

LANGUAGE RIGHTS IN EDUCATION
IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

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RECOMMENDATIONS TABLED BY
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION
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PART 1

LANGUAGE RIGHTS IN EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the Legislative Assembly passed the Official Languages Act. This legislation made English and French the official languages of the Northwest Territories, and Chipewyan, Cree, Dogrib, Gwich'in, Inuktitut, North Slavey and South Slavey official aboriginal languages.

On October 30, 1989, at the 5th Session, the 11th Assembly established a Special Committee on Aboriginal Languages. Its major assignment was to "review existing legislation and prepare draft legislation dealing with aboriginal languages". The Committee was mandated to report to the Assembly at the 6th Session.

The most important recommendation of this Special Committee was that Chipewyan, Cree, Dogrib, Gwich'in, Inuktitut and Slavey be official languages of the Northwest Territories in addition to English and French. The Official Languages Act was amended accordingly.

The Special Committee on Aboriginal Languages also considered the necessity of reviewing the Education Act and proposing amendments on aboriginal language education rights. It was the view of the Committee that aboriginal language education rights were crucial to the preservation of aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories. However, the Committee found that it did not have time to examine in detail the complex question of aboriginal language education rights and still meet the requirement to report at the 6th Session. As a result, the Committee's report included two recommendations which the Assembly approved:

- . that the Minister of Education be mandated to examine the inclusion of aboriginal language education rights when reviewing possible amendments to the Education Act, and table recommendations for amendments in the Legislative Assembly at the 7th Session of the 11th Assembly; and
- . that the Legislative Assembly consider, upon receipt of the recommendations of the Minister of Education at the 7th Session of the 11th Assembly, whether another special committee should be established to recommend possible amendments to the Education Act.

Concerns about the role of languages in providing a school program to children arose as soon as the first residential schools were established in the Northwest Territories. Because fluency in the language of a culture is essential to retaining that culture, the choice of languages to be used in schools has been an ongoing and fundamental issue for parents, communities, education authorities and educators.

Territorial legislators have also recognized that language and culture are critical considerations in an education system. The School Ordinance, in force until 1977, favoured English and required that "all schools shall be taught in the English language but it shall be permissible for a primary course to be taught in the French or Eskimo Language". When this Ordinance was replaced in 1977 by the Education Act it included a section on the language of instruction and another on the recognition of ethnic and cultural values. The authority to choose the language of instruction was given to the local education authority for kindergarten and grades 1 and 2, and to the Minister for grades 3 to 12. Some English was a requirement for all but there was no provision for French.

In the 1980's, two committees, the Special Committee on Education and the Task Force on Aboriginal Languages, made recommendations on languages in education. As a result, new programs were implemented but no changes were made to the language provisions of the Education Act.

In March, 1982, the Special Committee on Education submitted its final report, Learning: Tradition and Change, to the Legislative Assembly. It contained extensive recommendations on the use of languages in schools, including the recruitment and selection of teachers, teacher-training programs, and the material and financial resources required to implement the recommendations. More specifically, the Committee recommended that each local education authority determine the language to be used in the classroom and that the local aboriginal language be made one of the school's working languages. This Committee recommended that divisional boards of education develop aboriginal language programs in all subjects, but recognized the need for English language instruction by urging the boards to develop programs and materials for teaching English to aboriginal students. No recommendation was made on French programs.

The Task Force on Aboriginal Languages, established by the Government of the Northwest Territories, was asked "to make recommendations on how the aboriginal languages of the North could and should be used, developed and promoted". In its report in February, 1986, the Task Force recommended that "legally-enforceable language education rights are necessary to ensure that aboriginal languages are taught and used appropriately in the schools" and that the Education Act be amended to include such a

provision. Further, the Task Force stated that the protection extended to the official languages of Canada in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and in provincial law, should also be extended to the official aboriginal languages. The Task Force concluded that "the aboriginal people want to be bilingual, and it is the right to a bilingual education which they are asserting". Such a program, based in law, and which would include aboriginal cultural concepts and on-the-land experiences, would ensure that by grade nine, students would be fluent in an aboriginal language as well as in English or French.

In 1982, the Parliament of Canada proclaimed a new Constitutional Act containing the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In both spirit and wording, the Charter provides the guidance through which the Government of Canada seeks to ensure the full and equal partnership of Canadians in the life of their country.

Section 16 of the Charter states that English and French are the official languages of Canada. Section 23 provides significant minority language education rights to citizens of Canada whose first language is English or French, and who meet the other requirements of this section of the Charter. The Supreme Court of Canada has since ruled on several appeals under section 23 relative to language legislation in the provinces. Such rulings provide guidelines for provincial and territorial governments for amending education legislation to meet the minority language rights of the Charter. In redrafting the Education Act the Government of the Northwest Territories will have to measure its language provisions against the minority language education rights of the Charter.

To provide a base for a response to the recommendations of the Special Committee on Aboriginal Languages which were approved by the Legislative Assembly, an information pamphlet was prepared on the present language education provisions of the Education Act. The pamphlet was sent by the Minister of Education to all local education authorities, divisional boards of education, band councils, municipal councils, aboriginal organizations, the N.W.T. Teachers' Association and the N.W.T. School Trustees' Association, and the Fédération Franco-TéNOise. Comments on any aspect of language education rights were requested.

In addition to this request for written responses to the Minister, officials of the Department of Education are emphasizing the language issue in the presentations and discussions that are being made to education authorities on the proposed redraft of the Education Act. Comments are invited by January, 1991, on all areas of the Act, including language, as part of the process to redraft the Act. All comments received will be summarized in a report to be tabled in the Spring Session, 1991. This report will provide direction for redrafting the Act.

Submissions and responses received to the date that this report was compiled indicate that:

- language education legislation is very important and its preparation should not be hurried;
- parents who have rights under Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms expect to have those rights reflected in Territorial education legislation;
- language education rights mean rights to an effective bilingual education;
- bilingualism in English or French, and one of the official aboriginal languages is favoured;
- the decision on the language of instruction should be made at the community level;
- English or French should remain either as the language of instruction, or as a second language for all children;
- the effective implementation of language education will require additional resources;
- the measure of demand for additional language programs should be related to the approved pupil/teacher ratio.

Based on these findings, past directions and current factors the Minister of Education has developed general recommendations on language rights in education, which address aboriginal language education rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON LANGUAGE RIGHTS IN EDUCATION

1. Because meaningful change can only be fully realized when people have a clear understanding of what is currently in place it is recommended that:
 - the process of consultation presently in progress, between the Department of Education and concerned organizations, be continued until all parties have been informed on the current provisions of the Education Act.
2. Because the subject of language is an integral part of the Education Act, it is recommended that:
 - changes to the language provisions be included in the process for the overall redraft of the Act and regulations, rather than considering amending the section on language of instruction as a separate and prior exercise.
3. Because it is necessary to consider the resources required to implement any change in legislation it is recommended that:
 - resource requirements be analyzed carefully before any changes in the Education Act are made, including changes to the language provisions.
4. Because the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is part of the Canadian Constitution and is, therefore, applicable to the Territories, it is recommended that:
 - the Education Act be amended to include the minority language education rights of persons who have a right, under the Charter, to have their children receive school instruction in one of the official languages of Canada.

5. Because there is a need to preserve, develop and enhance all of the official languages of the Territories, and because at this time, aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories are at varying stages of development, it is recommended that:

- the Education Act be amended to include the language education rights of persons whose first language is an official aboriginal language, and such language rights should be similar to the rights extended to persons whose first language is English or French.

6. Because it will not be possible to complete the redraft of the Education Act during the 11th Legislative Assembly, it is recommended that:

- a message be sent to the 12th Assembly suggesting that a special committee be considered, and that it be mandated to examine provisions in the Education Act for which further direction is required, including language education rights.

P A R T 2**LANGUAGE PROVISIONS IN THE EDUCATION ACT**

The content of the Education Act is divided into seven main parts:

- Part 1 - Powers of the Minister and Duties of a Superintendent of Education
- Part 2 - Organization and Operation of Education Districts
- Part 3 - Conduct of Schools
- Part 4 - Supplementary Education Programs
- Part 5 - Teachers
- Part 6 - Students
- Part 7 - Regulations

The main language provisions are stated in Part 3 of the Act, under the heading "Language of Instruction", in sections 54 to 56. These sections provide that the local education authority or the divisional board of education shall prescribe the language of instruction to be used for the kindergarten program and for the first two years of the school program. The Minister, after consultation with a local education authority or with a divisional board of education, shall prescribe the language of instruction in schools for the years following completion of the first two years of the school program.

English is the only language specifically identified as a possible language of instruction. The provisions state that other languages may be prescribed but no list of languages from which to choose is provided.

The need for some instruction in English is recognized. The Act provides that if the language of instruction chosen for kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 is not English, then English must be taught as a second language. If English is chosen as the language of instruction in these grades, but is not the first language of the majority of students, then the first language of the majority of students must be taught as a second language. The Act also states that instruction must be provided in English for students whose first language is English.

For grades higher than grade 2, if the Minister decides on a language of instruction which is not the first language of the majority of the students, then the education authority may arrange for the teaching of the language of the majority.

