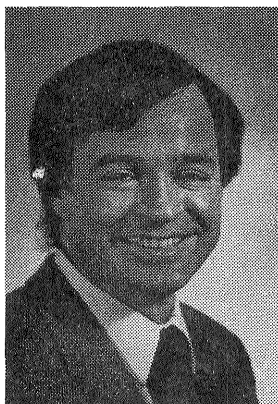
A DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
REPORT CARD

IMPROVING GRADES

A REPORT CARD FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION



The success of our children in the Northwest Territories school system is evaluated and documented in a report card. The report goes from school to home to tell parents how well their children are doing.

A few years ago, as we all recall, the tables were turned. The parents sent a report card to the Department of Education. They did it through their heartfelt and insightful presentations to a committee set up by this government, the Special Committee on Education.

Parents told us how well the schools were doing. In the eyes of most people who spoke to the Special Committee on Education, we were not doing very well, certainly not as well as those parents wanted us to do, nor as well as we, as a Department, were striving to do. We were failing miserably in attendance, and the number of students graduating, to name just two very basic areas.

In the spirit of so many report cards read over so many kitchen tables over the years, we were told that we had good potential, but that we had to work much harder, and with special effort in certain areas. That was in 1982, when the Special Committee released its report.

Five years later, I feel we can say, as a Department, that we are now passing with good grades. There is still much to be done, but we have greatly improved. We have already accomplished much of what we were told we should be setting out to do. The list of subjects in this report is like the list of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Education. Enrolment is up. Attendance is up. Local control of education is increasing through new Divisional Boards of Education. Centres for Teaching and Learning are preparing bilingual teachers, and native language teaching materials. Most children with special needs are now taught in their own communities. More and more of us are able to keep our children at home longer, with the addition of high school grades in

INTRODUCTION

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories' Special Committee on Education was set up in the spring of 1980. The following excerpts from the Legislative Assembly at that time indicate the level of concern that led to the creation of the Special Committee.

"I believe...that we do have a serious problem with education in the fact that many of the people or children who are supposed to be acquiring education would rather...drop out of schools."---Tagak Curley, MLA, Aivilik

"The problems are undoubtedly well-known...but the most alarming one...is the lack of confidence by the public in the system. Not only are the young children...dropping out of school...but parents do not feel that the school is their school."---Dennis Patterson, MLA, Iqaluit

"...to suggest in the system...that our history began when Alexander Mackenzie took his canoe down this big river...nowhere have you introduced the history of the Dene, the history of the Inuit and made it mandatory that children learn their own history...So, I really think the system of education has to change."---Richard Nerysoo, MLA, Mackenzie Delta

That was the political mood in 1980 that set in motion the Special Committee on Education. It soon became clear that the public mood was not much different. At least 1,500 witnesses spoke at 43 public hearings in 34 different communities. The Department of Education was told to let go of some of its control over Education, to allow for more local control over the schools.

People asked for a say in what is taught in the schools, who teaches it, and in what language. They asked for higher Grades in communities, so that young teenagers would not have to leave home to finish school. They asked for special instruction for handicapped children in their communities. They asked for courses for all ages more relevant to life in the North, and more likely to lead to jobs.

These concerns of the people were reflected in the 52 recommendations made by the Special Committee on Education in its 1982 report, Learning: Tradition and Change. The report was a call for change.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

This year there are 12,330 students enrolled in schools throughout the Northwest Territories. Getting students enrolled is one thing. Getting them to attend school on a regular basis is another. Years of poor attendance statistics prove this point all too well. But now the Department of Education has what it hopes is a winning combination to improve those statistics: a stronger law, school attendance counsellors, and most importantly new determination on the part of parents and Local Education Authorities.

Over the past five years, attendance has gradually been improving. Last year, the overall attendance at N.W.T. schools was just over 82 percent. That's five percent higher than it was five years ago. At that time, three schools had less than fifty percent attendance, and nineteen other schools had less than seventy percent attendance. Compare those figures with these: last year, no school had less than fifty percent attendance. In fact, only eight schools had average attendance less than seventy percent, and, as of December, no schools were below seventy percent.

Fort Liard in the west, and Repulse Bay in the east show the most dramatic individual improvement. Five years ago, Fort Liard had 33 percent attendance. Last year it was 75 percent - a remarkable 42 percent improvement, and as of December, 1986, it was 85 percent. Five years ago, Repulse Bay had 47 percent attendance. Last year it was 65 percent - an impressive 18 percent improvement, and as of December, it was 71 percent.

