

Ilisaijinnngulauqtut (They became teachers): A Discussion of Inuit Teacher Education Opportunities Within Inuit Nunangat

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Abstract: *Initial teacher education in Canada involves both education and certification. While teaching is designed by post-secondary institutions, certification falls under the jurisdiction of provinces and territories. Within Inuit Nunangat the intersection of both is guided by land claims agreements, which vary across the region. We establish a baseline for ongoing discussions of Inuit teacher education opportunities for growth. We also adopt Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) as a framework for unifying discussions across the regions, and through this, highlight innovations in teacher education within each of the regions in relation to the history of program development and student experience. In addition, regionally specific challenges with teacher education alongside shared challenges impacting recruitment, retention, and professional progression of teachers are discussed. Finally in our concluding thoughts, we explore the tensions between intentions and realities of becoming teacher for Inuit who wish to complete their initial teacher education at home.*

Introduction

The aim of this article is to encourage greater dialogue around the opportunities and challenges of Inuit teacher education, recruitment, and development in Canada. This article has been organized in a traditional research paper format and begins with a brief background describing the issues of jurisdictional governance and control of schools and how this impacts teacher education and certification processes which have together contributed to the shortage of qualified Inuit educators in schools. Next, using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) as the theoretical framework, we conduct an interjurisdictional scan of Inuit-centric teacher education through an analysis of public documents related to teacher education within each of the four regions of Inuit Nunangat (the traditional territory of the Inuit in Canada comprising Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsivut). The objective of the analysis is not to compare programs nor to evaluate their effectiveness, but rather to describe current programs and pathways for teacher education located within Inuit Nunangat. We also want to share what is known and practiced within Inuit teacher education programs about supporting Inuit

values and pedagogy from each of the regional perspectives. However, in describing what is presented in public documents, we found the story of “becoming a teacher” was incomplete. Therefore, for each region we add personal stories and descriptions of experiences of teacher education from the Inuit authors, to provide a richer conversation between the prescribed pathway as outlined by educational institutions and the lived experiences of those for whom the programs are designed.

We acknowledge that although we sought to describe shared strategies as well as known practices in a comprehensive overview, each region is unique, therefore approaches and strategies that work in one context might not be applicable in another. For this reason, we do not close the article with a typical conclusions, recommendations, or implications, but rather our reflections and questions about what is next in the development of Inuit teacher education that can attract more aspiring Inuit youth into teaching as a profession and better support those already in schools in their ongoing career development.

Background and literature review

Canada does not have a national approach to teacher certification, rather, each province/territory is responsible for determining the criteria and process for attaining a professional license. This provincial jurisdiction predates confederation and is part of the fabric of ensuring a distinct educational experience tied to the specific needs, context, and culture of each region. Within the provinces of “Southern Canada” the teacher certification process is monitored by the relevant provincial Ministry of Education and in British Columbia and Ontario through Teachers’ Councils in whom the provincial government has invested responsibility for accreditation. Over time, agreements have been developed to certify and accept educators across provincial boundaries. Though this process is not always streamlined, it is relatively easy, for example, for a teacher trained and certified in British Columbia to gain a licence to teach in Newfoundland and vice versa. However, the same cannot be said for prospective educators within Inuit Nunangat who have obtained their teacher certification through community based/territorial programs. One of the critical differences between certification in the “South” contrasted to certification within the regions of Inuit Nunangat is the autonomy exerted by the local government on education. Unlike First Nations, where the federal responsibility for education is clearly defined in the Indian Act (1876) and further refined by treaties, many of which also predate confederation, Inuit and funding for Inuit education was largely ignored by the Federal government until the 1950s. The assertion of federal control of Indigenous education has been and arguably continues to be a systemic mechanism of assimilation, and has led to the disastrous impacts of residential and federal day schools. Ironically, the lack of any formalized agreement for Inuit, regardless of the obvious damage done by such agreements, also left communities of Inuit Nunangat unable to hold the federal government accountable for funding or supporting Inuit-led public education. It wasn’t until Inuit entered into formal land claims agreements (1975 to 2005) that they had access to the legal tools to negotiate the restoration of control of education to Inuit. However, these agreements were signed with concessions and at cost to Inuit autonomy.

The earliest Inuit land claim agreement, established in 1975 (James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement) resulted in the federal recognition of Nunavik as a regional government and the transfer of control of K–12 education, including funding models somewhat parallel to those of the province of Quebec. However, *Kativik Ilisarniirniq*, the division of the regional government responsible for education including teacher training, to this day must still answer to the Ministry of Education of Quebec. The subsequent Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984) and the Nunavut Land Claims agreement (1993) are similar in that although authority is transferred through a bilateral treaty agreement, the respective territories are not fully granted

the same autonomous authority over education as the provinces of Canada. Even the most recent Labrador Inuit Land Claims agreement (2005) which made great strides in recognizing the region's right to fully control K–12 education within Nunatsiavut, did not permit jurisdiction over post-secondary education and teachers specifically must hold a valid provincial (i.e., Newfoundland and Labrador) teaching certificate (clause 17.12.13. b). Lack of autonomy over teacher education and the teacher certification process leaves all four regions beholden to their associated provinces for teacher certification, or, when no provincial association exists such as in Nunavut, with a teacher certification process not recognized outside of the region.

The end result is that regional teacher education programs must partner with “southern” post secondary institutions if they wish to offer their students a recognized qualification. But these partnerships and accompanying accreditation processes have been challenging as programs attempt to meet the goals of two separate authorities: the regional, Inuit specific body as well as the “southern” provincial accreditation. The longest currently operating partnership is between McGill University and Kativik Iisarniliriniq, which has resulted in the creation of a Certificate in Education First Nations and Inuit Studies which qualifies graduates to work as teachers in the jurisdiction of Nunavik only. Graduates of the certificate program can continue their studies towards a Bachelor of Education First Nations and Inuit Studies that allows candidates to achieve teacher certification in the province of Quebec for Kindergarten/Elementary teaching. One of the most recent is the Inuit Bachelor of Education program developed as a partnership between Memorial University and the Nunatsiavut government, which operated for only one cohort of pre-service teachers in Nunatsiavut in 2019. Meanwhile, both Inuvialuit and Nunavut, with a shared past of regional teacher education and separation, are in a period of rebuilding as they work with (re)newed partnerships towards building nationally recognized teacher certification programs.