Support for first and second language programs is provided in other parts of the Act. Sections 57 to 59, under the heading "Recognition of Ethnic and Cultural Variation", require that the school and supervisory staff shall accept guidance from the local education authority and shall ensure that the school program reflects the local culture. If qualified persons are available, the school staff shall be representative of the cultural background of the community. The local education authority may budget for non-professional staff who will work in "parts of the school program that relate to the culture, language or life-style of the local people". Section 95 provides for the employment of classroom assistants who shall work under the direction of a teacher and Regulation 33 requires that a classroom assistant be "able to communicate effectively in English, French or a northern native language". Regulation 10 states that to qualify for a teaching certificate a person must be "proficient in at least one of the official languages of Canada or in one of the native languages spoken in the Northwest Territories".

The provisions for governing education authorities do not include special provisions for linguistic or cultural minorities. There is only one education authority for each district or division. At the district level, all members are elected by the voters at large and there is no guaranteed representation. The education authority administers, or advises the Superintendent of Education on, all school programs offered in the schools of the district.

There have been no amendments to the language provisions of the Education Act since the Act was approved by the Legislative Assembly in 1977. At that time there was no Charter of Rights and Freedoms against which to measure its provisions, nor was there an N.W.T. Official Languages Act. The language provisions in the Education Act have to be interpreted to be consistent with the Charter, and have to provide direction for the implementation of aboriginal language education programs.

ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

Formal comments on language rights in education, in response to a pamphlet prepared by the Minister of Education, Official Languages and Education, have been received from nine agencies:

- Yellowknife Separate Board of Education
- Yellowknife Public Board of Education
- Kitikmeot Divisional Board of Education
- Keewatin Divisional Board of Education
- Iqaluit Education Council
- Fort Smith Education Society
- N.W.T. Teachers' Association
- Dene Cultural Institute
- Town of Hay River
- Municipality of Spence Bay

Most of the submissions received recognize the importance of bilingualism in English or French, and one of the official aboriginal languages. All emphasize that the decision on language of instruction should be made at the community level and most would like to see the measure of demand for a particular language of instruction related to the current pupil teacher ratio of 19/1.

Most of the submissions also express concern about how language rights will be implemented and how the additional funding needed will be provided.

The comments made by each are outlined below.

Boards of Education

A formal response was received from the Public and Separate Boards of Education in Yellowknife. Considerations on language issues were also provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning associated with the Separate Board of Education.

The Public Board emphasized two points:

- English or French should remain either as the language of instruction, or as a second language for all children of the Northwest Territories, and
- Recognizing the legitimate cultural and language support requirements of aboriginal communities, funding is a critical issue. Existing educational funding should not be eroded; new funding should be provided to respond to a broadening of parents' rights respecting the language of instruction of their children.

The Separate Board of Education in Yellowknife stated that it is reasonable to provide a school program in any of the official languages where there is reasonable demand for that service. However, they note that the range of languages presents problems in the following areas: funding, qualified staff, program development and facilities. The Board recognizes this issue as important and wishes to take part in the process.

The considerations provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning identified issues in providing a Dogrib program of instruction. The Centre noted that these issues were likely appropriate for other N.W.T. official languages.

Divisional Boards of Education

Neither the Kitikmeot nor the Keewatin Divisional Board of Education supported the idea of having the language of instruction determined by the cultural/geographical area the community was located in. Both emphasized the importance of the community making the decision on the language of instruction. The Kitikmeot wanted their students to be bilingual - fluent in either English or French and the language of the home community. The Keewatin emphasized fluency in English, and questioned what level of fluency was possible and necessary in the language of the community.

Both divisional boards said that reasonable demand could be determined by the number of students, and that number should be related to the staffing formula. (The Kitikmeot suggested 20 students over a 3 to 4 year age span.) Both said that if a language of instruction was to be introduced it should start in the primary grades and that a commitment should be made to continue teaching in that language for a period of time. (The Kitikmeot said 3 years and the Keewatin had passed a motion identifying 5 years.) The Kitikmeot suggested that consideration should be given to supporting a language-oriented pre-school.

Community Education Authorities

The Fort Smith Education Society was satisfied with the status quo and stated that no parent had ever asked for enhanced language services. They questioned who would determine if the demand in a community for education language rights was reasonable, and they said that the elected education authority should have that responsibility. They were also concerned about the additional costs.

The Iqaluit Education Council emphasized the importance of language education rights. They noted that with the large number of official languages and the differences in the stages of development of each of these languages it would be very difficult to implement language rights. They said that:

It is important that legislation not hinder the progress of some languages while creating unrealistic strategies for others.

They explained that their priority was to provide a high standard of education in Inuktitut and their goal in the short term was to increase the program from k - 3 to k - 6. They were concerned that although they did not want to impede the legitimate concerns of the French and English speaking population for programs for their children, if it were necessary to allocate existing funds for French programs, for example, then they would not be able to reach their goal in Inuktitut. They noted that "a plethora of educational materials" were available now for French and English and they were just beginning to be developed for Inuktitut.

Dene Cultural Institute

One of the goals of the Dene Cultural Institute was:

The creation of functionally bilingual students who fluently speak and write both the aboriginal language of the region and English or French.

They identified bilingual education (English or French and one of the official aboriginal languages) as well as a right and said that:

- In small and middle-sized communities the initial language of instruction should be the first language of the majority of the children, unless the parents decide otherwise... The second language of instruction should ensure fluency in that language (as well) by grade 9, and this standard should be adopted in the Act.
- In larger communities, two bilingual programs should be available. One would have an aboriginal language as the first language and the other would have English or French as its first language.

They also said that reasonable demand should be related to the number of students used in the pupil teacher ratio and that those students could be grouped in consecutive grades k-3, 4-6, and 7-9.

Northwest Territories Teachers' Association

The Teachers' Association emphasized the importance of community initiation and support, and support at home, to the success of a language program in education. They said that reasonable demand for such a program in the community was essential. Their greatest concern was that there should be sufficient qualified staff to teach, and adequate funding to support, the program without taking resources from existing programs. They also were concerned that if an official language was being taught as a subject, there should be sufficient time devoted to the core program.

Community Governments

The Town of Hay River said that the status quo was satisfactory. They stated that English and French should be the primary languages taught because they were the official languages of Canada, but they recognized that fluency in aboriginal languages was beneficial and sometimes essential in the N.W.T. They were most concerned about the funding necessary to enhance language rights and the "politicization of education".

The Municipality of Spence Bay noted that the dialect of the community should be taught as a subject in school and that the time spent on that community dialect should be lengthened.

Fédération Franco-TéNOise

No formal comments were received from the Fédération Franco-TéNOise or the Association des parents Francophones de Yellowknife on the pamphlet requesting comments on language in education.

The Deputy Minister of Education, however, was invited to attend a seminar hosted by the Fédération on education in French in the N.W.T. this fall. During the seminar, the results of a survey on the needs of the N.W.T. francophone community regarding education were tabled. The following information is a summary of the survey findings.

There were 129 questionnaires sent to parents of the five communities that are members of the Federation. A total of 56 questionnaires were returned (43%), and the findings of these returns were analyzed in a survey report. According to this survey, 74% of the parents who responded to the questionnaire believed that French should be the language of instruction at the primary level, and 43% at the secondary level.

If given the choice, 40% of parents with children at the primary level would send them to a homogenous French school. Thirty-six percent would prefer an English program with some French first language instruction. Twenty percent of parents would send their children to immersion programs and only 4% would send them to the English first language program.

At the secondary level, 43% of parents would send their children to a French homogenous school. Twenty-six percent would prefer English programs with some instruction in French, 24% would choose immersion programs and 7% would send their children to an English program.

About 70% of respondents agreed that parents should participate in the management of French programs in their education district.

CONCLUSIONS

In preparing recommendations on language rights in education the following factors must be taken into consideration:

- Information on the N.W.T. official languages provided by the 1986 Census of Canada
- Recommendations and directions on language in education made in the 1980s
- Status of official language instruction being provided now in N.W.T. schools
- Current language provisions in the Education Act
- Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada and N.W.T. Official Languages Act
- Process for redrafting the Education Act
- Comments received on language in education

The recommendations made by the Minister of Education must take these factors into consideration and recognize that the Education Act must reflect the spirit and intent of the Official Languages Act. They also must recognize that the people of the N.W.T. want to take time to consider this important issue before decisions are made on language rights in education. As a result the recommendations made are general in nature and emphasize the need for further consultation.

APPENDIX 1

STATISTICS ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

STATISTICS ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Aboriginal Languages as Mother Tongue

According to the 1986 Census, about 20,735 residents, 40 percent of the NWT population, identify an aboriginal language as their mother tongue, the language they first learned and still understand. The percentage of school-aged children, those 5 to 19 years of age, whose mother tongue is an aboriginal language is even higher, 47 percent (7,435 persons).

Inuktitut is the mother tongue of 15,215 individuals, 29 percent of the NWT population, while Dene languages represent 10 percent (5,350). Among the Dene languages, Slavey accounts for 2,490 persons with a Dene mother tongue, while 2,075 persons identify Dogrib as their mother tongue. Some 540 persons reported Chipewyan and 245 reported Gwich'in. For the Cree language, 170 people, or less than 1 percent, report that language as their mother tongue. Also, 30 percent of those persons with an aboriginal language mother tongue speak only aboriginal languages; that is, they do not speak either English or French well enough to carry on a conversation. For school-aged children this figure is somewhat lower at 22 percent.

