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February 9, 1998

Catherine McGregor
 Director, Baffin Divisional Board of Education
 Iqaluit, NT X0A 0H0

Dear Ms. McGregor,

As the permanent legal guardian of a special needs' student enrolled at Ulaajuk School in Pond Inlet, I am writing to you at the request of Ulaajuk's principal, Mel Parfy, to express my concerns about reductions in the funding for Classroom Support Assistants.

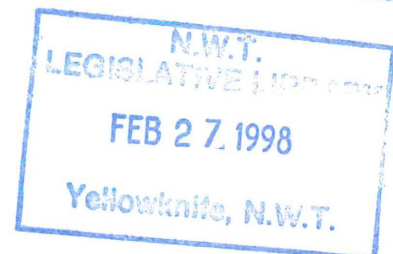
Our child's education is of paramount importance to us, and we feel that without a full-time CSA, she will not receive the extra attention she needs to achieve her full academic potential. Karen has Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, which can, as I am sure you are aware, cause serious deficits in cognition, judgment and attention. She is just one of many hundreds of NWT children tragically affected by parental alcohol abuse. Her disabilities were completely beyond her control, and have left her struggling to keep up with her classmates. She needs one-on-one attention for most of the school day if she is to make any progress at all in learning to read and understand basic math concepts. Although she takes special medication to increase her attentiveness, she is not yet capable of participating in the activities of her fully abled classmates for extended periods of time.

It is my understanding that funding for CSA's for special needs students like Karen's has been cut in half this year, which means that the one-on-one assistance she needs is only funded for half days. We feel this situation to be unacceptable, especially as CSA's receive little or no training, and the high rate of turnover among both CSA's and classroom teachers leaves Karen constantly struggling to adjust to the disruption in her school routine, as the new staff get to know her and her special needs. I think that *more* funding should be made available for special education, not less, as the need for staff training, support and materials is critical, and the relatively low wage paid to CSA's contributes to their high turnover. The staff at Karen's school are doing their best to design and carry out a special program for her, but, at the very least, they need funding for a full-time CSA if they are to achieve their programming goals.

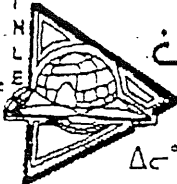
I hope that for Karen's sake, and for the sake of the many other FAS and FAE kids in Baffin schools, the BBDE will be able to increase CSA funding in the future, so that these students will have a chance to conquer their disabilities and receive the education they deserve.

Your sincerely,


 Helen Ferrigan



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Ulaajuk
School
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Date: Feb 11, 1998

To: Sherri Dubeau

From: Jernima Tongak

Number of pages being transmitted including this page: 4

Message: Good Morning!

Thank-you for the School Yr Calendar 98/99

The Petitions Im referring to are DEAs PR Campaign, they made up a resolution which if public supported it, they would sign it. Mel wanted to explain this to Lerne, so he may have spoken to him or will speak to him.

Letters from Joanna Nutarak & Tuggasie Killiktee re: PR Campaign.

Regards
JT

Charles Dren
Minister of Education
Yellowknife N.W.T.
X 1A 229.

Dear Sir,

As being classroom teacher in my own community. Years on I have taught more than 20 students in the class per year. And in each of the class I find more who will need individual help to catch up with rest of his/her peers. And in some ca there is a child in the class who will need total assistance through out the year because he/she is in level 1 stage. To provide proper help I will need CSA in my class, whole to. On the other hand I want to provide adqutit education for my students who are also in different learning stages. This system is an excellent practise for any school, w everyone in the class is provided with suppa.

If a teacher should lose CSA, I am sure the teacher in the class would be a nervous rect fearing her/his delayed student may hurt her him/self or someone because the delayed child has no one to guide her/him with her. Many teachers want to be a productive teachers. Only this will work if support body givers are in the class delivering proper education to our special needs children, where she/he needs to be in a normal envorun.

We sure will select certain students if G.S.As are not to be hired for a full day.

Our firm believe is to provide equal education to all our students. I sure hope Minister of Education is in with us, educators and parents in our positive out look on education I am one who do not want to be promoting negative model to our future builders.

Yes cut backs are our stress we have to Teachers are just human beings, just like any other people. Cut backs on teachers also cut back on teaching supplies, cut back on sick leave, cut back on staffs! What more can we take?

We are now experincing and crisis in hiring better qualefied teachers as it is High cost of living is real in Nunavut. Cut bac are not going to help better our education syst

Some of us are drained out and losing our energy and be motivated to teach properly.

I urge your response to this very important manner

Your employee
Joanna Nutaraa

C.C - B.D B.E & D.E.A.

- Hamlet Council of Pond Inlet,

- News North.