A brief overview of the current status of the key teacher education programs in each region, their historical development as well as a summary of the published pathway for teacher recruitment, training and professional progression will be discussed in the next section. However, it is critical to note that despite more than more than 50 years of negotiation, program development, and a range of programs being offered, there remains a critical shortage of qualified Inuit educators in schools across all regions of Inuit Nunangat. Jurisdictional control and the impact of paternalistic federal government policy is certainly one of the underlying systemic factors contributing to this imbalance. Local control of education has been a cornerstone in the development of Canadian identity, preparing teachers for highly contextualized local education prior to the inception of the nation, yet as we continue to discuss the issue of teacher education within Inuit Nunangat it becomes clear Inuit youth are not able to fully receive this same privilege.

Composition of Inuit educators in schools

Though Inuit educators (teacher certified and/or educational assistants) may dominate the lower elementary (K–3) classes, as students progress they will find fewer and fewer certified Inuit teachers (Berger et al., 2019; Jacobs, 2016). As an example, in 2016 the composition of Inuit educators in Nunavut was 126 in contrast to a total 579 teachers in the territory, responsible for teaching 9,300 Inuit and 420 non-Inuit students (Eetoolook in Berger, 2016). These numbers can be viewed both positively and negatively. The focus of teacher education regionally has been on providing “certificates” of teaching which allow candidates to teach in elementary education within their northern jurisdiction, without the completion of a full Bachelors degree, potentially enabling more Inuit educators to enter the classroom faster. Within Inuit Nunangat, the claim can be made that teacher education is successful in providing Inuit educators for the earliest years of schooling, which are arguably

the most important in grounding children in culture and language. K–6 majority Inuit educators marks a significant change from education offered in the past 20 years. In fact, many of the current Inuit educators have likely not experienced very many Inuit teachers in their own K–12 education, so they are leading the way as role models. However, an alternate observation could be that educational offerings are establishing a dichotomy of haves and have-nots within schools.

First, predominantly female teachers are graduating from Inuit teacher education certificate programs and subsequently teaching at the elementary level, while male, mostly non-Inuit educators tend to be found more commonly in the high school, principal, and other educational leadership roles (Arnaq, 2008; Jacobs, 2016; Berger et al., 2019). This pattern of gender, power, and cultural division has been found to make some Inuit educators uncomfortable (Arnaq, 2008). Second, a collegial/professional gap is created because on the rare occasions Inuit teachers are teaching at the high school level, they might be entering with the elementary preparation certificate with allowances to teach only language and culture classes (Walton et al., 2014; Walton & O’Leary 2015, 2018). Third, evidence suggests that being the sole Inuit teacher or a significant minority within the school staff results in Inuit teachers being called upon to respond to “all things Inuit” within the school. This can create an extra responsibility associated with teaching that is frequently unrecognized, seldom acknowledged, and which can contribute to burn-out and teacher attrition (ITK, 2017). It was reported in 2017 that stress associated with the aforementioned challenges to Inuit educators resulted in Inuit teachers leaving the classroom at a faster rate than those graduating (Berger et al., 2019). Finally, the difference in certification between a certificate level and a Bachelors Degree level educator leads to disparities in pay, access to promotion, and transferability of qualification as most certificate level qualifications are valid only in the one jurisdiction and not, for example, transferable from Nunavut to Nunavik. Those with a certificate (overwhelmingly Inuit) are on a lower pay scales than those with a Bachelors degree (predominantly non-Inuit). This can contribute to tensions within the school between teaching staff, as one can well imagine, when two groups of people do parallel jobs at different pay rates with different benefits (e.g., subsidized housing is provided to non-Inuit teachers in most regions) based on inequitable access to teacher education.

Furthermore, the high turnover of non-Inuit teachers, based on, among other things, the difficulty in obtaining a permanent teaching contract, can lead to fatigue for Inuit educators who become the de facto welcoming and enculturation committee to a new batch of southern educators annually. Southern teachers, though arriving in Inuit Nunangat well intentioned and highly qualified (many holding Masters degrees) from southern teacher certification programs, do not necessarily have the cultural understanding to teach effectively in Inuit schools upon arrival, nor do they fully appreciate the role Inuit teachers play in schools and may directly or indirectly marginalize Inuit teachers (ITK, 2018).

Therefore from a systemic perspective, the process of becoming (and staying) a teacher within Inuit Nunangat is no easy task. Youth considering this pathway will have had few role models beyond elementary school, and will have observed their role models navigating a challenging work environment. They too as future teachers must navigate choices between staying in their community to obtain a teaching certificate, or leaving for an extended period (typically four years) to achieve a southern university-based Bachelor’s degree. Leaving home for education often means being deprived of the opportunity to learn from Inuit post-secondary educators how to teach in culturally responsive ways, and is counter to the way teacher education has been designed to reflect regional goals for education across the other provinces of Canada. While a teacher preparing to teach in Prince Edward Island would have been taught to work with PEI curriculum guides, had the opportunity to teach in PEI schools during practicum experiences, and be mentored into the PEI education

system by teachers working in the system, leaving home and returning to teach in Inuit Nunangat can mean new teachers must learn all of these things on their own while navigating their first year of teaching. They would be gaining a qualification in a context far removed from their own, which is in opposition to the fundamental intent of the distributed responsibility for education the Canadian system is built upon. Furthermore, the entire teacher education system of a southern university is founded on values, epistemology, and pedagogy that is reflective of the province of instruction, which likely does not align with the Inuit candidate's own education and values.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) is frequently translated from Inuktitut to mean “things which Inuit have always known” (GN, 2007). As is the case with “Indigenous ways of knowing” Qaujimajatuqangit is more than just a term. IQ encompasses a way of being and knowing in the world which reflects all aspects of traditional Inuit culture, including values, language, social organization, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Karetak et al., 2017). Within Nunavut an official framework was adopted in 2007 which forms the basis for all public education. The IQ Educational Framework for Nunavut Curriculum (2007) outlines a learning continuum, comprising four key curriculum strands: inuglugijaittuq (inclusion), atausiunnigittumut (language), ilitaunnikuliniriniq (dynamic assessment), and inunnguiniq (critical pedagogy). The following Inuit philosophies inform the eight principles of IQ:

- Inuuqatigiitsiarniq: showing respect and a caring attitude for others
- Tunnganarniq: building positive relationships by being welcoming and open in communications, and inclusive in the ways of interacting
- Piliriqatigiingniq: working together through collaboration for mutual benefits, reflecting a “we” rather than “me” centered purpose
- Pijitsirniq: making one's life purpose being of service to others
- Aajiqatigiingniq: decision-making through processes of consensus building based on listening to all voices of community
- Avatimik kamattiarniq: environmental stewardship respecting land, animals, water, and the environment
- Pilimmaksarniq: the process and values associated with skills and knowledge development through observation, practice, and mastery
- Qanuqtuurunnarniq: resourcefulness and problem solving, which has enabled Inuit to live in one of the harshest environments on the planet

These eight principles embody maligait (natural laws) that govern how one connects with other people: working for the common good, being respectful of all living things, maintaining harmony, and continually planning/preparing for a better future. They also reflect atuagat (cultural laws) that help govern daily activities, and piqujat (communal laws) which focus on the way one is expected to behave. Together the principles are expressed in values of aghokhimaktokhak (perseverance), oktokatahutik (practice), havaktigiyait (teamwork), havakatigiikot (cooperation), ataaningoktot (mastery), and tuhakatahtok (listening). IQ serves as the guide for the education system in Nunavut and is reflected throughout Inuit Nunangat in the values and ways of being and knowing in the world. Supporting learners to develop positive attitudes in these areas, towards creative, critical, innovative, and reflective thinking is considered the pathway to becoming inummarik, a genuine and contributing member of society.

With this Inuit-centered goal for education, and by extension the goal for teacher education, in mind, rather than a comparative program review, with this paper we set out to

learn the ways in which teacher education programs in operation across the four regions of Inuit Nunangat support Inuit educator development towards IQ goals, rather than southern metrics for success. In so doing we address the question: what is the current and recent landscape of teacher education across Inuit Nunangat?

Methodology

As part of an interjurisdictional scan of Inuit teacher education in Canada, the data collected for this paper was derived from a literature review of Inuit education and a document analysis (Conway et al., 2009; de Sola Pool, 2006) of publicly available sources relating to the design and offering of Inuit teacher education programs in Canada. Data collection encompassed all documents referencing Inuit teacher education programs design and delivery including public policy statements, governmental reports, university/college programmatic information, news reports, external evaluations, and academic research publications that could be found between January and August 2020. These were systematically gathered and organized in relation to the following aspects: program history, design, participant engagement, and evaluations, including critiques and recommendations. One of the critical limitations of this examination is that there are many gaps in the public record related to number of graduates and their progression into teaching. Another is the word limit of this paper as entire books could be written about teacher education in each region and our examination is presented as an overview. As a first step in clarifying the process, Inuit coauthors have shared their stories as examples of lived experiences around the process of becoming teacher in each of the regions. When possible, knowledgeable contacts were consulted to member-check researched material, add insights to interpretations, and fill gaps in the public documentation of programs. While much of the educational research in relation to Inuit teacher education evaluates how these programs “measure up” in comparison to southern teacher education (Assemblée Nationale Québec, 2018; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Education (RCAE), 1993) our analysis adopts an assets-based approach (Villalpando & Solórzano, 2005; Yosso, 2005) by shifting focus away from what is “missing” in Inuit teacher education to what teacher education programs within Inuit Nunangat have accomplished, and how they have been designed to serve the unique regional contexts where they are offered.

Teacher education within Inuit Nunangat

Travelling as the sun rises from east to west we describe teacher education in each of the four regions of Inuit Nunangat. The stage and development of the teacher education programming is intertwined with the length and nature of the regional land claims agreement and autonomy in self-government. Each region of Inuit Nunangat will begin with one of the author’s stories, how she became a teacher, and then discuss the current educator preparation in the region. Next, we present a brief history of teacher education in the region to provide some context illustrating the developmental progression of current offerings which are outlined in a table for each region. We then discuss what we discovered from the literature search and consultations with experts about the structure, language and cultural components, and highlights of the current offerings.

Becoming teacher in Nunatsiavut - Jodi’s story

In March of 2014, I heard that a teaching program was to be offered in my hometown of Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I was delighted to hear this information as I had recently returned home from St. John’s, Newfoundland after discontinuing my post-secondary education due to many factors, the main one being the distance, almost two thousand kilometers away from home. My family and I were struggling financially. I decided to get in contact with Nunatsiavut’s Educational Manager to find out the details. I had no idea what to

expect. I always had it in the back of my mind that I would love to become a teacher, but I did not think I was capable, nor did I have the support to help me figure out how to do so. Everything changed once I attended an information session about the Inuit Bachelor of Education (IBED). In this session I learned that the IBED program was going to be a partnership between the Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) and the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) and it was to be offered at the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. NG had all the required registration forms at the information session, and helped with the process of filling out an application. The first year of the program was deemed an upgrading/transition year called “First Year Success”. Similar to any university program I completed a combination of university courses (both CNA and MUN courses) that enabled me to meet the requirements to enter IBED in September 2015. In addition to completing the courses, I had to maintain a 65% average to gain entry. The most appealing aspect to this program for me was that not only would I finish the program with a certificate in Indigenous and Aboriginal studies and a Bachelor of Education (Bed) (primary/elementary) that was provincially certified, I would also be fortunate enough to learn Inuktitut throughout my entire program.