Inuktitut

Inuktitut is the mother tongue of 73 percent of NWT residents identifying an aboriginal language as their mother tongue. Among the school-aged population 79 percent identify Inuktitut as their mother tongue (5,850 individuals). Further, those with an Inuktitut mother tongue account for 37 percent of all residents 5-19 years of age.

Thirty five percent of persons with Inuktitut as their mother tongue speak only aboriginal languages. This percentage for school-aged children is 25%. Further, language ability in Inuktitut only (unilingual Inuktitut) is concentrated in the younger portion of this age group: 780 of 1,630 persons for those 5-8 years (48 percent); 315 of 1,145 for those 9-11 years (28 percent); 175 of 1,085 for those 12-14 years (16 percent); and 185 of 1,990 for those 15-19 years (9 percent). In comparison, the figure for children under 5 years is 71 percent unilingual Inuktitut (1,535 out of 2,150).

Dene Languages

Dene languages account for 26 percent of those persons with an aboriginal language as their mother tongue, and 21 percent of the school-aged population (1,555 persons). Further, those with a Dene mother tongue account for 10 percent of all persons 5-19 years of age.

Eighteen percent of those persons with a Dene mother tongue speak only aboriginal languages. The corresponding figure for school aged children is 10 percent.

The incidence of unilingual Dene language ability varies among the Dene languages. About 25 percent of those with Dogrib mother tongue, 17 percent of those with Slavey mother tongue, and 7 percent of those with Chipewyan mother tongue speak only aboriginal languages. Approximately 100 Dogrib and 55 Slavey school-aged children are unilingual. Based on the Census, unilingual Gwich'in speakers are nonexistent.

Cree

Cree accounts for 1 percent of those persons with an aboriginal language as their mother tongue and 0.4 percent of the school-aged population (30 persons). Further, those with Cree mother tongue account for 0.2 percent of all persons 5-19 years of age. Based on the Census, unilingual Cree speakers are nonexistent.

Aboriginal Languages as Home Languages

About 62 percent (32,215 persons) of the N.W.T. population speak English most often at home, while 35 percent (18,405 persons) speak an aboriginal language. About 575 individuals speak only French at home, while 325 speak both English and French.

Inuktitut speakers are the single largest group speaking an aboriginal language at home. They represent 14,005 persons or 27 percent of the territorial population. Dene home language speakers (4,320 persons) represent 8 percent. Dogrib is the most common Dene home language accounting for 1,990 persons, and Slavey follows closely with 1,810 persons speaking Slavey at home. About 385 persons speak Chipewyan at home and 135 speak Gwich'in. Only 80 persons report speaking Cree at home.

Among those 5 to 19 years of age, 55 percent (8,690 persons) report English as their home language, while 44 percent report an aboriginal home language. Most school-aged children reporting an aboriginal home language speak Inuktitut at home. Approximately 5,545 school-aged children report Inuktitut as their home language, while approximately 1,335 school-aged children report speaking a Dene language most often at home (795 Dogrib, 465 Slavey, and 75 Chipewyan). No children report speaking Gwich'in at home and approximately 15 school-aged children report speaking Cree at home.

English and French Mother Tongue and Home Language

According to the 1986 Census, some 28,165 persons identify English only as their mother tongue; 1,270 report French; and 270 report both English and French.

Approximately 1,270 persons living in the Northwest Territories report French as their mother tongue. Of these, 55 are able to speak only French, another 1,130 speak both English and French, and 90 speak only English. Looking at home language, English is more common than French as the language spoken at home for those with French as their mother tongue. Of these, 615 speak English most often at home, 530 speak French, and 115 speak both English and French. Another 10 report speaking an aboriginal language most often at home.

Some 270 persons have both English and French as their mother tongue. Of these, 240 are able to speak both English and French while 30 speak only English. Looking at home language, 125 of these persons speak only English at home 120 speak both English and French, and 20 speak only French.

Among school-aged children, 150 report French as their mother tongue and 35 have both English and French as their mother tongue. All school-aged children reporting French as their mother tongue are able to speak English.

TABLE 1

POPULATION, by Mother Tongue, Home Language and Age Group, Showing Number of Persons Speaking Native Languages Only
Northwest Territories, 1986

| | All Languages | | | | Native Languages Spoken Only | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|
| | All Ages | <5 Years | 5-19 Years | 20+ Years | All Ages | <5 Years | 5-19 Years | 20+ Years |
| MOTHER TONGUE: | | | | | | | | |
| All Languages | 52,020 | 6,365 | 15,820 | 29,835 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Native Languages | 20,735 | 2,550 | 7,435 | 10,750 | 6,260 | 1,730 | 1,610 | 2,920 |
| Inuktitut | 15,215 | 2,150 | 5,850 | 7,215 | 5,280 | 1,535 | 1,455 | 2,290 |
| Dene Languages | 5,350 | 400 | 1,555 | 3,395 | 980 | 195 | 155 | 630 |
| Chipewyan | 540 | 35 | 95 | 410 | 40 | - | - | 40 |
| Dogrib | 2,075 | 215 | 825 | 1,035 | 525 | 120 | 100 | 305 |
| Gwich'in (Loucheux) | 245 | - | 10 | 235 | - | - | - | - |
| Slavey (incl. Hare) | 2,490 | 150 | 625 | 1,715 | 415 | 75 | 55 | 285 |
| Cree | 170 | - | 30 | 140 | - | - | - | - |
| English | 28,165 | 3,670 | 8,070 | 16,425 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| French | 1,270 | 50 | 150 | 1,070 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| English and French | 270 | 40 | 35 | 195 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Other Languages | 1,590 | 40 | 125 | 1,425 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| HOME LANGUAGE: | | | | | | | | |
| All Languages | 52,020 | 6,365 | 15,820 | 29,835 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Native Languages | 18,405 | 2,435 | 6,895 | 9,075 | 6,275 | 1,730 | 1,610 | 2,935 |
| Inuktitut | 14,005 | 2,065 | 5,545 | 6,395 | 5,290 | 1,540 | 1,455 | 2,295 |
| Dene Languages | 4,320 | 370 | 1,335 | 2,615 | 985 | 190 | 155 | 640 |
| Chipewyan | 385 | 30 | 75 | 280 | 40 | - | - | 40 |
| Dogrib | 1,990 | 205 | 795 | 990 | 525 | 115 | 100 | 310 |
| Gwich'in (Loucheux) | 135 | - | - | 135 | - | - | - | - |
| Slavey (incl. Hare) | 1,810 | 135 | 465 | 1,210 | 420 | 75 | 55 | 290 |
| Cree | 80 | - | 15 | 65 | - | - | - | - |
| English | 32,215 | 3,825 | 8,690 | 19,700 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| French | 575 | 50 | 75 | 450 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| English and French | 325 | 35 | 65 | 225 | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Other Languages | 500 | 25 | 40 | 435 | ... | ... | ... | ... |

Symbols: ... not applicable; - zero.

Note: Native Languages Spoken Only refers to persons with a native mother tongue or home language who speak neither English nor French. English and French mother tongue and home language counts may exclude persons who also speak an aboriginal language. Information based on census data is randomly rounded by Statistics Canada. As a result, totals do not necessarily sum.

Source: Based on a special tabulation from the 1986 Census of Canada (20% data). Excludes population living in institutions.

TABLE 2

POPULATION, by Mother Tongue, French and English Ability, and Home Language - For Persons Whose Mother Tongue is French, English or Both Northwest Territories, 1986

| | Total | Speaks French or English | | | | Home Language | | | | |
|---|--------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------|---------------|--------|------|-----------------|----------------|
| | | English Only | French Only | Both English & French | Neither | English | French | Both | Native Language | Other Language |
| French Mother Tongue | 1,270 | 90 | 55 | 1,130 | - | 615 | 530 | 115 | 10 | - |
| <5 Years | 50 | - | 20 | 30 | - | - | 50 | - | - | - |
| 5-19 Years | 150 | 20 | 15 | 115 | - | 70 | 70 | - | - | - |
| 5-8 Years | 35 | - | - | 30 | - | - | 30 | - | - | - |
| 9-11 Years | 25 | - | - | 20 | - | - | 10 | - | - | - |
| 12-14 Years | 35 | 10 | - | 25 | - | 25 | - | - | - | - |
| 15-19 Years | 55 | - | - | 40 | - | 30 | 25 | - | - | - |
| 20+ Years | 1,070 | 70 | 20 | 985 | - | 545 | 410 | 115 | - | - |
| English Mother Tongue | 28,165 | 26,275 | - | 1,815 | 75 | 27,640 | 15 | 80 | 330 | 100 |
| <5 Years | 3,670 | 3,610 | - | 10 | 45 | 3,625 | - | - | 30 | - |
| 5-19 Years | 8,070 | 7,620 | - | 445 | - | 7,895 | - | 25 | 105 | 45 |
| 5-8 Years | 2,560 | 2,450 | - | 105 | - | 2,500 | - | 10 | 20 | 10 |
| 9-11 Years | 1,540 | 1,440 | - | 105 | - | 1,500 | - | 10 | 10 | 15 |
| 12-14 Years | 1,610 | 1,530 | - | 85 | - | 1,580 | - | - | 15 | - |
| 15-19 Years | 2,365 | 2,205 | - | 155 | - | 2,315 | - | - | 30 | 10 |
| 20+ Years | 16,425 | 15,045 | - | 1,360 | 30 | 16,120 | - | 55 | 195 | 55 |
| English and French Mother Tongue | 270 | 30 | - | 240 | - | 125 | 20 | 120 | - | - |
| <5 Years | 40 | - | - | 35 | - | - | - | 35 | - | - |
| 5-19 Years | 35 | - | - | 40 | - | - | - | 25 | - | - |
| 5-8 Years | 15 | - | - | 15 | - | - | - | 15 | - | - |
| 9-11 Years | 10 | - | - | 10 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 12-14 Years | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 15-19 Years | 15 | - | - | 10 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 20+ Years | 195 | 30 | - | 165 | - | 125 | 20 | 60 | - | - |

Symbols: - zero.