**Percent Attendance by Region
1981/82 to 1985/86**

	1981/82 %	1982/83 %	1983/84 %	1984/85 %	1985/86 %
Baffin Region	72	77	77	77	79
Fort Smith Region	78	81	82	82	85
Inuvik Region	80	79	80	80	79
Keewatin Region	66	70	71	72	76
Kitikmeot Region	64	68	68	70	71
School District #1	87	93	93	93	94
School District #2	91	89	93	91	92
School District #4	93	91	93	92	93
N.W.T. Average	79	81	82	82	84

Note: Percent attendance are as of school year end.

Information Systems. Oct./86

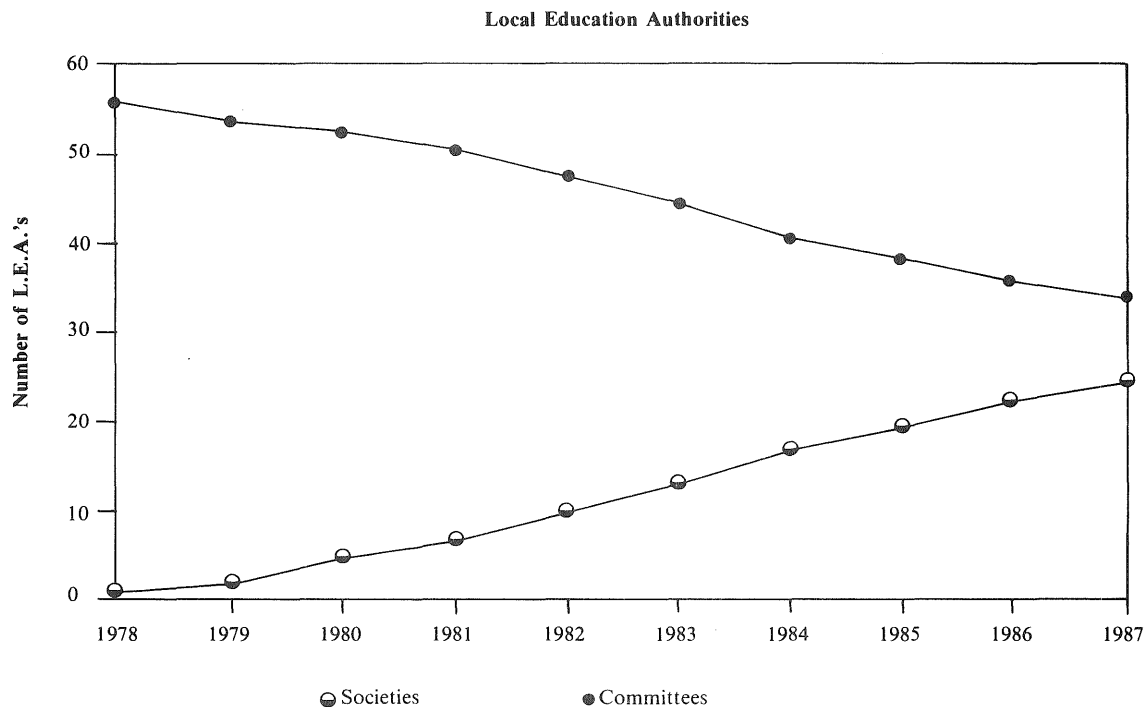
LOCAL CONTROL OF EDUCATION

There is perhaps no other area where the improvements made over the past ten years have been more dramatic or more far-reaching. Ten years ago there simply was no local control of education, outside of the City of Yellowknife. Today, 60 communities have publicly-elected groups that oversee, and to varying degrees, authorize what goes on in the schools. They do this through Education Committees, Societies, Divisional Boards of Education, and Boards of Education.

It started in 1977 with the Education Act. It created what we have come to know as "the LEA"...the Local Education Authority. This is the elected group that serves as the community's doorway to the Department of Education, and the school.

At first it was a fairly narrow doorway. The LEAs in most communities were simple education committees. Committees have limited powers. Mostly, they can just give advice to the Superintendent of Education in the region on hiring, programs, and so on. No one is bound to take that advice.

But that has steadily changed. Eskimo Point was the first community to take a greater authority back in 1978. Since then, a total of 24 communities have chosen to graduate from their education "committees". They have gone on to form education "societies". This year, Fort Simpson and Holman will be added to the list.



Note:

¹ Two Education Societies are proposed for establishment in 1987.