Nunatsiavut’s Inuktitut language is considered endangered. Within my family, we have lost most of our language. My grandparents as well as my father were forced to attend residential school where they lost their language. I grew up knowing very little of the language. When I started the IBED program I was ashamed when I had to complete the interview in Inuktitut to determine my language level. Throughout the IBED program, my classmates and I practiced the language approximately two hours daily, in addition to our credited university classes. We were taught by Inuit elders, which made the experience and our learning much more meaningful. My classmates also contributed to my learning as we became very close and practically family throughout the duration of our program. Many of my classmates are from the North coast of Labrador and grew up in communities where they were surrounded by people who were speakers and were taught Inuktitut in their K–12 school systems. It was with them that I began to learn not only our mother tongue but also more about who I am as a person. The program was challenging at times, but it helped having a room full of classmates who were on the same page, doing the same courses, balancing families and everyday life to help and support you when you needed it. We would often study and do assignments together. We would meet in our classroom, or the CNA library. I also spent a lot of time studying at home. Studying at home for me was easy, as I do not have any children and I live on my own with my partner. Our professors were just as supportive and encouraging but most of all understanding. We often talked about how as a small cohort we were able to develop relationships and become close in a way that might not have happened on a big university campus. Our professors were able to get to know us well, and together the learning flourished in every way possible.

The IBED program made me realize the importance of decolonizing our education systems. Throughout many of our courses I reflected on my own schooling experiences and how frequently things did not work for me while I was learning. I learned the importance of authentic teaching experiences for the fulfillment of the learner. The focus of our program was to think outside of the box and how we can take culturally relevant knowledge, information and teachings and use them as teachers in the future. Many of our instructors came from MUN and were not Inuit but they knew how important our culture and beliefs were and that our goal was to learn in such a way where we are able to confidently express ourselves fully.

Our professors encouraged us to learn about our culture further by examining significant times in history throughout the Nunatsiavut region. We learned parts of our history that have not been taught in our prior educational experiences. We learned about the

Moravian Missions arrival in Labrador, the impact it had on the Inuit throughout Nunatsiavut, as well as how they taught and learned from our ancestors. We learned about the Hudson Bay Company's posts that were stationed throughout our land, and about residential schooling that took place throughout Labrador. Through healing circles, we learned as students that we were all impacted by our history either directly or indirectly. One thing for certain was that as a class we had to learn about the past to learn about how we can make the future better. We spent a lot of time out on the land, in different activities such as dog sledding, ice fishing, gathering, learning from different professionals (including a botanist, who works with Elders in Northern Nunatsiavut to learn about traditional uses of plants), and learning from Elders and local knowledge keepers by listening to stories of how they grew up on the land and everything it had taught them. We would take in all the information we have learned, add in our knowledge, and think of ways in which we could incorporate these teachings in the classroom with our students. As a class we were able to learn/study the Newfoundland and Labrador Curriculum guides and create lesson plans infused with culture and traditions, while still meeting the provincial outcomes.

I officially finished the Inuit Bachelor of Education program in December 2018 and convocated in May of 2019. Since February of 2019 I have been teaching Grade 1 in an Indigenous community outside of Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I am about to take the next step in my learning journey and apply to start my masters.

Nunatsiavut government and the Inuit Bachelor of Education Degree (IBED)

Nunatsiavut is the most recent Inuit region to settle a land claim (2005), thus allowing the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) to exercise their right to control K–12 Inuit schools and education (Sandiford, 2018). However, up to the time of writing the NG has not fully exercised its educational autonomy for K-12 education because the government is strategically working to build capacity first. Regulation of teacher certification and training remains the responsibility of a partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador government and school board, and current legislation does not extend educational authority to teacher training to the GN due to restrictions on post-secondary educational governance. The original Teacher Education program in Labrador (TEPL), founded in 1978, was designed to support both Inuit and Innu candidates as teachers grounded in culture and language for Labrador, however it had limited success (Jong, 2007). TEPL was a 20-credit (two year) diploma program offered by Memorial University in Goose Bay of which four credits were designed for culturally specific teacher education. Courses within the diploma consisted of 14 foundational education courses, with the remaining six credits from academic areas such as linguistics and English (Sharpe, 1992). TEPL allowed Innu and Inuit educators to work in classrooms with predominantly Indigenous enrollment through a provincial certificate in “Native and Northern education” (Clark & Mackenzie, 1980). Educators, Inuit and Innu groups agreed the issues of TEPL were related to a shortage of language credit opportunities (only one specific language course was offered) and that the remaining three culture-based courses were situated in anthropology and history. There were also issues related to course scheduling and pre-requisites—inconsistent enrollment created a situation where candidates were admitted into courses that they were unable to be successful in because they had not completed the constituent prerequisite course/s. This was compounded by inconsistent offerings of courses with potentially long gaps between courses and criticism of instructional staff who were not familiar with the local context of Labrador and thus unable to offer contextualized educational training (Clark & Mackenzie, 1980; Jong, 2007). In 1987, a five-year Bachelor of Education in Native and Northern Education was approved for offer by Memorial University, which provided provincial teacher certification recognition beyond the

possibilities of TEPL (Sharpe, 1992). TEPL students could scaffold course credits into the Bachelor of Education in Native and Northern Education which operated out of Memorial University St. John's campus for 27 years and produced 33 Inuit/Innu graduates during that time (Jong, 2007). Memorial University, recognizing the need for a review of teacher education, commissioned the independent Jong (2007) report from which much of the information presented here was derived. Acting on the report and in partnership with the Nunatsiavut Government the university developed a new Inuit Bachelor of Education (IBED) program launched in 2015, which was a critical and timely response to the needs identified for culturally relevant, language-centered teacher education offered in community (Sandiford, 2018). The IBED program has a number of aims including: a parallel Inuktitut language program; encouraging pedagogies that incorporate a cultural lens; centering Inuit heritage, culture, language, and land in teaching and learning; referencing and using learning resources that reflect Inuit and Regional culture; and respecting Inuit students' prior knowledge and perspectives as integral to the teaching and learning process (Moore et. al., 2016).