Note: English and French mother tongue and home language counts may exclude persons who also speak an aboriginal language. Information based on census data is randomly rounded by Statistics Canada. As a result, totals do not necessarily sum.

Source: Based on a special tabulation from the 1986 Census of Canada (20% data). Excludes population living in institutions.

APPENDIX 2

**DESCRIPTION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES PROGRAMS OFFERED
IN N.W.T. SCHOOLS**

DESCRIPTION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES PROGRAMS OFFERED IN N.W.T. SCHOOLS

Aboriginal Languages

The Northwest Territories school system serves children who enter the education system speaking eight official languages: Inuktitut (3 major dialects), Slavey (2 major dialects), Dogrib, Gwich'in, Chipewyan, Cree, English and French.

In total, 53 of the 73 schools responding to the Department of Education's 1989/90 Aboriginal Language Survey said they offered some instruction in an aboriginal language. Fifty-two schools were offering second language instruction and 31 were offering first language instruction to a total of 6,980 students.

The survey demonstrated that 36% of the total N.W.T. school population, or 4,846 students, were taking aboriginal second language programs.

With respect to first language programs, the survey identified that 1,744 students or 13% of the total school population were taking such programs. In both first and second language programs there were 6,590 students (49%) taking at least some instruction in an aboriginal language.

The total number of students receiving instruction in an aboriginal language increased by just over 3% from the 1988-89 report. This increase can be attributed to an increase in first language instruction. Enrolment in second language programs increased by 0.8%.

In 1989-90, there was first language instruction in schools in the Kitikmeot, Dogrib, Sahtu, Baffin and Keewatin regions. The average first language program offers instruction in an aboriginal language for 85% of the school week.

A k-6 Dene languages curriculum and a k-6 + grade 10 curriculum for Inuktitut are currently being developed by the Department of Education. Two Subject Advisory Committees have been formed to set the direction for the development of these two curricula. It is expected that the cultural components of the Dene Language Arts (k-6) curriculum will be developed for use in schools by January, 1991, at which time work on the Dene language component will begin. The Inuktitut Language Arts (k-6 + grade 10) curriculum is also being developed, and should be completed over the next few years. The k-3 portion of the curriculum should be in schools by September, 1991.

French

There are 3 types of French programs of instruction in N.W.T. schools: core French, or French as a second language, French as a first language, and French immersion. There were 3,814 students from 10 communities taking French as a second language in 1989-90. This represented 27.7% of the total N.W.T. student population. Of this total 2,038 students were taking the program in Yellowknife, 608 in Hay River, 152 in Iqaluit, 334 in Inuvik and 384 in Fort Smith. Core French was also offered to students in Fort Good Hope, Nanisivik, Norman Wells, Fort Simpson and Rankin Inlet.

Kindergarten classes in core French are offered only in Nanisivik and Norman Wells. Grade 12 core French is offered in Iqaluit, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik and Yellowknife Districts #1 and #2.

In 1989-90, 51 (0.4%) students were registered in French as a first language. There were 7 students in Nanisivik, 28 students at the Nakasuk school in Iqaluit and 7 were attending the Gordon Robertson Education Centre. Nine students attended the École Allain St-Cyr in Yellowknife from kindergarten to grade 2. (There are currently over 20 students in K-6 attending the École Allain St-Cyr.)

In 1989-90, 445 (.3%) students were taking immersion programs from Kindergarten to grade 12 in Yellowknife. The Yellowknife Separate School Board offered k-6 to 207 students and the Public School Board and the Board of Secondary offered grades 4-12 immersion programs to 199 students.

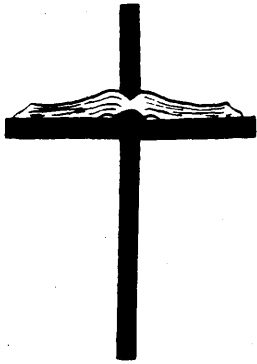
English

The language of instruction is English in all N.W.T. schools except the following:

- Most schools in the Baffin Division provide instruction in k-3 in Inuktitut, and some provide k-6,
- In the Keewatin Division some primary schools provide instruction in Inuktitut,
- In Fort Franklin some primary classes are offered in North Slavey,
- At École Allain St-Cyr in Yellowknife, children are instructed in French, and English is taught as a second language in grades 3-6, and
- In French immersion classes in Yellowknife, English language arts is also taught.

APPENDIX 3

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION



Yellowknife Catholic Schools

The Board of Education for the Yellowknife Separate Education District Number Two
Education Centre: 5115 - 46th Street
Mailing Address: Post Office Box 1830
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories X1A 2P4

Fax (403) 873-2701
Phone (403) 873-2200

J. C. POSTON - *Superintendent of Education*
B. GIRARDIN - *Secretary-Treasurer*

September 25, 1990

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the N.W.T.
P.O. Box 1320
YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

Enclosed with this letter is the Board of Yellowknife Catholic School Trustees response to the *Official Languages Act* and the *Education Act*.

We do hope this brief assists your department with the *Education Act* and the Northwest Territories *Official Languages Act*.

The Board of Trustees of the Yellowknife Catholic School District wishes to cooperate with the Government of the Northwest Territories on this very important issue as far as their resources permit.

If you require any additional information please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Noel O'Sullivan
Chairman

NOS/dmh

Encl.

Board of Trustees Reponse to Official Languages and Education Acts.

THE ISSUE: What is the role of the Board of Trustees in ensuring that the Official Languages Act is respected within the curricula in the Catholic Schools?

BACKGROUND:

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility to provide an Education to its school jurisdiction. The population is composed predominantly English first language and a limited number of French and Aboriginal students.

The three schools within the Board therefore contain students whose language needs will require a full examination in the light of Official Languages Act.

COMMENTS:

We agree that it is reasonable to deliver the school program in any of the official languages where there is reasonable demand for that service. The Dene Languages Centre experimental classes, K - 2 have been based on 5 as a reasonable number.

The particular geographic location and range of languages present in the Catholic schools creates a unique problem in the following areas:

1. Financial resources
2. Qualified staff
3. Curriculum -program development
4. Facilites

The Government and the Catholic schools district would need to discuss in depth a process suitable to the objective of the Official Language Act.

CONCERNS: 1. The time factor for meeting the Official Languages Act.

2. Revision of budget between government and school board.
3. Involvement of each community in the development and implementation of changes required.

The Board of trustees of the Catholic Schools District wish to cooperate with the Government of the N.W.T. on this very important issue, subject to resources being available.

YELLOWKNIFE EDUCATION DISTRICT No. 1

OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

September 19, 1990

Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

RE: Improvements to the Education Act: Official Languages

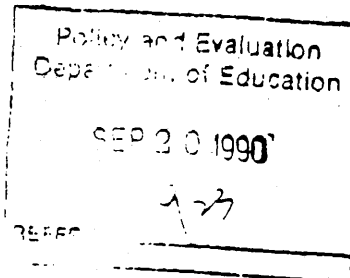
Pursuant to your recent letter and questions contained in the pamphlet "Official Languages and Education", this Board offers the following observations.

Members appreciate the opportunity to express views on this important issue. Thank you for consulting us.

Language issues are complex, far-reaching, and fraught with emotions. Eight "official languages" promise a Pandora's box of challenges, most of which, history illustrates, has eluded satisfactory resolutions in other jurisdictions.

Ostensibly there are two "official" national languages with which Canadian citizens may communicate with the federal government and crown agencies. At least one of these should remain either as the language of instruction or as a second language for all children of the Northwest Territories.

This Board recognizes the legitimate cultural and language support requirements of aboriginal communities; however, we do not want to see existing educational funding eroded. It is critical that the G.N.W.T. find and add sizeable new contributions to Board budgets to respond to language expansion within the educational mandate. Broadening parents' rights relative to instructional languages significantly expands requirements: teacher training, curriculum development and implementation, textbooks and supplementary resources, staffing, etc. With regard to staffing it should be noted that a one-for-one replacement will work in only limited instances; in most cases staff will have to be added: the P.T.R. will need to change. Current levels of educational programming and delivery simply cannot be maintained in light of this expanding



BOX 788
YELLOWKNIFE, N.W.T.
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(403) 873-5050

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Page 2
September 10, 1990

Our district offers the following observations to the questions contained within the pamphlet:

1. In an absence of a definition, the term "official language" poses problems throughout. If each "official language" is equal in status to the other then it seems reasonable that instruction would not be offered in any language unless a reasonable demand for that service exists.