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Tuqqasie Killiktee
P.O. Box 54,
Pond Inlet, NT.
XOA OSO

Feb 06, 1998

Dear honourable Charles:

I am writing to you on behalf of my job and myself as a parent. I have been teaching for almost 15 years now. My understanding is I think my teaching job should be easier as I get more and more experienced. But years go by and somehow it is getting more and more frustrating for the children I teach, because they are not getting the kind of attention that they need. Education authorities are telling us to mainstream, and yet it can't seem to go to the right direction. Each year seem to be getting more stressful due to lack of Inuktitut materials and lack of support. We Inuit are expected to teach in our mother tongue. We have plenty of Language but, due to lack of materials to teach children the right way that we are expected to do by the parents. It seems that we are going to different direction that parents expect us to do. As an Inuk and as a parent, I am expected to learn how to make traditional clothing. At the same time teach my children how to survive in the Arctic. But I never have time to do all those stuff. I only spend time trying to prepare for tomorrow's lesson. Piles and piles of unfinished business are at my home and at my classroom. I am never late for my work, spend my weekend at the school when I am supposed to be with my children teaching them but ends never seem to meet. When we graduate we are expected to be role models for the children. Volunteer for this and that. I can never understand myself nowadays.

For your expertise I need suggestions from you and how else I can try to work things out for myself and my job.

c.c. D.E.A.

Hamlet of Pond Inlet.

For 64 P. Inlet

District Education Authority
Pond Inlet, NT X0A 0S0

February 6, 1998

Charles Dent
Minister of Education
Department of Education
Government of the NWT
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Dent,

Re: Funding Cutbacks by Department of Education

I'm writing to you as chairperson of the District Education Authority in Pond Inlet in regards to the seemingly, never ending funding cutbacks by the Department of Education. As the District Education Authority in Pond Inlet, we have a responsibility to the parents of Pond Inlet to provide 'quality' programs in our schools. We were under the assumption that the Department of Education had a similar obligation to the parents of Pond Inlet as well, but with the funding cuts that have been occurring in our schools over the past couple of years, that certainly doesn't appear to be the case. We've outlined our main concerns below:

Student Enrollment

This year, we can project an increase of anywhere from 34 to 39 students over our current enrollment in Pond Inlet. A couple of years ago, using the 16:1 ratio for high school and the 19:1 ratio for elementary, we could project the increase in the number of teachers. Last year, the Baffin Divisional Education Council (BDEC) informed us that a 'table' was used to calculate the number of teaching positions in our region. While we never did get to see the actual table, we certainly did get to see the results. The so-

called table proved to be a deliberate ruse by the GNWT to increase class sizes across the NWT. If this wasn't bad enough, this year, the GNWT has apparently become even more bold. We've been advised by the BDEC not to anticipate any increase in teacher allocation, regardless of our projected enrollment increase. To put it simply, we were informed that the Department of Education has 'no more money.' Does this mean that this year, schools can anticipate class sizes of anywhere from 30 to 35 students? Does this mean that next year, we should anticipate class sizes of 50 students? Where does it all end? Do we have a right to be concerned about increasing violence in schools?

Special Needs

At present, we have 5.5 level one students and 26 level two students. Under the current formula, we're allocated a total of 5.25 classroom support assistant (csa) positions to meet the needs of those students. The current level of funding by the department for special needs is a joke. Level one students which used to be funded with full-time positions are now funded with half-time positions. Even though they have made incredible progress, the majority of our level one students are still unable to function in the classroom independently. In fact, it is because of the full-time support that they have had in the past and the dedication of the classroom teachers that they have been able to make such gains. To suggest that any teacher can teach the students in question plus a full class with no support for half a day borders on the absurd. First and foremost there is the issue of 'safety.' This has all the potential for a rather interesting lawsuit at some point down the road. Secondly, what about the 'education' factor. The GNWT needs to address the issue as to whether or not our teachers are educators or babysitters?

With respect to level two students, even though they may not be as disruptive or have the same degree of physical disabilities that are indicative of many of our level one students, they are no less needy. The current funding for level two students works out to approximately 10 minutes per student per day. Can anyone truly believe that this level of support is sufficient to enable a student to catch up two or three grade levels?

With the current lack of funding for special needs students provided by the Department of Education, we feel that many of these students are doomed to be future school drop-outs as students and financial burdens on society as adults. Unfortunately, the full extent of the GNWT's refusal to live up to their commitments in this area will not be felt for years down the road. What will be the future impact on Social Services, the RCMP, and/or the Department of Corrections? Where are the savings here?