Table 1***Pathways for Inuit Teacher Education in Nunatsiavut¹***

	Early Childhood Education Certificate or Diploma College of the North Atlantic	Teaching Diploma in Native and Northern Education MUN (T.E.P.L)	Language Specialist Certificate: Labrador Inuktitut Training Program (LITP)	Inuit B.Ed. MUN – Primary/ Elementary
Description	Certificate and diploma options to prepare candidates for early childhood education	Diploma preparing Inuit and Northern teachers in community. Discontinued in 2015	Pilot program paired with IBED, offered by the Nunatsiavut Government	Graduates are certified to teach primary and elementary
Duration	Diploma- 2 years Certificate- 1 year	3 years	Ran concurrently with IBED	3 years full time Plus preparatory year
Location	On Campus- Cornerbrook, Happy Valley- Goose Bay, Prince Phillip Drive, Port aux Basques Distance learning option part-time or full time.	In community	Goose Bay, Labrador Institute campus	Happy Valley- Goose Bay, Labrador Institute campus
Practicum	Diploma- 4 field placements Certificate- 2 field placements	-	-	2 field experiences
Credits	Diploma- Equivalent to 2 years study post-secondary level	60 credits, graduates qualified to teach language and culture courses only	-	150 credit hours plus 30 credit hours in preparatory year

¹ Information for this, and all summary tables in this document has been derived from public records of programs and where possible informed by stakeholders, program developers and/or students. They are accurate to the best of our knowledge but we acknowledge there may be errors or omissions. We welcome corrections.

	Certificate-Equivalent to 1 year study post-secondary level			
Accreditation and Transferability	Diploma-Eligibility for provincial Level II CCS Certification Diploma-Eligibility for provincial Level I CCS Certification	Could ladder into the B.Ed. at MUN campus	-	Fully certified B.Ed that can be transferred to any Canadian post secondary institution
Academic Pre-requisites for entry	High School graduation with an average of 60% in 9-level 3000 credits or equivalent OR Comprehensive Arts and Science transition OR Adult Basic Education level 3 graduation transition program	Open to Inuit with knowledge of language and culture	Entrance tied to IBED entrance	-60 credit hours in post-secondary -cumulative average of 65% or at least 65% on last attempted 30 credits hours

Within IBED, courses for students included introductory child development, teaching in the context of Labrador, and discipline-specific teaching. Further courses on exceptional learners, technology, and children’s literature in Indigenous contexts were offered along with a range of humanities courses. A cultural consultant connected IBED students with Elders and to land-based education ‘workshops’ (i.e., dog-sledding, ice fishing). Although faculty might have rotated in and out of Goose Bay for teaching, students remained there with the Academic Lead of IBED, who provided a consistent support and acted as a central contact. Graduates stated that IBED helped them focus on land, language, resources, and local knowledge as the key to culturally relevant education (Moore et al., 2016). Moore et al. (2016) also discussed how the challenges of supporting Inuit identity development and culturally responsive teaching with predominantly non-Indigenous instructors were addressed through co-learning and partnering with local Elders. The program offered a cohort model to support relationship building within the program: all pre-service educators started together, completed courses in the same sequence, and supported one another in a non-competitive environment (Tulloch & Moore, 2018).

Language development within the program and was addressed through a partnership pilot with the Labrador Inuktitut Training Program (LITP) to offer concurrent programming by Inuktitut Elders and speakers. As illustrated profoundly by Jodi’s story, the language component was identified as critical to participants’ success by supporting identity development, pride in language development, and intergenerational connections/relationship building with Elders. Unfortunately, potential candidate numbers from the small population of Nunatsiavut could not sustain the offering of the IBED for more than one cohort (yet).

IBED allowed graduates to obtain a Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Level 5 Teaching Certificate which is the standard certificate issued across the province for qualifying provincial two year post-degree education programs.

Becoming a teacher in Nunavik – Nancy’s story

In my last year of high school, I had big plans to become a dental hygienist. I had passed my CEGEP entry exam in the spring, so all the pieces were in place to begin my new life as a post-secondary student in Montreal. I was pretty certain about the future I had planned until I commenced my final work placement for my course. Our teacher had us choose potential careers we were interested in. On a whim, I chose my final work placement to be with the Kindergarten teacher—and that was when the magic happened. I absolutely fell in love with the little humans that were learning to read, write, and do math. Even watching their “peer connecting” behaviours gave me so much energy—it was like I was sprinkled with “magic teacher dust”.

The day after my graduation, I went to see the school principal and told him that I would like to be considered for the Teacher Training Program offered through the Kativik School Board. I cancelled my plans to become a dental hygienist and started on my path to becoming a teacher in the Fall of 1996.

The way the Teacher Training Program worked in our school board is that you were placed with a senior teacher in the school. In addition to attending academic training through McGill, I would have to shadow my senior teacher and slowly take on responsibilities in the classroom. I had the privilege of working with one of our most experienced Inuktitut teachers. I also started attending winter and summer teacher training sessions offered by McGill University. During the 1997-98 school year, I was asked to teach secondary Social Studies in French—it was a challenge that I embraced, along with the 50% kindergarten task.

Over the course of my career in education, I have been a Kindergarten teacher, student counsellor and vice-principal. Being the vice-principal is a role which I continue to enjoy immensely. As a school administrator, I can ensure the Inuit have a voice that is heard, and I can guarantee that Inuit values are respected.

I had the privilege of teaching a few courses with instructors from McGill to student counsellors and teachers. Despite teaching courses with McGill, I have still not completed my own Bachelor of Education degree. While I was still teaching, I had two courses left to complete, but time passed quickly and things changed when I became the vice-principal. I am loving my role as vice-principal, but I sometimes wonder if I should have continued to pursue my BEd.