Identifying the number of students that constitutes a reasonable demand for school instruction is for legislators to decide. However, if an arbitrary number is identified it must generate sufficient O&M funding to compare favourably with other programs/classrooms; a teacher salary contribution; etc. If a number is identified it should encompass one grade, or at the very least, consecutive grades.

2. Culture and language heritage, or mother tongue, seem reasonable criteria for determining eligibilities.
3. See comments relative to official national language.
4. Other criteria for determining when a child could receive language instruction could be availability of suitably trained (certified) staff; curriculum and support materials, adequate funding, etc.
5. This question is ambiguous. How could instruction in "an official language" not commence in primary grades? Using the example provided in the brochure our view is that instruction in a language should commence in grades K or 1.
6. This Board expects that as a minimum, students graduating from the Northwest Territories' school system will be fluent in one of Canada's national official languages.

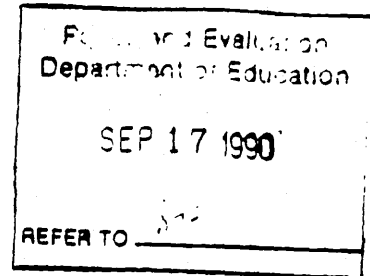
Sincerely,

W. Bisaro
Chairman

cc G. Joyce, Department of Education, G.N.W.T. ✓



KITIKMEOT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
September 9, 1990.



Gail Joyce
Director - Policy and Evaluation
Department of Education
Yellowknife, NWT

- FAX -

Official Languages and Education

In response to your request for information about change to the Education Act as it relates to the Official Languages Act, I have been in touch with our Administration staff and the Coppermine Education Council for their input. This letter summarizes the responses on a question by question basis.

Question 1 (a)

There was general agreement that the school program could be delivered in any of the official languages assuming 'reasonable demand' existed. The question that arises is "What constitutes reasonable demand?" and "Who determines when a sufficient level of demand exists?".

Questions 1(b), 1(c), 1(d)

For the Most part, there was agreement that if the demand for instruction in an official language was coming from the parents of 20 students, that could be considered 'reasonable demand'. A related suggestion tied reasonable demand to the present pupil-teacher ratio. In other words, if you had a group of students in sufficient numbers to make up a class, then the request for instruction in a particular language should be considered. One differing opinion held that the demand should come from the parents of 50% of the school population to be considered 'reasonable'.

Since the concept and reality of having a classroom limited to children of a single grade is completely foreign to our region (and most schools in the NWT), there would be no need to set such a restriction concerning language instruction. In fact, it would be educationally beneficial if the students receiving instruction in the 'official language' possessed several grades of language ability. This is not to say that the 20 students (to use the minimum number) receiving instruction in the 'official language' should be spread out across the school population but, rather, they should form a class within a three to four year age span. **The age factor, from our perspective, is more important than the grade factor** and, to minimize in-class social problems, there should be a limitation placed on the age range for that class. Put another way, to minimize the need for additional resources, the makeup of the group receiving instruction in the official language should be very similar to the makeup of our regular classes.

It was also agreed that it would be best if students receiving instruction in an official language could receive that instruction as early as possible in their schooling and in a consecutive manner. It would be very difficult for students, say 11-13 years old with little previous background in a particular 'official language', to begin receiving instruction in another language at that age. Ideally, students would use the 'official language' at home (mother tongue), receive instruction in that language from the beginning of their school career, and continue to receive the instruction as they progressed through school.

Question 2

There was general agreement with the suggestion in this question. However, one has to be mindful of the resource implications. There needs to be sufficient qualified human resources and satisfactory printed resources in order to deliver the curricula in any official language.

Question 3

If this question meant that the language of instruction in a school would be prescribed simply by determining the predominant culture of a community without the consideration of any other factors, there was not support for this point. It was felt that, when demand for instruction in a particular language occurred, the language of instruction of a particular class or of the school should be determined by the Education Council in conjunction with Board input. The ability to make the decision locally was felt to be important - a community may decide that, despite its predominant culture, it prefers English as the only language of instruction for its school(s).

Although the ability to make a local decision in 'language of instruction' matters was felt to be very important, it is not without its risks. For a program to succeed educationally, there need to be long-term commitments made to a particular endeavour. You can't implement a program in an aboriginal language one year and then change the direction the following year. Endeavours of this nature need to be given time to succeed. The Education Act could address this element by setting minimum time frames (say, three years) for programs of this nature. Also, the Act could establish the assessment process for such undertakings to assure they are evaluated fairly.

Question 4

In order to receive quality instruction in any official language, there needs to be trained personnel and sufficient print materials available to deliver a program that will meet children's needs. Desire alone is not enough.

Question 5

As mentioned earlier, it would be best to have instruction in a second official language being as early as possible for a child. This does not preclude beginning such a program later but, the more delayed the start, the more difficult it will be for a student to achieve success. For older students who have never had instruction in their native language, it may be best to offer them courses in their language rather than immerse them in an instructional environment that uses another official language.

In addition, it was felt by all that the Department of Education should consider the direct support of language development for our pre-school children. This exposure could occur in pre-school programs and/or daycare organizations when a child's aptitude for language acquisition is the greatest. Programs such as this would contribute significantly to a child's ability to succeed in the regular school programs, whether those programs were delivered in English or in another 'official language'. One of the most significant problems cited when discussing children's lack of success in school and school dropouts is the lack of language development of many children when they first enter school. A language-oriented pre-school program that involves parents and community organizations would reduce this problem considerably.

Question 6

Ideally, the language goal of our school system (as should be outlined in the Education Act?) should be to produce graduates who are fluently bilingual. The graduates should be articulate in one of either English or French and the second language should be the language of the student's home community. However, this raises some interesting questions for us regarding language programs in high school and the right of a child to receive instruction in his/her own dialect. Due to the transient nature of much of the northern population, I would not expect this fluency to be a requirement of graduation but, rather, a future goal.

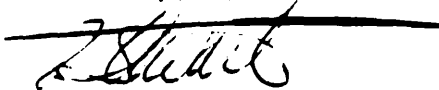
Several other relevant comments surfaced during the CEC's discussion of this topic:

- o In high school, for students who complete an aboriginal language course(s), there must be credit given at the university level for that course(s). Such courses must have some extrinsic value.
- o Related to the above point, it was felt that there has to be practical incentives for our students to take instruction/courses in an aboriginal language. For instance, there should be a link with employment opportunities such as an increased number of NWT jobs requiring a facility in an aboriginal language.

0 It was also felt that, for any aboriginal 'language of instruction'/bilingual program to truly succeed, there needs to be a strong home-school involvement in the process and a community commitment/support as well. Without broad-based support for the use of the aboriginal language, a school will only be working in isolation to try to ensure a future for that language - and it will have great difficulty succeeding.

I trust you will find these comments to be of some value in your endeavours to revise the Education Act.

Yours truly,



Tom Stewart
Director

cc: Mel Pardy, Supervisor of Schools
Edna Elias, Principal, Kugluktuk School
Dan Harvey, Chairperson, Coppermine Education Council
KBE Members, Kitikmeot Region
School Principals, Kitikmeot Region

English speaking students are present. We can anticipate a time when the department may be challenged to provide full-time instruction for these children as guaranteed under the Act.

With respect to question #1 d) Would make sense to be consecutive, if numbers at single grade do not warrant a (dedicated) teacher, but it is not an absolute requirement. Emphasis should be placed on teachers ability to effectively deliver the required programs in an multi-graded classroom situation. Use of an implementation cycle to determine course content (what skills, concepts and attitudes to be taught) over a fixed — usually two or three — number of years can be used in multi-graded teaching situations. A consecutive requirement makes programing more rational, but in special instances, other instructional arrangements can be made. My sense would be to leave these determinations up to the LEA and principal.

With respect to question #2 & #3 These make sense and the LEA's should be able to make informed decisions if they are presented with the range of options and consequences of each option. There also should be some provision in the legislation or directives (operational expectations) for continuity so that once a determination has been made it is adhered to for a number of years. Repetitive "flip-flops" in terms of language of instruction decisions will have a cumulative adverse impact on student achievement. Our Board has been concerned that some schools have begun instruction in Inuktitut only to reverse the decision the following year. As a matter of policy they are now insisting that a decision may not be reversed for five years once the language of instruction is set.

With respect to question #4. For Keewatin students, French could be taught as a subject as numbers warrant, with our primary mandate to provide a bilingual program in English and Inuktitut. There is also the problem of depending on the services of qualified and certified aboriginal language teachers. Resignations have compromised and will continue to compromise aboriginal instruction programs - although anticipated changes to teacher certification may alleviate this problem.