On a positive note, when there is support, the sky is the limit! Last year one of our level one students, unable to walk or communicate, literally crawled into school on opening day. This year, on opening day, she met the principal at the front door with a big smile on her face, stopped briefly to 'sign' his name and proceeded to 'walk' to her classroom with her classmates who by the way, can 'sign' better than most adults in Pond Inlet. We can do the job, but we must have the support!

Casual Funding

Presently, the BDEC is underfunded from the GNWT by approximately \$450,000 in casual funding. The NWTTA and PSA collective agreements indicate that school staff are entitled to sick leave, special leave and other types of leave throughout the year. Schools have no control over when staff or children are sick and sometimes this represents a significant drain on school budgets. The NWTTA has advised staff that "covering off" classes is not an option that is permitted. Almost every school in the Baffin region experienced a deficit in this area last year. This deficit is expected to be covered off by other areas such as school program dollars. This means that there is less money for library books, student textbooks, computers, paper, pencils, etc.

The GNWT needs to reassess their formula for allocating casual funding to boards. The GNWT appears to fund on a 'vacancy rate' that you 'can afford,' similar to what is used in businesses. For example in a business, you don't have to replace certain office workers and/or managers if they are out for a day or so. It becomes painfully obvious that this formula doesn't quite work for schools. We don't have the luxury of not replacing teachers, or do we? Are we expected to send the students home when the teacher is sick?

Lack of Inuktitut Materials/Resources

Five or six years ago, the BDEC assumed a lead role in the publication of Inuktitut books and materials. Those were the days when boards received quarterly funding from the GNWT and were able to use the 'interest revenue' to address this area along with other areas such as special needs that appeared to fall between the cracks. The fact remains that while there are literally millions of books for our children to read in English, there remains very few in Inuktitut. Reading is the foundation of most educational programs throughout the world. We are currently running a K-3 program in Inuktitut. Even though curricula development is a departmental responsibility, this curricula was developed by the BDEC at their own expense. This is funding that had to be taken away from other areas. We realize that the BDEC is given a budget for program development via the Teaching and Learning Centre. However, we are also well aware that there is not even close to enough funding being provided by the Department of Education for this extremely important area.

Our teachers are doing the very best they can to teach our children in their native tongue with limited materials and resources. In a couple of years, when our teachers graduate from NTEP, we will have the human resources necessary to teach a K-6 program in Inuktitut, but what about the materials? How far can we stretch those already limited resources? At the high school level, local language specialists are expected to teach high school level courses without the benefit of a curriculum or program guides. Dispensing with quarterly funding, no more than a simple 'money grab' by the GNWT, relieved the BDEC of the 'interest revenue' and consequently, the financial resources necessary to continue the publication of Inuktitut resource materials. Continued budgetary cuts to education in the ensuing years, further reduced

the BDEC's spending power to the deplorable state that we find ourselves in today! Who will assume the responsibility for the publication of resource materials in Inuktitut?

Teacher Benefits/Cost of Living

We're pleased that over half of our teaching staff in Pond Inlet is aboriginal. They are bilingual, and having been born and raised in the NWT, have a strong background in our local culture, a real asset in teaching northern students. After having lobbied for a Teacher Education Program in Pond Inlet for the past couple of years, this year, we finally realized our goal. We currently have 16 future teachers enrolled in Pond Inlet NTEP. On the surface, the educational future for Pond Inlet looks bright.

However, given the increase in rents, the loss of VTAs and the general erosion in spending power of our teachers that has occurred over the past number of years, we are fearful that we may lose some of our aboriginal teachers. Many are openly questioning whether it makes sense for them financially to teach in Pond Inlet. One of our recent NTEP graduates applied for income support only to learn that the difference between her continuing to teach and living on social assistance was a mere \$57 per month. Where is the incentive for her to teach? Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Agreement supposedly commits the GNWT to a minimum 85% Inuit work force in this community. While, we're currently nowhere near that level, the GNWT is actively recruiting people like her to become teachers, social workers, nurses, etc. Are they expected to work for nothing? We currently have 13 people enrolled in the Pond Inlet Teacher Education Program. Are they aware that, they too, will be expected to endure the pressures of teaching without any financial reward?

We are similarly concerned over our ability to attract teachers from southern Canada. Last year, our teacher recruitment team was extremely frustrated with the number of people who 'turned down' offers of teaching positions. In total, we had 13 people reject offers of teaching positions in Pond Inlet. For most of the teachers, it proved to be just too expensive. Most teachers from the south, understandably, wish to visit their families for Xmas. The lack of a VTA and the high cost of travel from Pond Inlet to Montreal (\$3,217.51 per person), was a determining factor for many applicants. Many of the teachers that we interviewed were currently teaching on reserves in the northern provinces. Having had experience teaching in a cross-cultural environment, we had several excellent interviews. There were four in particular, that had researched Pond Inlet and were eager to come here. It was frustrating for all of us on the interview team to learn that we didn't measure up financially. One of our principals who has been involved in interviewing teachers across the NWT for the past 12 years has stated that this past year was the worst, by far, that he has ever experienced.