The Teacher Training program is completed at various rates depending on the educators. Some trainees get through the program efficiently, but there are several challenges. One of the biggest challenges to completing the degree is our remote location. Trainees are expected to travel outside of their community for several weeks at a time to attend courses. Because many trainees already have families, leaving home for several weeks can be challenging. Because the internet in our region is very poor, online courses will not be an option until connectivity is improved. Another challenge is the lack of mental health options to overcome stress and burnout, which leads to a high turnover rate as people leave the profession. The final challenge is that teacher education programs are designed using methods from southern institutions because there is no post-secondary institution based in the Arctic and led by Inuit.

My daughter also caught a passion for education and decided to pursue her teaching degree through the western education system. It was a long seven years for her in Montreal. There were often struggles adapting to her new reality in the South, but she succeeded. She was recently hired to teach Grade 4 in our school, which makes me extremely proud. To

achieve what she did was an enormous accomplishment because she had to work hard to successfully live between two cultures.

Educating young people is a passion of mine. I am hoping more young Inuit become passionate about being educators in Nunavik. Ideally, I dream of a school where all the courses are taught by Inuit teachers. Achieving this dream may be a challenging task, but I hope we can someday get there.

Nunavik, Katavik Ilisarnirniq (KI) and the McGill B.Ed.

The Kativik School Board (KSB) was created in 1975 under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), and was the first Inuit-controlled school board in Canada (Vick-Westgate, 2002). The JBNQA agreement gave KSB responsibilities far beyond those allowed by individual school boards in the southern provinces, particularly the training of Inuit educators for their schools. Inuit teacher education in Nunavik is offered through two partnership teacher education programs: McGill University and Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT). KSB, renamed Kativik Ilisarniliriniq (KI), has partnered with McGill university since 1978 and is the longest running university partnership for teacher education. The UQAT teacher training program is smaller, offered only in two communities in Nunavik and does not lead to Quebec Ministry of Education teacher certification. Therefore we will focus this discussion on the McGill programming. The initial McGill partnership was designed to provide professional training and provincially recognized credentials to Inuit who were working as classroom assistants within the previously Federal/Provincially controlled schools (Vick-Westgate, 2002). The first graduates of the “Native and Northern Education” program became the teachers of subsequent students with the goal of Inuit leadership and increasing Inuktitut language use (Vick-Westgate, 2002). Inuit graduates were taught to present courses in Inuktitut, eliminating the need for translation from English which had a measurable effect on morale and competence of unilingual (Inuktitut) pre-service teachers who could potentially obtain full certification in their first language (Cram, 1987). To be admitted to the McGill program potential students had to be fluent in Inuktitut, employed in teaching by KSB (regular or substitute), and recommended by their local education committee (Vick-Westgate, 2002). The program consisted of 45 credits with a focus on preparing teachers to teach K–2 (Atii Training Inc, 1992). An independent review conducted in 1993 in response to community concerns outlined the need for fundamental shifts in structure to position Inuit values more centrally in program design (Kemp in Vick-Westgate, 2002). While the response from KSB stated: “consultation with teacher training counsellors and teachers indicated that they are satisfied with the teaching training program and there is ongoing improvement, therefore we don’t feel the need to redesign the whole program” (Vick-Westgate, 2002, p. 286). This program has been operating with minor revisions in essentially the same format up to today.

Table 2

KI and McGill Teacher Education Pathways in Nunavik

	Early Childhood Education Offered by	Certificate in Education for First Nation and Inuit Education (FNIE)	Bachelor of Education - Kindergarten and Elementary Education - First Nations and Inuit	Bachelor of Education for Certified Teachers

	Saint Felicien's College			
Description	ECE diploma or a certificate and 3 years experience	An Indigenous focused certificate program to prepare First Nations and Inuit educators	Community based integrated Bachelors degree that leads to provincial certification to teach K-2.	Designed for teachers who are already certified to teach in elementary schools
Duration	Diploma = 3 years AE Certificate = 1 year	There is a 12 year maximum duration		
Location	Community based through Saint Felicien's College	Community-based in Nunavik. Typically scheduled at different Nunavik communities on a rotating basis.	Community-based in Nunavik. Typically scheduled at different Nunavik communities on a rotating basis.	Available through community-based, virtual delivery and/or on campus at McGill University, Montreal.
Practicum	2 fieldwork courses	12 credits of practicum comprised of four field placements		
Credits	Certificate = 375 program contact hours	60 credits	An additional 60 credits to total 120 credits	An additional 60 credits with advanced standing of 30 credits. 90 credits in total.
Accreditation and Transferability	Diploma is nationally recognized. The ECE certificate (the only option in community) is provincially recognized (AEC)	Teacher certification in Inuit schools in Nunavik only.	McGill University web site states that graduation leads to Quebec ministry of Education teacher certification.	McGill University web site states that graduation leads to Quebec ministry of Education teacher certification.

Academic Pre-requisites for entry	One of the following: covered by an agreement between college and employer who benefits from program; previous enrollment in postsecondary studies; hold a Quebec Secondary School Vocational Diploma	High school graduation (Secondary Level Six). However candidates must be recommended from schools.	Completion of the Certificate in Education : First nation and Inuit and support of KI	Completion of the Certificate in Education : First nation and Inuit and support of KI
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Course delivery (before the pandemic) of the Certificate in Education for First Nation and Inuit Education (FNIE) was through community-based intensive courses and through blended learning. Students have the option of participating in three courses per year, one face-to-face while the other two can be taken at a distance (McGill, 2022). It takes on average nine years to complete the certificate (McGill, 2022).