With respect to question #5. For our Keewatin students, it makes sense to start in Kindergarten whether it is first language instruction in Inuktitut or as Inuktitut as a subject. The following research has been used in the Keewatin to support this position:

- Rock Point Community School: An Example of a Navajo-English Bilingual Elementary School Program
- Evaluating the Role of First Language in Native Education: Developmental Results in a Canadian Inuit Setting, Arlene Stairs (research done in Kativik School Board, Arctic Quebec)
- Bilingual and Minority Language Children by Jim Cummins (a review of research findings)

With respect to question #6. Consideration for English and one of the official languages (in the Keewatin, English plus Inuktitut or French) should be given as

not always a function merely of formal education, and hence, a fluency requirement as such, should not be made mandatory. If a student is not fluent in at least one official language, then it would be impossible to graduate, given our current notion of academic accountability.

Other Comments

The Keewatin Divisional Board of Education currently follows the policy of the Department of Education in carrying out its responsibilities under sections 54 — 56 of the Education Act, in that it advises each community of the language options open to it, as well as, the instructional/operational implications. K.D.B.E. then seeks the LEA's informed decision as far as language policy in that community is concerned.

The Education Act should be consistent with and help to support The Keewatin Divisional Board of Education's nascent interest in promoting bilingualism in schools.

The following definition of bilingual education still seems serviceable:

"Bilingual education in the Northwest Territories is the use of two languages, one of which is English, the other of which is the appropriate local tongue, as mediums of instruction in well organized programs which is designed to lead to standards of proficiency expected of students by the community and the department."

From the Keewatin perspective, any changes to the Education Act should allow flexibility and provide support for bilingual programming — read instruction in English and Inuktitut — with provisions for students to learn French as a subject as numbers warrant. The less prescriptive the legislation is, the better. Divisional Boards should be empowered to make meaningful decisions in terms of their constituency and this can best be accommodated by flexible legislation and the where-for-all to carry-out a mandate.

Sincerely,


Rob Henderson,
Director, KDBE

IQUALUIT EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the NWT.
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NWT.
X1A 2L9

September 14, 1990

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

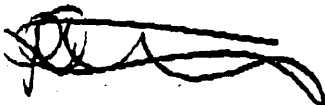
The Iqaluit Education Council has responded to the pamphlet entitled "Help Improve the Education Act". In our submission to you we put forth two primary concerns that we as a council have.

We believe that the issue of language rights is of fundamental concern to all Inuit and Dene of the NWT and we welcome the opportunity to have some input. We are concerned however, that the amount of time given to education councils may be too short.

Your letter was received by our council on July 24th. As you are aware most education councils do not meet during the summer and would therefore be unable to respond to your questionnaire until early September which was the given deadline. We would like to see a longer period of time given for education councils to properly research and solicit public responses on this issue.

Please give consideration to this request.

Sincerely,



Rosie Simonfalvy
Chairperson

IQUALUIT EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Honourable Stephen Kakfiwi
Minister of Education
Government of the NWT.
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NWT.
X1A 2L9

September 14, 1990

Dear Mr. Kakfiwi:

Thank you for your letter of July 24th soliciting comments and advice on language provisions of the Education Act.

Language issues are, for this Council, of the utmost importance. We sincerely believe and it is the basis of this submission, that a good education begins with a solid foundation in one's maternal language. For this reason we have consistently supported and fought for the expansion of Inuktitut programs in our schools. There is much to be accomplished and we hope that our tasks will be facilitated with the introduction of the new territorial legislation.

Apart from the obvious advantages to having aboriginal languages recognized, we would like to comment on two areas of concern.

Firstly, the large number of official languages will make implementation difficult. All of them are at different stages of development and most are specific to geographical regions. It would seem obvious that any legislation will have to address this. It would be unworkable to apply the same timetable to all languages.

We do not wish to infer that a language is more or less important based on its stage of development or even on the number of speakers. All of the aboriginal languages are equally important and all deserve the government's full attention to ensure full and equal representation by Aboriginal Peoples in their lands.

It is important that legislation not hinder the progress of some languages while creating unrealistic strategies for others. Here in Iqaluit we feel that we are ready to pursue further expansion of Inuktitut in our schools to the point that our next goal is an Inuktitut school. (K-6)

Throughout the Saffin region, Inuktitut is strong in the community and in the school. There is virtually no danger of losing the language and it is more a question of providing support and

services to the residents in their language. In Iqaluit the situation is more nebulous.

The second concern appertains to the large number of non-Inuit and a correspondingly large number of services provided in English only. There is also a substantial (about 15%) francophone population. More and more demand is being placed on our schools to provide services and programs in French.

Presently the Act says that instruction must be provided in English for students whose first language is English. If this were to be expanded to include French, then our ability to provide Inuktitut will be severely hampered. Given the fact that French (minority) language rights are protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms it is likely that these rights would supersede those contained in an act of the territorial government.

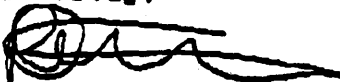
It is our desire to provide a high level of Inuktitut to the Inuit majority in our community and we do not wish to impede the legitimate concerns of francophones who wish to have French programs for their children. We feel however, that Inuktitut must be given priority. As it is we are having great difficulty providing adequate programs in Inuktitut. If it were to become necessary to allocate existing funds for french programs, then it is our view that the rights of the Inuit majority would be severely undermined.

Iqaluit is the administrative centre for the Baffin region. It contains the regional headquarters of most government departments including education. We feel strongly that we should serve as an example and model to other Baffin communities. Therefore sir, we are urging you ensure that Inuktitut does not become relegated to third place in a community of three languages.

English and French both enjoy a plethora of educational materials, literature, and support structures. With Inuktitut we are just beginning to develop these. Much time, money, and effort will have to be expended in the future if we will legitimately be able to claim that Inuktitut is truly "official".

Thank you again for the opportunity to put forth our views on this most important matter.

Sincerely,



Rosie Simonfalvy
Chairperson

Fort Smith Education Society

P.O. Box 131 Fort Smith Northwest Territories XCE 0P0 Phone (403) 872 2011

September 07, 1990

Policy and Evaluation
Department of Education

SEP 12 1990

REFER: 884

Honorable Stephen Kakfiwi
Minister of Education
Government of the N.W.T.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Subject: Changes to NWT Education Act - Official Languages

Your request for input into the above has received serious and material discussion by Fort Smith LES members. However, the members were confused by some of the wording used in the brochure. Specifically the word "reasonable" located in 1 a) caused the greatest confusion.

The members wondered:

- 1) who defines "reasonable", the Department of Education, Divisional Boards, Local Education Councils, or Parent Groups;
- 2) who pays for the additional interpreters, teachers required to promote a language initiative;
- 3) if a community parent group wanted a particular language program, and it was supported by a Local Education Council and a Divisional Board, subject to the department providing additional funding to hire interpreters, translators and/or teachers, could the Department refuse to fund on the grounds that the request was unreasonable because money was limited or unavailable.

These types of questions led to other questions and issues to consider.

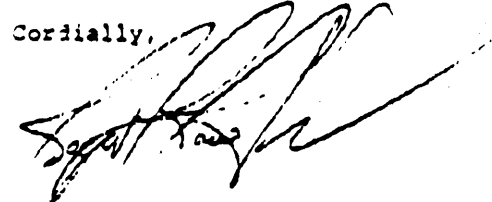
Until the wording of the brochure is much more succinct, rendering the questions more meaningful and realistic, the Fort Smith LES cannot provide you with the type of input we believe you are requesting. We require substantially more clarification. Until such clarification is forthcoming, the Fort Smith LES can only respond as follows:

- 1) In consultation with the elementary school principle it has been determined that no parent, nor parent group has ever come forward and promoted the need for enhanced official language accessibility.

- 2) Until such parental promotion takes place, the Fort Smith LES accepts the status quo.

- 3) Should a parent, or parental group come forward with a specific proposal, the LES will consider the request on its merits, in conjunction with the regional education office. The final decision of the LES will depend on the type, kind, and amount of resources your department will expend in support of the proposal.

- 4) The Fort Smith LES recommends that the final decision on which official languages will be approved will rest upon the elected body (LEA or Div. Board) of each respective region.