We are concerned over our ability to compete for teachers with teaching experience who have other job options open to them. The majority of the teachers that we ended up hiring this year were fresh out of university with no teaching experience. They are new to teaching, new to the North, new to teaching in a cross cultural environment and

obviously have their work cut out for this year. They are putting a lot of effort and enthusiasm into their teaching this year and, as is generally the case with beginning teachers, they will become even better teachers, as they gain more experience in teaching in a cross-cultural situation. In the past, for beginning teachers, we could generally count on their second and third years in the NWT as being their most productive. However, they are already in debt as a result of student loans and when you consider the extremely high cost of travel and the current uncertainty in rent, this year's teachers (and not just our southern hires) are already exploring other options for next year.

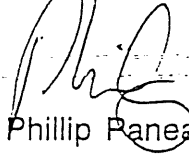
There was a time when teachers used to happily stay in Pond Inlet for more than one year. In fact, the majority of our current teachers have confirmed this, indicating that, if not for the financial hardships, they too would be looking at staying for an extended period. In the past, the NWTTA has criticized the BDEC for hiring so many 'term' as opposed to 'indeterminate' positions. Speaking from the point of view of someone who has been involved in the hiring process over the past couple of years, the reality is that, given the current financial implications of living in northern communities, why would anyone be willing to commit to more than one year at a time. Imagine if you will, a family of three, booking travel to Montreal for their summer vacation, only to be told that it will cost them in excess of \$9,000. When VTAs were included in the teachers contract, all communities across the NWT were on an equal footing. This is no longer the case, as communities further south and on the highway system hold a real advantage, with which, we as a community cannot compete. In Pond Inlet, one can only wonder if we will continue to be a revolving door for first year teachers, or if we will be eventually reduced to hiring warm bodies? After all, why do reference checks, when any 'body' will do?

Summary

To summarize, we are well aware of the fact that the the BDEC has been given a budget by the Department of Education to address the above areas. We are also well aware that the BDEC is drastically underfunded by the Department of Education in most if not all of these areas. In short, we believe that the BDEC is doing the best that it can with extremely limited resources. This is why, Mr. Dent, that we have addressed this letter to you and not to the BDEC.

As a DEA, are we wrong to be concerned about increases in class size? Are we wrong to be concerned about the lack of books, computers and materials in our schools? Are we wrong to be concerned about the lack of Inuktitut resource materials? Are we wrong to want quality teachers for our children? Are we wrong to be concerned about the lack of support for our special needs students? Are we wrong to be concerned about increasing violence in our schools? In short, are we wrong to be concerned about a government that is so committed to balancing the almighty budget that they've lost sight of the real future of the NWT - our children? Unlike the Department of Education, we, the Pond Inlet DEA, truly believe that "our children are our future."

Sincerely yours,



Phillip Paneak
Chairperson
Pond Inlet District Education Authority

cc: Simon Merkosak, Mayor, Hamlet of Pond Inlet
Cathy McGregor, Director, Baffin Divisional Education Council
Jack Anawak, Interim Nunavut Commissioner
Jose Kusugak, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Lazarus Arreak, Shadow Cabinet, QIA
Mark Evaluadjuk, MLA

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worried, sick, sad & stress

On behalf of N T E P graduate, I'm worried about ~~at~~ other students in N T E P programme. What and how will they pay their rent. They cost so much today.

Sometimes I get sick & sad about food on the table NOT ENOUGH MONEY FROM GOV'T. to support my family.

I got over load of stress now since I started teaching. I thought I will get every thing I wanted when I start working. But its NOT ITS OTHER WAY ROUND.

Dee Teacher of Pond Inlet.

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Handwritten signature

Peg Pardy
Program Support Teacher
Ulaajuk School
Pond Inlet

February 6, 1998

Honorable Charles Dent
Minister of Education
Department of Education
Government of the NWT
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Dent,

I am a Program Support Teacher at Ulaajuk School (Kindergarten - Grade Six) in Pond Inlet and I am very concerned with the funding cutbacks in Education in the Northwest Territories. While I am aware that other departments have also experienced funding cuts, I am asking you to please reconsider and give us the adequate funding the schools need to carry out the necessary programmes our Special Needs students need. Are these students not entitled to a quality education and life?