The government still owns the schools, and decides on the core subjects that have to be taught. But the divisional board is in charge of almost everything else, from the language of instruction, to the budget. Teachers in the division are still government employees, but the divisional board chooses those teachers, and decides which community they should work in.

A divisional board is made up of one representative from each LEA in the division. These LEAs are no longer called committees or societies, but education councils. Basically, each council is in charge of its own community school. The divisional board is in charge of the things the councils share in common with each other.

More and more, N.W.T. communities appear to want to take on a much greater responsibility for education, the responsibility possible through a divisional board. In 1985, just two years after the Special Committee Report, the first Divisional Board of Education was established for Baffin Island communities. Dogrib communities will form a divisional board on the first of April, this year. Deh Cho, Kitikmeot, and Keewatin communities are hoping to form divisional boards next year, and others seem sure to follow.

The divisional board is as close as the communities can get to having all the powers of a Board of Education, such as the two that have existed in Yellowknife for years. The biggest difference between a Board of Education and a Divisional Board of Education is this: the Yellowknife Boards must raise a quarter of their budget from taxes collected from City landowners while most other communities have few landowners to pay taxes. Without a tax base, most communities continue to rely entirely on the government to decide how much money they'll have to spend.

In spite of limited tax bases, local control over education has continued to increase. It is an indication of the Department's willingness to let go, and of the public's willingness to take over. It is an expression of the Department's increasing confidence in the commitment of parents. It is an assertion of parents' longstanding belief that they know best what is good for their children.

In recent years parents in Yellowknife, and parents in regions have requested control of Sir John Franklin Territorial High School. The Department drafted new legislation which is now before the Legislative Assembly. If passed the new law will provide another means for local control in the N.W.T., a Board of Secondary Education, where a high school serves local students as well as students from other regions.

Ever-increasing local control of education in fact, has been, and will be, the key to the success of many of the other goals the Department of Education has set for itself.

Iqaluit, Fort Smith, Hay River, Pine Point, Yellowknife and Inuvik are still the most advantaged. These places have high schools that offer all the grades up to Grade Twelve. Three other places, Fort Simpson, Aklavik, and Pangnirtung, have had up to Grade Ten (in some cases on and off) for the past eight years.

Last year, Grade Ten was added in Pond Inlet, Igloolik, Cape Dorset, Coppermine, and Rankin Inlet. This year Clyde River got Grade Ten, Rankin Inlet got Grade Eleven and so did Pangnirtung. Next year, four other communities may also be getting Grade Ten, and two may be getting Grade Twelve.

The Department feels this is a significant start in meeting the requests of parents and students alike, and in providing equal access to education in all regions of the Northwest Territories. The next couple of years will be an important test to see whether having those extra grades at home cuts down on the number of young dropouts.

It used to be that barely half of the young people who enrolled in Grade Ten were still enrolled by Grade Twelve. Over the past couple of years, though, that number has improved. It now averages about sixty percent. We are still not graduating nearly as many students as we need to, but students are at least staying in school longer. They may not be graduating from Grade Twelve, but about a hundred more per year are getting Grades Ten and Eleven compared to seven years ago.

Secondly, the number of native students graduating from Grade Twelve is improving, even though the total number of Grade Twelve graduates has changed very little. Since 1980, there have always been around 200 graduates a year. Last year there were 204. The difference is, sixty-one of those graduates were Dene, Inuit, or Metis. That's almost twice the number of native graduates six years ago. In fact, the number of native graduates has gradually increased every year since.

Given the numbers of native students in the N.W.T. school system, the percentage of native graduates is still low...about thirty percent. However, considering that, just six years ago, only sixteen percent of graduates were aboriginal people, it is a significant improvement.

The Department of Education hopes its combined efforts to improve attendance, to increase local control and to extend grades in N.W.T. schools, will serve to strengthen the trend of graduating more and more students.

These early results have already given the Department a clearer indication of the direction it must take to make sure N.W.T. students can achieve the desired standards. The Department must evaluate and improve language programs in primary school grades. We must also seriously evaluate the need for more English Second Language Programs in N.W.T. schools.

The Department has already taken specific action. A consultant is working with the Grade Three and Four students in Fort Franklin, Fort Simpson, and Eskimo Point to assess the language skills, and particularly the reading skills, of children who are being, or have been, taught in native languages. He is developing ways to test these skills, and he will prepare a report by the end of this school year.

We are also developing program guides for all aboriginal languages taught in Kindergarten to Grade Six and a bilingual language policy will be ready to guide all language programs by this September.