Cordially,


Roger P. Rawlyk, Chairperson

THE *Northwest Territories*

P.O. Box 2340
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FAX 873-2366

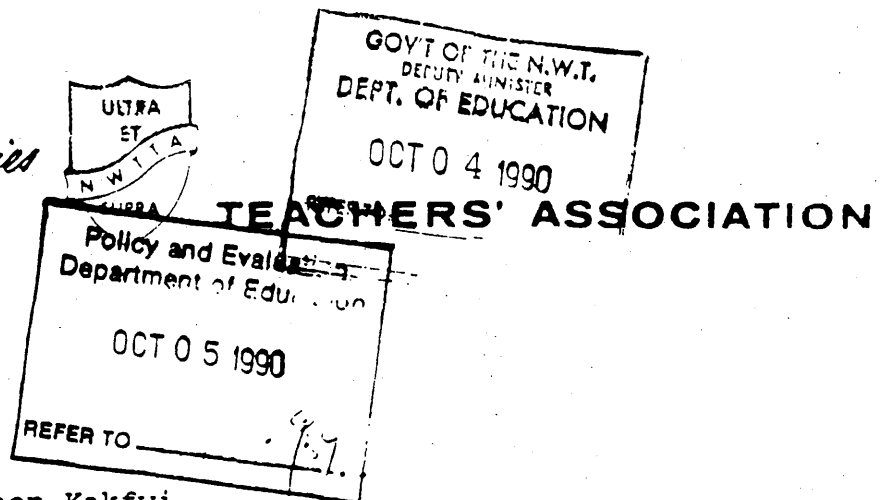
September 27, 1990

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

In response to your request for involvement of the NWTTA regarding the discussion paper Help to Improve the Education Act, I am pleased to relate the stand of the Association on the questions posed in the pamphlet Official Languages and Education. The NWTTA believes:

1. (a) that the success of any program is significantly related to community initiation and support; hence, a reasonable demand is essential prior to implementation of any specific language program;
 - (b) that there should be at least twenty students demanding instruction in the initial course; a smaller number may result in failure due to pupil attrition; especially, if the course is intended to span more than one year;
 - (c) that this number should be set for a single course;
 - (d) that there should be an initial course based on twenty students and consecutive programming based on an evaluation of the initial program.
2. that if the program is to be successful, language and cultural support at home is essential;
 3. note (2); yes, as the cultural region is in an extended family of support;
 4. that the main criteria should ensure there are sufficient qualified staff to teach the program and adequate funding to support them without taking staff or funding from existing programs;



5. that language instruction should begin at the Kindergarten level if it is to be offered as children as most amenable to language training when they are young;
6. that some students have great difficulty gaining fluency in language because of ability, motivations and among some, physical handicaps. Therefore, fluency would not be expected.

Concerns:

The greatest concern of our Association is the availability of trained language teachers to implement the preceding programs. In addition, if the courses are formalized rather than being vehicles of instruction in other programs eg. social studies or arithmetic; then close attention must be paid to the availability of time for the programming of studies such as Language Arts, arithmetic, science, etc.; so that, sufficient time is given to the core program to ensure a level and intensity of instruction that prepares students to continue on in the preceding programs.

Yours truly,



John F. Rouble
President

JFR/lg

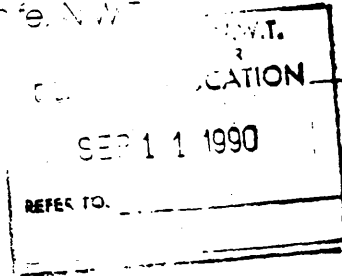
cc: Director of Policy & Evaluation
Central Executive



DENE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 207
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L2

Phone 403-873-3317
Fax 403-873-3317



September 7, 1990

Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the N.W.T.
Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi,

Thank you for your letter of July 23, 1990, inviting the Dene to participate in the process to revise the Education Act.

Please find enclosed our recommendations relating to language rights in Education. We have relied on prior work (positions, discussion papers, and reports) to formulate our position regarding changes to the Act as we had neither the time since receipt of your letter in late July, nor the resources to conduct any further consultation with our people.

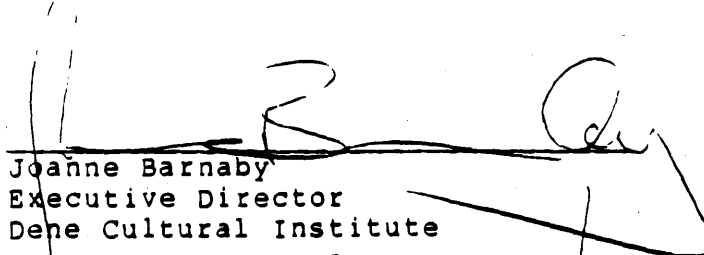
We do believe however that the views of the Dene have been articulated clearly and consistently for at least a decade now and that the attached submission reflects well, this reality.

We look forward to the public debate that is surely going to ensue and encourage you in your desire to see strong language rights established in a revised act to meet the longstanding needs of Aboriginal peoples.


We also look forward to meaningful participation in revising other parts of the Education Act, with the goal of increasing the relevance and effectiveness of education for our people. In order

to do this effectively, we will require additional human and financial resources. Your immediate assurance of the availability of such resources would be greatly appreciated.

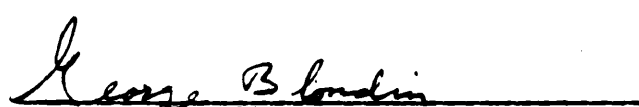
Sincerely,



Joanne Barnaby
Executive Director
Dene Cultural Institute



Bill Erasmus
President
Dene Nation



George Blondin
Chairman
Denendeh Elders Council

cc: All Chiefs
Denendeh Elders Council Members
Dene Cultural Institute Board of Directors

DENE SUBMISSION TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RE: CHANGES TO THE LANGUAGE PROVISIONS OF THE EDUCATION ACT

SEPTEMBER, 1998

**BY: DENE CULTURAL INSTITUTE
DENE NATION
DENENDEH ELDERS COUNCIL**

INTRODUCTION

SECTION I

The Dene Cultural Institute and the Dene Nation have actively pursued the legal recognition of Dene languages for several years now. We do not believe that legal status alone will ensure the survival or indeed the future health of our languages.

We do however believe that such status will help to ensure that the necessary support resources are available to our communities and that public awareness created by such rights will lead to greater public support.

We have an opportunity here in the North to give protection and recognition to Aboriginal peoples as distinct societies within a public government system. Some progress has been made in achieving this goal through the recent amendments to the Official Languages Act which now recognizes Aboriginal languages as Official.

It is now time to meet the most critical challenge of all. This is to provide the support and opportunities to our people at the most crucial learning period of their lives, during childhood. Support of the formal education system for our language development needs, coupled with cultural commitment, will increase the chances of our languages survival as well as to contributing to achieving higher educational goals.

Much evidence exists that shows that without strong language capabilities, learning capabilities are severely hampered. The fact that we can still find many youth graduating from high school who are still functionally illiterate demonstrates further the need to increase language skills. These youth are limited in their opportunities and will not meet university education with success without first acquiring strong language skills.

The following section of this submission, contain excerpts relevant to language education rights and needs, from three sources. They are;

- (1) the Joint Dene Cultural Institute/Dene Nation/Denendeh Elders Council submission to the Special Committee on Aboriginal Languages;

- (2) a discussion paper entitled "Effecting Change for Dene Education" produced by the Dene Cultural Institute and submitted to the Department of Education in December of 1989; and
- (3) the report of the Aboriginal Languages Task Force. The Task Force report has been sanctioned by the Chiefs and Executive of the Dene Nation as well as the Denendeh Elders Council and the Board of Directors for the Dene Cultural Institute.

The following section contains statements of Principles, Goals and Rights and forms the basis for our position on language changes required in the Education Act.

The third section of this submission addresses the specific questions distributed in August to us by the Department of Education.

And the final section addresses other matters of concern with respect to Dene Education.

SECTION II

A. PRINCIPLES for guiding the development of Dene Education Language Rights.

1. The Canadian Constitution under Section 35 recognizes and affirms Treaty and Aboriginal Rights. Initiatives to provide for language rights in education must be consistent with this recognition.
2. That the quality of education for aboriginal people, which is presently entrusted to the GNWT, will be improved through guaranteed aboriginal participation in the development of curriculum and educational policy and through recognized rights such as Education Language Rights.
3. Aboriginal students should learn a common, shared foundation of knowledge, as well as certain abilities, attitudes, beliefs and standards of conduct. This shared foundation must provide a balance between the personal needs of learners (intellectual, physical, social, emotional) and the needs of the aboriginal communities and aboriginal society as a whole.
4. Relevant curricula and Aboriginal Language instruction will go a long ways towards improving (a) the achievement of aboriginal learners, and consequently the ability of the public education system to graduate Northerners able to lead our society into the next century.
5. Aboriginal languages and culture are inseparably intertwined. Language cannot adequately be taught or learned in isolation from the culture which is its lifeblood.
6. Within the over-all public government of the Northwest Territories, aboriginal peoples must be recognized as having the ultimate right and responsibility for the future of their languages and cultures. This responsibility must be recognized in the governing institutions of the Northwest Territories.

7. Northern Society as a whole has responsibility for actively supporting and encouraging aboriginal peoples in exercising these rights.
8. The Government of the Northwest Territories has responsibility for providing secure and ongoing support for the development of the aboriginal languages through legislation, funding and program development.
9. A goal to work towards full bilingualism and bi-culturalism must form the basis of all education rights, policies and programs.
10. Official Language Minorities must be assured that education services are reasonably provided within specified periods.

B. GOALS

1. The creation of functionally bilingual students who fluently speak and write both the aboriginal language of the region and English or French. Specific levels of competency must be established with direct representation of each language group.
2. Designated High Schools will offer a bilingual experience with approximately half of the subjects taught in English or French and half in the appropriate aboriginal language.
3. In the larger centres, English or French may be the main language of instruction in secondary schools. However, the content of the education will be based to a great extent on the Aboriginal cultures and a system of bilingual education will be available.
4. To improve the quality of Education for aboriginal and non-aboriginal residents of the Northwest Territories.
5. To increase understanding and acceptance of Aboriginal cultures.

6. To increase understanding and the value of distinct cultures.

C. RIGHTS

1. A basic and fundamental right to receive bilingual education in English or French and in one of the Official Aboriginal languages must be established.