Daily, I am faced with the planning and modifying of individual programmes for our Special Needs students and not enough CSA support to implement them. Yet, we seem to have less and less money for CSAs with every passing year. We are constantly juggling, trying to get as much extra help as we can for our students. With the CSAs that we have been allotted this year, our level two and three students receive about 10 minutes of extra help a day. We feel that this is just not good enough. This is extremely frustrating for teachers, parents and students. With the increasing class sizes and more students entering our schools with greater needs, teachers are becoming overwhelmed, over worked and very frustrated. They know the success that their students can experience when the appropriate support is in place. However, we are not feeling enough of this success. Without the appropriate CSA support and smaller class sizes, we are unable to build the necessary foundation our students need in order to succeed and move through the school system.

Every student at Ulaajuk School, regardless of their needs, should have the opportunity to attend school everyday, the opportunity to learn and the opportunity to

succeed. For this to be a reality, we need more CSA support and we need smaller class sizes. Our students are our future. Please don't take that opportunity away from them. Surely our children are more important than a balanced budget!

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely yours,



Peg Parady

Program Support Teacher
Ulaajuk School
Pond Inlet

cc: Simon Merkosak, Mayor, Hamlet of Pond Inlet
Cathy McGregor, Director, Baffin Divisional Education Council
Jack Anawak, Interim Nunavut Commissioner
Jose Kusugak, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Lazarus Arreak, Shadow Cabinet, QIA
Mark Evaluadjuk, MLA

Takijualuk School
Pond Inlet, NT
X0A 0S0

February 6, 1998

Honourable Charles Dent:

I am the Program Support Teacher at Takijualuk High School in Pond Inlet. I am writing to you to express my concern with regards to the present levels of student support services that are available within the schools in the Baffin , citing our school as an example. Teachers within our schools are professionals who strive to help all students within their classes. However, with the increasing diversity of needs that are present within each classroom, the job of meeting these needs is becoming impossible without further support.

Present day classes consist of any or all of the following combinations of student make-up. Within classes there are students with severe learning disabilities, profound deafness, personality disorders , gross and fine motor challenges, visual / spatial difficulties and some with combinations of the aforementioned. Many students are being diagnosed with or are revealing symptoms of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effects. Others have history of birth trauma resulting in brain damage due to oxygen deprivation. Life is most challenging for these students who to most appear fine but inside are struggling against a disability that they have no control over.

There are students who are experiencing social disruption to their lives , reacting in many forms such as violent anger outbursts within the class. Students who have been at outpost camps for many years are returning to school. This poses a challenge when a student has grade one ability and returns after six years away from school and is socially placed in a grade seven class with his/ her peers. Once again special attention is required.

The students with the most profound combination of the above mentioned characteristics , the students which are requiring level 1 support, are presently supplied with half day support. These students require individual assistance to meet their most basic of needs, as well as learning support. We have been forced to place two students with profound needs within the same classroom with one CSA so they could have full day assistance . Meeting their needs is an impossible task and they do lose out however this is the best option we have at present. They both require full time support if their educational needs, as well as the needs for the rest of the class, are to be met.

In the past, both of these students had individual full time support and the advances in their learning and development was exciting and encouraging. A profoundly deaf student learned how to use sign as a means of communication, began reading and writing and developing life skills to prepare her for a brighter more productive future. The system does work when it is in place.

We presently have three level one students and thirteen level two students who all have needs that require extra support. These numbers reflect students presently identified and we are identifying more all the time. There are students presently undergoing assessment who have been recommended for placement on Individual Education Programs. As well, there are many more students that can not succeed within the regular programs for social / emotional problems together with learning disabilities that need to be addressed through modified programs , all which require

additional support.

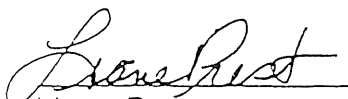
With the number of students with special needs increasing within the classrooms together with lack of adequate support, the demand on the teacher's time to attend to their needs reduces the time the teacher has to spend with the rest of the class. This affects the support the class receives as a whole. This often perpetrates frustration with the students at times resulting in behaviour difficulties which requires further attention and a vicious cycle of frustration begins for everyone. With level one and level two students supplied with adequate support, everyone would benefit as all the students in the class would gain by receiving appropriate assistance thus making it possible for more students to achieve success.

At present we only receive funding /support for the level one (half a day per student) and level two (1 1/2 hours for every eight students which works out to eleven minutes each per day per student). Based on the students presently identified our school is supplied with 1.75 positions for extra support. Scheduling these CSA's into the classrooms with the greatest needs is an impossible job. We are all aware of the need for support that each teacher requires. However, when the funding for this support is not there to provide to classrooms, it is the students who lose the most. This has forced us to double up students with higher needs together in classes with level two students. Where we are trying to aim for integration of students with special needs, the inclusive school model appears to be proceeding in a backward direction. Should the students with special needs be evenly spread throughout the school population, which would best integrate them, it would be impossible to schedule our present student support time between them. Some support is better than none so we have been forced to group students in such a manner.