These steps are being taken because the Department recognizes that all students must reach the same degree of English language skills by the end of Grade Nine, or preferably by the end of Grade Six, no matter what their language background is when they start school.

Language development is just one area that may be improved as a result of the findings of the Grade Nine Testing Program.

**Aboriginal Language Courses
Enrolment in 1985-86
By Region and Grade**

	Native Enrolment K-9	Students Enroled in Aboriginal Language Courses Taught	
		As A First Language Enrolment % of Native Students	As A Second Language Enrolment % of Native Students
NWT			
All Grades	8205	3729 (45%)	1987 (24%)
K-3	4347	2083 (48%)	1048 (24%)
4-6	2433	1051 (43%)	614 (25%)
7-9	1425	595 (42%)	325 (23%)
Baffin			
All Grades	2389	1933 (81%)	263 (11%)
K-3	1134	1027 (91%)	56 (5%)
4-6	754	541 (72%)	91 (12%)
7-9	501	365 (73%)	116 (23%)
Keewatin			
All Grades	1361	1310 (96%)	90 (7%)
K-3	731	715 (98%)	40 (5%)
4-6	424	397 (94%)	32 (8%)
7-9	206	198 (96%)	18 (9%)
Kitikmeot			
All Grades	957	119 (12%)	688 (72%)
K-3	572	109 (19%)	404 (71%)
4-6	320	10 (3%)	225 (70%)
7-9	65	0 (0%)	59 (91%)
Inuvik			
All Grades	1331	137 (10%)	452 (34%)
K-3	681	52 (8%)	311 (46%)
4-6	358	59 (16%)	84 (23%)
7-9	292	26 (9%)	57 (20%)
Fort Smith			
All Grades	1795	230 (13%)	494 (28%)
K-3	1044	180 (17%)	237 (23%)
4-6	494	44 (9%)	182 (37%)
7-9	257	6 (2%)	75 (29%)

Note:

1. The enrolment figures are based on Department of Education, October 31, 1985 enrolment, and the language information is based on the Aboriginal Language Survey published by the Department in May, 1986.
2. In some schools non-native children have been included in the aboriginal language courses, and some students have been counted as enroled in both first and second language courses.

Perhaps the biggest single obstacle to native language programs in the past has been the lack of available qualified teachers. Too often native language instructors in schools have been people with good language skills, and good intentions, but little or no knowledge of how to teach. This is changing. Language, literacy and teaching skills are all part of the N.W.T.'s two Teacher Education Programs.

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

What about all the young people who have not done well in the existing school system, no matter how hard the Department of Education is trying to improve it? What about all those who simply will never leave their home community to finish high school? In many communities this is more typical than the much smaller handful who actually go on to a regional high school and graduate. This is the kind of question that has led to the development of Alternative School Programs in the N.W.T.

The Department of Education now has two increasingly popular programs intended for this group of community young people: the Community Occupational Program (COP), and the Senior Practical Program (SPP). Both programs are two years long. Both emphasize personal development and work experience. The goal is to help these students become good employees and independent people.

The COP program has grown tremendously in four years. At first only Baker Lake and Rae Edzo carried the program. Now it is available in 13 communities and 197 students are enrolled this year. They spend half of their time in school, learning practical English and Math skills such as banking, catalogue shopping, using telephones and telephone books, and filling out forms.

The other half of the two year program is spent on the job. Students may rotate through various jobs around town: stocking shelves or cashing at the store, helping with clinics at the Nursing Station, helping the janitor at the school, or helping out at the community offices.

Community Occupational Program Growth

Community	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87
Rae Edzo	+	+	+	+
Baker Lake	+	-	-	+
Cambridge Bay		+	+	+
Pangnirtung		+	+	+
Pond Inlet		+	+	+
Gjoa Haven			+	+
Sanikiluaq			+	-
Fort Simpson			+	+
Arctic Bay			+	+
Coppermine				+
Resolute Bay				+
Rankin Inlet				+
Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay)				+
Tuktoyaktuk				+
Total Communities	2	4	8	13

Note: This symbol "-" indicates the program was not delivered that year.

The Senior Practical Program (SPP) is not offered in individual communities. It is taught at regional high schools, so the students must be mature enough to live away from home in a hostel. It is also half classroom, half training, but students concentrate on one work area. In Rankin Inlet, for example, it will be Travel and Tourism.

SPECIAL NEEDS

In 1982, the Special Committee on Education made several recommendations about special needs education based on the principle that all children have the right to an effective learning program.