This right should be established as a collective right of each aboriginal language group. It is not enough to ensure that the individual needs of citizens are assured. The aspiration to continue and to develop aboriginal languages is based on a desire to maintain collective distinctiveness.

Culture is the collective identity of people - no one person can determine or dictate the cultural identity of a people. It is only through collectives that people can take charge of affecting positive meaningful and conscious change within their society.

2. All citizens have the right to a relevant education. Education is relevant to the extent that it is useful and meaningful to individuals learners as well as the societies from which they come: the Dene/Metis, the Inuit/Inuvialuit, and the northern non-Aboriginal societies.
3. All citizens have the right to an education that develops and maintains a positive concept of self, community and culture so that they may be better prepared to live with pride and dignity and contribute productively to their cultural collective, and to society as a whole.
4. All citizens must have equal access to public education. For the purposes of the Act, equal access must not be restricted to simple access to the educational system, but must be broadly defined to ensure all citizens have equal access to the benefits to be derived from education.
5. In the small and middle-sized communities of the Northwest Territories, the initial language of instruction should be the first language of the majority of such children, unless the parents decide otherwise.

All children in the community should be guaranteed intensive second language instruction in the other language, whether it be English, French or the regional aboriginal language. The second language instruction offered should be designed to ensure fluency in the language by grade 9, and this standard should be adopted in the Act.

6. In the larger communities, two bilingual programs will be available. One program would have an Aboriginal Language as its designated first language and the other would have English or French as its designated first language. At least one facility in each major centre will have an Aboriginal Language designated as its first language.

7. Each regional aboriginal language will be offered in a bilingual program in one of the regional high schools in the NWT by the year 2000. The language will be used and taught equally with English in the program; the first language/second language distinction is no longer necessary. All students should have the option of enrolling in this program or in a unilingual English program containing aboriginal cultural components and offering Northern studies and the regional aboriginal language as a mandatory subject of study.

SECTION III

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS POSED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The following criteria should be used to determine the language(s) of instruction in order or priority;

- the culture and language heritage, or mother tongue, of parents or guardians;
- the geographic/cultural area the school district is located in;
- level of demand for school instruction in an official language in a school district.

'Reasonable' demand should be defined on the same basis as the teacher-Student ratio for any specialized program as long as each school district has at least one facility that has an aboriginal language as the language of instruction at the Primary level. The number can be set based on the number of students across several grades.

Grades can be grouped as follows: k-3, 4-6, 7-9.

Each district should offer at least one fully bilingual program for grades 10-12 by the year 2000.

Aboriginal language instruction as a subject of study, should become mandatory immediately for all grades.

By 1992-93 all students should have the right to receive grades k-3 in a fully bilingual program (Aboriginal and English or French).

By 1995-96, all students should have the right to receive grades 4-6 in a fully bilingual program.

By 1998-99 all students should have the right to receive grades 7-9 in a fully bilingual program.

By 2000-2001, all students should have the right to receive grades 10-12 in a fully bilingual program.

SECTION IV

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

It is critical to the success of achieving Aboriginal language fluency that the teaching methods and learning environment be culturally appropriate.

New approaches based on Aboriginal teaching techniques utilizing elders, parents and the extended family must be developed. As much as possible, Dene language instruction should take place in traditional settings.

Our concern regarding Dene and public education extend well beyond the question of education language rights and issues.

It is imperative that we be fully involved in addressing matters pertaining to teacher education and standards, curriculum development, jurisdiction and devolution, student support and the question of separate schools.

We look forward to participating in reviewing other portions of the Education Act to this end and to creating additional forums necessary to enable Dene participation in matters not specifically set out in legislation.

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SENT BY FAX TO HAY RIVER NO 9-12-90 3:41PM

42387432374

42387432374



BAG 8000, HAY RIVER
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES,
X05 0R0
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Our file: _____
Your file: _____

T R A N S M I T T A L

ATTENTION: Stephen Kalret
Minister of Education

ORGANIZATION: Government of the N.W.T.

ADDRESS: Yellowknife

FAX NUMBER: 920-4218

DATE: 10 September 1990

SUBJECT: Official Languages and Education

SENT BY: Jo Cooper

NO. OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: 3

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Jana:

Attached is a copy of the letter as requested.

Tel: (409) 874-0222

Fax: (409) 874-0227

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SENT BY TOWN OF HAY RIVER NL 9-10-90 3:41PM

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BAG 8000, HAY RIVER
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES,
X0E 0A0
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



Policy and Evaluation
Department of Education
SEP 13 1990
REFER TO 899

10 September 1990

GOVT. OF THE N.W.T.
DEPT. OF EDUCATION
SEP 12 1990
REFER TO: _____

Our file: _____
Your file: _____

COPY

Mr. Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education
Government of the N.W.T.
P.O. Box 1380
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
XLA 2L9

Dear Mr. Kakfwi:

The Council of the Town of Hay River decided that it would hold a public meeting to discuss your letter and the contents of the pamphlet "Official Languages and Education" to obtain the views of the public. This public meeting was held at the S.G. Sivertz Community Hall on Wednesday, September 5, 1990. About 20 people were in attendance.

The general consensus was that the present Education Act already provides for the education of children in a language other than English. The section "What the Education Act says now" explains the options. The people present did not have any objections to specifically listing which official languages may be used.

There was some discussion, however, on the difference between "teaching a native language" and "teaching in a native language". The former had support, but not the latter. A local teacher who is teaching Slavey explained the situation she faces. She has had difficulty with the local people because her dialect of Slavey is different from that of the local people. A lack of curriculum and materials in Slavey are additional problems.

One gentleman noted that he researched the local library and found only five items in Slavey, the best being a dictionary developed a number of years ago. Even that, apparently, has numerous errors and did not use the complete alphabet.

...2

Mr. Stephen Kakul
10 September 1990
Page 1

Other problems that arise in using Slavey as a language of instruction include the lack of a Slavey vocabulary. How would one translate "distributive property" in mathematics, technical terms or medical terms? It was pointed out that the Territorial Court circuit is having considerable difficulties in providing interpretation services. Is the answer to artificially devise terms in the various native languages and pass them off as genuine to that language, or is it more practical to use the local languages as they are, and supplement them with words borrowed from other languages, be they English, French, etc.?

It was pointed out by various speakers that young children readily learn languages and, therefore, giving children the opportunity in the early grades to learn several languages would be a positive move. Some people were concerned, though, if it would be mandatory to learn a native language. In their instance, they are residents of May River for several years and are then transferred to other communities. It was pointed out that English and French should be the primary languages to be taught because Canada is a bilingual country. There was recognition that fluency in a native language would be beneficial, and at times essential, in the N.W.T.

Although attempts are being made to standardize the native languages in the written form, there doesn't seem to be much done in the oral sphere. Much more work needs to be done in this area.

Concern was expressed about the impact on the present program. If a commitment is made to teach a or in a native language through grade six, for example, and the number of students drops to single digit values, is the commitment fulfilled or is the program truncated? Furthermore, where is all this additional money to teach these programs to come from? The Government of the N.W.T. is presently operating at a deficit. The Federal Government has reduced funding levels to the Government of the N.W.T. and it's well known that schools at present are having difficulty in obtaining basic materials given the proliferation of courses and revisions which require new texts, etc.

On a personal note, I have viewed with increasing concern the drift over the last 10 years or so that the schools are becoming less and less an educational institution that has a solid core of academics. Acculturation has been given more emphasis at the expense of academics. Finally, I am concerned with the "politicization of education". By this I mean that the government of the day requires schools to do things that further the political aims of the executive or the legislative assembly. I consider this to be a dangerous trend and contrary to basic democratic principles.

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Mr. Stephen Kakul
10 September 1990
Page 3

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the proposed language provisions. We look forward to further involvement when the draft legislation is presented for changes to the entire Education Act.

Yours truly,



WALTER S. KUDELIK
Mayor

WMK:jms

cc John Pellard M.L.A.



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MUNICIPALITY OF SPENCE BAY

SPENCE BAY, N.W.T.
XOE 1B0

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|--|
| Policy and Evaluation Department of Education |
| SEP 13 1990 |
| 896 |
| REFER TO _____ |

August 02, 1990


The following are my responses to the Official Languages and Education Act before some changes are made to the Education Act for improvement.

- 1.) To have every community have their own Inuktitut dialect as a subject to study for the students.
- 2.) To have their cultural meanings and words used and studied in the schools for students to learn, since everything has a slightly different meaning.
- 3.) To have the Inuktitut subject class lengthened, as well as, have the Inuktitut teacher speak strictly in Inuktitut, since there are times when an English word is used to explain different words, or, meanings in Inuktitut, therefore a mixture of Inuktitut and English becomes spoken.

So that our ancestors culture and communications can be studied among students if they are put into the Education Act, as well as, the Inuktitut speaking should never be forgotten in the N.W.T..

There are also some people who are beginning to lose their own cultural languages, regardless that they are the original people from the land, these different languages must be recorded on tape so that the teachers can use them to learn and study. These are some of the things that should be included into the Education Act for improvement.

Your's Truly,


Steve Alookey
Mayor of Spence Bay.