I cannot help but feel the frustration of the educators who are experiencing increasing difficulties in providing the support required for all students in their classes and for the students and parents who experience difficulty obtaining the support required for their child to succeed. Even though teachers, administrators, parents and students remain as supportive as possible toward each other, realising that everyone involved is trying their best with what they have, the present levels of frustration and stress are increasing daily. Every teacher's goal is to see their students succeed. Every parent wants the best for their children so they can reach their potential and every student has a desire to succeed. We need the financial support necessary to help students find their way to a successful future. This must be seen as a priority. We are losing too many students that ultimately could be helped to experience success if sufficient funding for "inclusive schooling" was available.

On behalf of our staff I am asking you, as an advocate for all students, to reassess the funding that is provided by the GNWT to schools for support services.

Yours sincerely,



Liane Prest
Program Support Teacher

February 5, 1998

D. Jochebed Ootoova
Pond Inlet, NT
XOA OSO

To:
Minister of Education

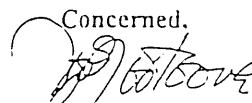
I am writing concerning Special Needs Assistance-s financial difficulties due to cut-backs to which I myself have had experience as an Inuktitut teacher, Classroom assistant and a Special Needs Assistant for so many years on and off .

I know all students at school are different from each other, there are some that are too slow to learn although the other students in class are the same age as them, and to some they can't straight away understand what is being taught although can work but tend to get behind school work and have hard time trying to catch up with others and some need one to one instructions, there are still some others that can work with groups which really need to catch up on work and need help. With all the cut-backs that have been going around, it is getting hard for us parents as well as we try to help our children in school with their work, it must be harder for the teachers to work so much in order to teach the children with some students that need one to one instructions.

As I had taught before, the last I was a Special Needs Assistant was from Sept. 1996 to Feb. 1997 to which I had never ending job since I was assisting the teachers with their students and teaching them on one to one basis to which I found out that it really was a great support to the teachers. As I had to move to another employment due to financial difficulties I was experiencing as an Special Needs Assistant due to cut backs.

Therefore I as a parent would like the Special Needs Assistants to get more support financially to which is best for students who are slow in learning or who are retarded and for the teachers to which they would find it much easier to teach.

C.C.
Hamlet Office
Housing Association
Elders' group
Social Services
Health & Social Services Committee

Concerned,

D.J.N. Ootoova

*physically challenged

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Julia Kallou

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P.O. Box 287
Pond Inlet, NT
X0A-0S0

February 6, 1998

Honorable Charles Dent
Minister of Education
Yellowknife, NT

Dear Mr. Dent ,

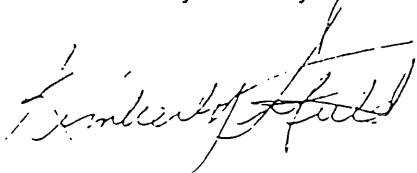
I am writing to you concerning the recent cutbacks your government has allotted to the education system here on Baffin Island. I realize that these are times of debt reduction and tough financial restraints. However, I do believe that the present cuts are to the detriment of the students.

As a teacher in a grade four first year English immersion class the past cuts have already affected the quality of education my students have received so far this year. First of all, I have several students in my class who require CSA support. Because they are not classified as level one students they do not qualify to receive the extra support they need. Furthermore, having a class with students who speak mostly Inuktitut and no interpreter to aid with instruction, these children are having an even more difficult time adjusting to the transition. The entire burden for this problem is placed on the classroom teacher and the administration of the school. Without sufficient funds our hands are tied to provide adequate solutions for this problem. We need more funding for CSA supports in our classroom.

Not only have our classroom been hit hard but we ourselves as teachers have had to deal with major cuts in our recent contract. My household has two income earners, myself and my husband whose paycheck is less than half of what I bring home. In contemplating whether or not to return to Pond Inlet many issues arise. The first being the cost of housing, the second being the cost of food and the third being the rising cost of air travel. In September we will need a two- three bedroom house for our baby. This we are told with the rent increase will cost approximately \$1800 a month. Then if you factor into this the cost of daycare, saving for a ticket and an extra mouth to feed it leaves one with very little money, if any, for the extra's at the end of the month. As a result I may not be able to continue employment here next year.

Finally, there is the issue of casual support. It is totally illogical to expect that a teacher not become sick throughout the course of a school year. It is also absurd to expect teachers to cover for one another when someone is out. I agree that sometimes sick leave is abused but that is rarely the case. The only alternative solution to providing sufficient funds is to send the children of a sick teacher home. That in turn means that the children are getting an insufficient education.

Thank-you for your consideration of the issues presented in this letter.