The certificate includes four mandatory courses (12 credits), three practicum field experiences and associated seminars (12 credits), Inuktitut orthography and grammar, as well as a course on the dialects of Inuktitut (two courses, six credits) and 30 credits (10 courses) chosen from a range of curriculum specific courses. The Teacher Education department within KSB takes responsibility for scheduling course offerings according to the needs of the current students across any particular year. Should students proceed into one of two bachelor-level degrees on completion of their certificate (which is not common—see below), they will be required to take additional courses and to demonstrate their proficiency in the language of instruction, in this case English, through completion a mandatory English Exam for Teacher Certification (EETC). Students admitted to the BEd with advanced standing (through completion of the Certificate) must write this examination in the fall term of their first year of studying towards the BEd. Timely graduation from the Bachelor’s program as well as the certificate (as indicated in Nancy’s story) has been recognized as problematic, and McGill has now implemented a 12-year deadline for the completion of the certificate (Assemblée Nationale Québec, 2018).

Inuktitut language is the primary medium of instruction. Teacher candidates are prepared to teach in kindergarten to Grade 2, therefore all course materials are translated from English/French to Inuktitut and courses are offered through a co-teaching arrangement of local and McGill instructors. The courses are co-developed by McGill and local Inuit instructors to ensure they include an Inuit worldview and culture as core elements. While the appointment of Inuit instructors to work alongside of McGill instructors brings an Inuit lens to courses, it gives rise to a particular dilemma for the Inuit instructors in terms of completing their own qualifications. Specifically, Inuit educators who have completed specific courses themselves as students in previous years may be invited to be co-instructors during an intensive summer session, thus preventing them from engaging as students in courses they

might need to progress through the Certificate program. This conundrum contributes to the time taken for many Inuit educators to graduate from the Certificate program.

Upon graduation from the Certificate in Education for First Nation and Inuit Education (FNIE), Inuit educators receive Quebec Ministère de l'Éducation certification to teach at the elementary school level in schools within Nunavik, or within First Nation schools in Quebec. Certification is not recognized outside of Nunavik in other Inuit regions, nor in elementary schools in any of the provinces in “southern Canada.” Few Inuit teachers from across Nunavik continue on to the Bachelor Degree after graduation from the the Certificate in Education for First Nation and Inuit Education (FNIE) as this typically requires relocation to Montreal to complete the program requirements which is prohibitive to most. Thus, while McGill and KI have a long-standing partnership for teacher education in Nunavik, Inuit educators are largely either current students or graduates of the Certificate in Education for First Nation and Inuit Education (FNIE) which brings limitations in terms of transferability of certification beyond Nunavik (or First nation communities in Quebec) and salary implications as the qualification is not at bachelor degree level.

Becoming teacher in Nunavut - Pauline's story

As a clerk interpreter at the local Arviat health centre and a mother of five young children, books and assignments were far away from my daily routine. But when my youngest child was 15 months old a whole new lifestyle emerged. Cultivated from my work as an interpreter, speaking both Inuktitut and English to translate between health professionals and patients, I developed a sense of pride and confidence in my ability to carry out my role at the health centre which deepened my interest in contributing to my community using language.

In 2013, the Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) partnered with the University of Regina (UofR) to offer Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP). A group of students had taken a foundation year before the official announcement for NTEP was made in Arviat. The foundation program prepares students for any program that they want to apply for, and it serves as an upgrading year before taking university-level courses. The NAC was partnered with McGill university the first time the NTEP program was offered in Arviat in 2003. From a relative and former McGill graduate, I heard that the University of McGill graduates were asked to complete an evaluation. The foundation year was then put in place after NAC received feedback from educators who got their teaching degrees from the University of McGill, as not everyone enters these programs readily prepared to take intensive workloads.

I sent in my application for NTEP, completed an entrance exam, and was accepted without taking the foundation year. The ability to study in my hometown and comfort zone was utterly rewarding. I was fortunate to be surrounded by family and friends, which provided me with the support I needed to continue my studies. Looking back, I also faced many challenges, the biggest of which was finding a quiet spot to study and learn. I often had mom-guilt feelings because I closed the door on my kids so many times. In addition, since it had been a long time since I faced academic deadlines and due dates, I often had to set goal after goal to maintain the high grades and standards I was determined to achieve in NTEP.

Most of my instructors were not local people; rather they were non-Inuit educators who were flown into the community to teach intensive short 3-week courses offered by University of Regina. There were some courses that required Inuktitut instruction and learning so I had the opportunity to learn from and complete assignments in my first language, which is Inuktitut taught by Inuit instructors. The communication between me and my classmates was in Inuktitut most of the time, but it was a bonus to have Inuit instructors for some courses because it gave us the opportunity to learn fully in our own language. The IQ values we discuss throughout this paper had a profound impact on my studies—because I

was studying alongside peers I knew, in a place where I had grown up, I felt deeply connected to my Inuit culture. In the third year of NTEP, students must complete a fall-semester internship in one of the local schools. I was fortunate to be placed in a Grade 1 classroom setting with an Inuk teacher. That is where I felt most comfortable and willing to learn. I was exposed to real students in a real classroom of Inuit students. The ongoing positive interactions and communication with others helped me achieve the goals and dreams that I had of becoming an educator.

I finished the four-year NTEP program in 2017 with distinction, which further helped me get into graduate studies in Regina, Saskatchewan the following fall. Although the scenery and university atmosphere were hard to adjust to, the best part of my experience living away from home and attending university was sharing about who I was and where I come from through reflection and research. It was also a way for me to better understand my roots as an Inuk. My journey was both satisfying and challenging. I left my children for extended periods of time, which made it even harder to adjust to. The mom-guilt feeling was intense; it was nothing compared to closing the doors when I studied at home. It was extremely hard to board the plane, but I kept reminding myself that I am doing this for my children, and it will all pay off. The first few weeks were brutal, but as soon as I got into a routine time went very fast.

During my final semester in Regina, I had the pleasure of studying alongside my oldest daughter. We lived on campus as roommates. Currently, she is in her third year, studying at the University of Regina to become a teacher. I often look back to my journey of becoming a mature student as something that will inspire others to finish what they started no matter what kind of situation they are in. Taking chances and going with your gut instinct takes you to places. I am now in my second year of teaching in Arviat. I feel lucky to be exposed in an environment where I can teach in Inuktitut and students are able to learn from me. In closing, I would like to say that who we are remains within us no matter where we are, but being able to learn and grow with people you know in a place you are familiar with gives you the determination and pride in what you do.