The Special Committee said that children with special needs, whether they are handicapped or gifted, should be able to live in their own communities, go to the local school, and be part of a regular classroom. To help them reach their full potential, the Special Committee said these children should have their own specially-developed learning program, and specially-trained teachers.

Five years later the Department of Education can say that it has taken major steps towards meeting the needs of the N.W.T.'s special needs students. In 1985 the Minister of Education released Guidelines for Special Needs Education. The guidelines include an inventory of the special needs in the N.W.T.

The numbers indicate that fifteen percent of children enrolled in N.W.T. schools require special needs education at one of the three levels available. Only half a percent need a special assistant on a full-time basis (about 70 students). Another two and a half percent require a special needs assistant for more than two hours each day. The other 12 percent may include some students with severe learning problems.

To help the special needs students, about 800 Individual Education Programs (IEPs) have already been set up throughout the Territory. Parents work with the school principal and the special needs teacher/assistant to develop these individual programs. They are based on the child's physical, cultural, and language needs, the child's abilities right now, and the potential for progress.

To help the Special Needs Instructors, an agreement with McGill University in Montreal is being finalized to provide courses to certify N.W.T. teachers in special needs education. Our goal is to have all the special needs teachers, assistants and regional coordinators we need within the next three years.

The special needs programs and teachers are an expensive addition to the Department of Education budget. This year about four and a half million dollars will be needed. But the Department is committed to making up for an area of education that was largely neglected in the past. It is also committed to reflecting the wishes of N.W.T. parents who made it clear to the Special Committee on Education. They want their children living at home, not in the southern institutions where they have often been living in the past, with no sense of belonging anywhere.

Adult education programs have been developed to respond to all of these needs. And, just as importantly, the Department of Education has made this range of programs available at the community level.

Adult education programs have become increasingly popular. Last year, in the Inuvik region alone, there were two hundred people enrolled in education/employment programs for adults. Three years ago there were only half that many. In 1985-86 over eight percent of the total adult population of the N.W.T. was involved in community adult education/employment programs.

Attendance figures are just as revealing. In the Kitikmeot region, for example, attendance at adult education classes last year was seventy-nine percent---even higher than in some schools in the region.

The enrolment and attendance figures are clear proof that the Department of Education has correctly identified, and is successfully responding to, community needs for education at all levels, and for all ages.

Adult Basic Upgrading will continue to be important for some years to come. But as the learning needs of adults change adult education programs will also change to provide people with relevant life-long learning opportunities.

In the past, the percentage of N.W.T. sponsored non-native graduates from colleges and universities in the south has always been much higher than the percentage of non-native people. But now there are positive signs that more and more native people will be amongst those graduating.

This year may mark the beginning of a new trend. In 1986-87, 738 Northern students are being sponsored, compared to 587 in 1985-86, which is an increase of 26%. The major reason for this increase is the number of sponsored native students. N.W.T. native student enrolment in the south has almost doubled, from 110 last year, to 201 this year. What's more, the increase in native students enrolled in post-secondary studies applies to all northern aboriginal groups.

The biggest jump in enrolment, though, is in the number of Inuit. Seventy Inuit students are enrolled in southern institutions this year. That's almost two and a half times as many as the year before. The Dene and Metis student enrolment increased by 60% compared to the 1985-86 enrolment.

**University and College/Technical School Enrollments by
Ethnic Status N.W.T. 1983/84 to 1986/87**

Ethnic Status	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87
Dene	26	20	25	45
Inuit	28	37	28	70
Metis	45	58	57	86
Non-Native	406	458	477	537
Total:	505	573	587	738

The diplomas and degrees these N.W.T. students will bring back to the north with them will contribute towards a goal of N.W.T. self-reliance in more trades and professions. The native graduates in particular will serve as important role models for other northern students as they consider their own paths for the future.

Ideally, these early university graduates may even have an important role to play one day in the establishment of our own university here in the North!

Arctic College
Number of Programs Delivered on Campus

Campus Program Type	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86
Thebacha			
Trades	21	22	22
Academic	8	7	7
Total	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>
Iqaluit			
Trades	1	1	2
Academic	1	1	6
Total	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>
Yellowknife			
Trades	0	0	0
Academic	4	4	4
Total	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
Total College			
Trades	22	23	24
Academic	13	12	17
Total	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>41</u>

The variety of programs offered is also growing. Teaching, Renewable Resources, Social Work, and Business Administration are already well-established diploma or certificate programs, and so is the Community Recreation program, which has now been transferred to the Inuvik Campus.