To The Minister of Education,

I am writing regarding budget cuts in education. I am a grade 4 teacher in the Baffin region. The school in which I teach has undergone drastic cuts that threaten the welfare of its students and teachers.

One issue is the reduced funding of CSAs in our school. We have four students who require constant support from a teacher assistant. Without their help it is impossible to provide a proper program for that individual student or the rest of the class. I know this first hand because I have a 10 year old Fetal Alcohol Syndrome student in my class. Without help in the classroom, I would not get very much accomplished. I agree with the integration of these children in the school system, but support is needed for integration to succeed. I personally have this support because my school, seeing its importance, has taken funding from other areas such as school supplies and student academic support which has its own disadvantages. I think that it is shocking that the schools have to bear the burden of supporting such an important area of proper education.

Another issue deals with the cuts in casual support. How can a teacher provide adequate teaching if they are expected to teach even when they are ill. This would be detrimental to their teaching and the students health. If a school is forced to dip into other school funds in order to give their teachers necessary sick days, then how will those areas be restored.

Finally there is the issue of salaries staying the same while living cost goes up and benefits are being cut. It is bad enough that 45% of our check is taken with taxes and insurances, but we also have to put up with rent increases by 65% and the extreme cost of living in the North. Living so far North away from friends and family is one thing; there is also the disadvantage of having our VTAs (Vacation Travel Allowance) taken away. We can not afford to go home for holidays with the cost of flying in the North being so high and rising. My husband and I also have the burden of paying off a large University loan which is why we accepted this job under such poor conditions. It will be harder and harder to entice teachers to leave their homes in order to go up North to teach. These students deserve good teachers, proper school programs and support. I appreciate your consideration of this letter and hope that something can be done to improve the quality of education in the North.

Lynette Cole

To the Minister of Education:

I am writing regarding cuts that have impacted our educational system in the North. I am currently teaching in the Baffin region and have witnessed firsthand the effects of losing valuable educational programs. It is essential that all children of the North receive a quality education to insure a successful future. I believe that the cuts that have been initiated and proposed will alleviate the quality of education to our schools.

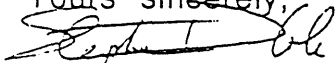
The first area of concern is the issue of reduction to the CSA program. Currently we have two levels of students in our school who require assistance: level I students are those who are unable to work independently and require student assistance; level II students are those who are academically challenged and need the help to arrive at the academic level of the other students. Since this is an English as a second language class it is essential that these level II children be provided the help they need. Instead money has had to have been taken from these level II students to provide full time assistance to the level I students.

The second issue is that of taking money from casual support. In this instance I cannot stay home when I am sick because the money is not there to pay a substitute teacher. Therefore, by going to school when I am sick I am risking the health of myself and my students. This will have a detrimental effect on the education of my students.

The third issue is the lack of a pay increase in over six years while the cost of living continues to rise tremendously. We are faced with the removal of 45 percent of our salaries every pay cheque, a 65 per cent rent increase, the high cost of food and supplies, and a large student loan of \$30 000 (which was necessary to get an education to teach). On top of all this our VTAs (Vacation Travel Allowance) are taken away, resulting in having to pay upwards of \$3000 to fly home this summer. If you are interested in the education of Canada's children then something has to be done about these and other issues. Teachers will not be willing to go into a position where they are working primarily for the privilege of teaching. It will get more and more difficult to get teachers to come to the north.

Thank you for considering my letter and I hope something can be done to improve the standard of education; the future of our children are at stake.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen D. Cole". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S".

Stephen D. Cole

Tuqqasie Killiktee
P.O. Box 54,
Pond Inlet, NT.
XOA OSO

Feb 06, 1998

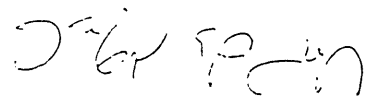
Dear honourable Charles:

I am writing to you on behalf of my job and myself as a parent. I have been teaching for almost 15 years now. My understanding is I think my teaching job should be easier as I get more and more experienced. But years go by and somehow it is getting more and more frustrating; for the children I teach, because they are not getting the kind of attention that they need. Education authorities are telling us to mainstream, and yet it can't seem to go to the right direction. Each year seem to be getting more stressful due to lack of Inuktitut materials and lack of support. We Inuit are expected to teach in our mother tongue. We have plenty of Language but, due to lack of materials to teach children the right way that we are expected to do by the parents. It seems that we are going to different direction that parents expect us to do. As an Inuk and as a parent, I am expected to learn how to make traditional clothing. At the same time teach my children how to survive in the Arctic. But I never have time to do all those stuff. I only spend time trying to prepare for tomorrow's lesson. Piles and piles of unfinished business are at my home and at my classroom. I am never late for my work, spend my weekend at the school when I am supposed to be with my children teaching them but ends never seem to meet. When we graduate we are expected to be role models for the children. Volunteer for this and that. I can never understand myself nowadays.