But much of the responsibility of the new Arctic College campuses is not actually "on campus". The campuses are also responsible for delivering programs in the field to the communities. Many of these "extension programs" are not at as high an academic level as the diploma, certificate and trades programs offered on campus. But many people in the communities do not yet have enough schooling to qualify for advanced programs. These people must do upgrading of one kind or another.

The Arctic College Extension program helps them do this. It also offers short-term courses in the communities for specific skills such as learning to drive, or learning to be a telephone receptionist, or to operate a word processor.

Like the "on campus" programs, the number of extension programs has grown. In 1983 there were 46, and this year there are 62. This year there are about 480 students enrolled in extension programs. That's almost a hundred more than three years ago.

But fewer jobs are available today. People who got work easily before, now know that they must be more competitive. More and more of these "community-trained tradesmen" are applying to write exams and are becoming certified.

Employment

If the point of it all is to go to school so you can get a job, then the results today are encouraging.

First of all, a high percentage of students who enrol in Arctic College programs on campus are completing their studies. Last year, for example, 754 students enrolled in programs on campus, and 614 completed their year. That completion rate of 81 percent has been fairly consistent over the past few years.

**Arctic College
Student Enrolment and Completion of Programs on Campus**

Campus Program Type	1983-84		1984-85		1985-86		1986-87	
	Enrolment	Completion	Enrolment	Completion	Enrolment	Completion	Enrolment	Completion
Thebacha								
Trades	431	363	381	325	301	258	348	NA
Academic	250	201	241	144	175	141	221	NA
Total	681	564	622	469	476	399	569	NA
Iqaluit								
Trades	8	8	43	34	53	50	32	NA
Academic	20	7	19	11	80	58	80	NA
Total	28	15	62	45	133	108	112	NA
Yellowknife								
Trades	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Academic	75	58	131	98	145	107	125	NA
Total	75	58	131	98	145	107	125	NA
Total college								
Trades	439	371	424	359	354	308	380	NA
Academic	345	266	391	253	400	306	426	NA
Total	784	637	815	612	754	614	806	NA
		(82%)		(75%)		(81%)		

Note: Enrolment peaked in 1984-85 because of additional training funds associated with the Norman Wells pipeline.

And the completion rate for native and non-native students is almost identical. The number of native students enrolled at the Thebacha Campus alone (203) is greater than the number of native students enrolled in universities and colleges in the south (201). More native students are taking courses at Arctic College and completing those courses. In 1985-86 there were a total of 133 students enrolled in courses on the Iqaluit Campus, and 95% of these students were native. Last year the completion rate for native students at Iqaluit was 84%, and it was approximately 83% for native students at Thebacha.

Arctic College - Thebacha Campus
Labour Market Status of Program Graduates
1983/84 - 1985/86

Program	1983/84 Graduates					1984/85 Graduates					1985/86 Graduates				
	Total	Empl. ¹	Unempl.	Stud. ²	Unkn.	Total	Empl.	Unempl.	Stud.	Unkn.	Total	Empl.	Unempl.	Stud.	Unkn.
Diploma ³	9	8	-	1	-	26	26	-	-	-	31	28	-	3	-
Academic	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	-	-	18	7	27	2	-	23	2
Trades & Technology ⁴	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	32	16	2	7	7	35	23	4	4	4
Heavy Equip.	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	38	25	9	-	4
Extension	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	44	34	5	4	-	73	50	11	7	5
Secretary Arts	13	12	-	-	1	10	10	-	-	-	18	15	-	2	1
Total (%)											222	143	24	39	16
												(64%)	(11%)	(18%)	(7%)

Notes: The following abbreviations are used:

Empl. - Employed; Unempl. - Unemployed; Stud. - Students; Unkn. - Unknown; N/A - Data not available

¹ Employed includes seasonal, part-time and casual workers

² Students are persons continuing their studies either in the north or at an institution in southern Canada

³ Diploma Programs include: Social Services Program, Public and Business Administration, and Renewable Resource Technology

⁴ Trades and Technology Programs include: Electronics, Introductory Mechanics, Pre-employment Welding, and Pre-employment Cooking

Future College Growth

More courses available in communities, more courses available on more campuses, and more courses being prepared for the future: these are all part of the broad plan of the Arctic College. It is a plan to prepare Northerners for what appears to be the inevitable...continuing and sometimes rapid change.

The goal of the Arctic College, as part of the overall goal of the Department of Education, is to help Northerners prepare, so that instead of being overwhelmed by change, they will be able to take advantage of any opportunities change may bring, and direct the future of the N.W.T.