For your expertise I need suggestions from you and how else I can try to work things out for myself and my job.

c.c. D.E.A.

Hamlet of Pond Inlet



Minister of Education
Charles Dent

I am writing this letter to inform you that recent contractual changes (ie salary cuts and loss of V.T.A.) along with changes in housing have put our family in financial jeopardy. Are you aware that the salary, cost of living, air fare, rent formula is giving many NWT teachers a standard of living close to the poverty line. There are many people on social assistance with more disposable income than ourselves.

Also the recent cuts to the "casual budget" and C.S.A. positions are playing havoc with our ability to do our jobs. We have special needs students currently receiving no support. We are currently losing badly needed school supplies from casual budget over runs.

Could you teach a variety of children with unique needs in an empty room?

As teachers we enjoy the chance to make a positive impact and make a difference. We invite you to do the same.

Keith + Julie Oliver
Teachers at Ulaajuk School
Dond Inlet NWT
XOA OSO

District Education Authority
Pond Inlet, NT



RESOLUTION

Whereas; the communities in the NWT are experiencing difficulties in respect to the school operations due to funding cut backs.

Whereas; the schools are faced with more students but no teachers especially for the special needs students, level one and two and three.

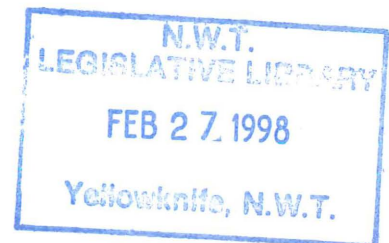
Whereas; the schools are faced with no funding or minimal funding for Inuktitut curriculum and programs. While the parents expect and have urged the D.E.A.'s for more and quality programs.

Whereas; the D.E.A.'s are faced with shortage of funding due to resulting from lack of casual funds employees.

Whereas; the communities are experiencing difficulties in placing and attaching experienced and quality teachers due to the state of employee benefits and resulting from the Gov't's initiatives on budget cut backs, and due to the high cost of living in eastern Arctic, High Arctic in particular.

Therefore; be it resolve that the Gov't of NWT be lobbied and approached vigorously to readdress the issues of:

1. to live up to their commitments for special needs funding as outlined in the special needs directive.
2. to provide sufficient funding for the development and publication of Inuqatigiit programming.
3. to readdress Gov't formula used to allocate casual funds to schools.
4. to readdress the issue of employee benefits, including base salary, vta's, and other allowances.



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Resolution:
Public Relations Campaign 1998

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ՎՊՐՎՐՈ:
ՃԱՎԸՆՋՐԴԵՆ ԿՊՐՈՐԾՆԵՐ 1998

ԵՎ ԲՅՆԻՍ

Scott Finkle
Baronett Road

Brendy Kanayan
John's Street

Joshua Enckel

Shah Karam

Alton

MATHEW AND MARY

W

James H. Hagg

Baranick

ESNAK QIGUNIK

David Anwick

Rose Invarag

Lyka Alacac

Rich Alados

Seena Arzomacik

W

Maria Muchkin

W

W

THOMAS KUBIK

W

W

W

W

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ՀԻՄՆԱԿՆԵՐԻ ԿՐԹՈՑՄԵՆ 1998

Rebecca Kullitta

Nancy Smith

Les Pandey

Neil Ayala

ՀՈՒՆ ԵՂ

ՀՈՒՆ ԵՂ

~~Steph Dole~~

Jessie Costello

Alfred Pandey

~~Joanna Whitcomb~~

Elizabeth Cole

Արմեն

Հ. Մ. Օլսոն

Jessie Oleson

~~Kimberly Spalding~~

Jessie Oleson

Elizabeth Cole

Մարիա Գրիգորյան

Մարիա Գրիգորյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

Մարիա Գրիգորյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

Արմեն Կոչարյան

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ΔΨΡΑΡΠΠ:
ΔΨΔΕΨΥΡΓΟ ΚΨΡΨΝΟΨ 1998

~~C. NOTARAK~~
A.P. LC
Joseph M...
B.L.C. 537
C...
id... PC...
H.P.A. PC...
William A...
Leah Sheatic
K...
A...
K...
D...
Paul H...
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L...
Shaun Burke
S...
M...
M...
C...
C...
C...

MASY MUCKTAY
Mathew Kautainuk
Norman Inoetik
Sam N...
D...
I...
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K...
D...
Mike...
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M...
E...
L...
JUST INK...
JORDAN KYAK
Ashley...
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