Teacher education in Nunavut – Nunavut Arctic College

Nunavut and the Northwest Territories (NWT) have a shared history of teacher education because the offering of a regional teacher education program pre-dates the formation of Nunavut in 1999, which once was part of the Northwest Territories Settlement agreement. However, Inuit in the East requested an Eastern Arctic specific teacher education be developed out of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) program. This led to the formation of the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education (EATEP) program in 1979. EATEP operated for eight years through an evolving partnership which began as a separate two year “classroom assistant program” and two year “EATEP diploma.” In 1981 the program formalized a partnership with McGill University enabling Inuit teachers to become certified to teach in the Northwest Territories (GNDE, 2006). The diploma was granted full accreditation by McGill and consisted of 60 credits which enabled the holder to receive NWT teacher certification, however the diploma was not recognized by certification bodies outside of the territory. In 1984 a third and fourth year was added to EATEP, which required participants to move to Iqaluit full time but led to a BEd certified by McGill in 1986 (GNDE, 2006) The program modelled from the original GNWT program consisted of instructors hired and based in Iqaluit by the GNWT (these were educators frequently recruited from territorial schools) alongside professors flown in for short periods from McGill (McGregor, 2011). In 1987, with the formation of Nunavut Arctic College (NAC), the responsibility for the management of EATEP was transferred to NAC and the program was revised and renamed Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP).

In 1990 NAC established the first fully community-based teacher education programs in the territory in Baker Lake, Arviat, and Rankin Inlet. Each location had a “home instructor” while other instructors rotated between the three communities, all of which are located on the same flight route (GNDE, 2006). Similar to the original EATEP diploma, the community-based program could be completed in two years to receive a certificate, with the option of travelling to Iqaluit for a further two years to complete a BEd. Participants could enter the community program directly out of high school. To increase access and academic readiness for students, in 2003 an additional foundation year was added which means it now takes a full five years to complete the program (GNDE, 2006). In 2007, the partnership with McGill ended and NAC partnered with University of Regina, a partnership which remained relatively unchanged from the McGill model and operated until 2019, when the Government of Nunavut changed partners once again and signed a ten year agreement with Memorial University (GNDE, 2019). It is difficult to determine graduation rates from the aforementioned programs and partnerships, however, in a ten-year snapshot of 2005–2015, Berger et al. (2019) report NTEP has graduated 254 students which is an average of 11 students per year. While the GNDE (2006) claims that success cannot simply be measured by graduation rates, the graduates of the EATEP/NTEP programming have made and continue to make significant contributions to the development of “social, economic and intellectual life of Nunavut” (p. 20).

With the NTEP program undergoing renewal new students were not accepted during the 2019–20 academic year; however, those already enrolled could continue to completion (Akulukjuk, 2019). According to Gloria Uluqsi, then Dean of Education at NAC, the program is undergoing a detailed visioning process which involves the key community members and partners involved in teacher education (Akulukjuk, 2019). Recruitment was re-opened for the 20–21 academic year with candidates being accepted into year one in the Iqaluit campus.

Table 3

Pathways for Teacher Education in Nunavut

	Early Childhood Education Certificate	NTEP Teaching Diploma UR / UArtic	Language Specialist Certificate	NTEP B.Ed. MUN – Primary/Elementary
Description	Prepares candidates to work with children from infancy to the age of 6, in daycares, nurseries and schools. Candidates can also work as teaching assistants	Graduates are certified to teach K–12, but the emphasis is on primary and elementary	Graduates are prepared to be Inuktit/Inuinnaqtun language and culture teachers in schools	Graduates are certified to teach K–12, but the emphasis is on primary and elementary
Duration	One year (2 full-time semesters)	3 years full time	One year	4 years full time (3 years transferred)

				from Diploma)
Location	Community based campus sites	Iqaluit and community campus sites	Community based campus sites	Iqaluit and community campus sites
Practicum	3 field based placements	3 field based placements	2 field based placements	14 weeks in final year
Credits	13 courses; all required	90 credits of which 9 are elective allowing students to specialize in teaching areas of interest	10 courses; all required though substitutions are possible from a list of approved NAC courses	120 credits with 90 credits transferred from Diploma courses
Transferability	Credits can transfer to Aurora College	Credits transfer to the externally certified NAC/Partner BEd	Credits may be transferred into NAC teaching diploma	Fully certified BEd that can be transferred to any Canadian post secondary institution
Academic Pre-requisites for entry	Grade 10 or equivalent	Grade 12 or equivalent; mature students may enter without Grade 12 if they complete the following 3 NAC courses at the 130 level: Inuktitut, English and Mathematics and have relevant work experience.	NAC 140 level completion in written Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun and an oral interview	Completion of NTEP Diploma or equivalent; application directly to Memorial university

The Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP) is the sole, formal opportunity for entering teacher education in the Nunavut. Previously, the Government of Nunavut had a strong K–12 recruitment pathway by encouraging teachers to recruit community members as classroom assistants. Once employed in the school these Inuit staff members would gain access to formal professional development opportunities in the form of NAC teacher training that would allow them to gain a teaching certificate while working. Though this opportunity still exists, it is not as prevalent as it once was. Currently, the dominant recruitment method appears to be through NAC promotional events and materials rather than a cohesive collaboration between schools and NAC (personal communication, Nuqingaq, 2020). Berger

et al. (2019) recommend a return to strategic recruitment of teachers through the development of an apprenticeship-type model that could begin as early as middle school by providing youth with opportunity to support peers in learning and making teaching more explicit as an attainable future career. Another strategy from Directions (2017) involves making teaching more attractive to Inuktitut speakers in particular by increasing salary incentives for fluent speakers. Though Inuktitut speakers currently receive a language bonus in schools, this amount does not adequately address the pay disparity between Southern BEd-trained teachers and language specialist teachers who hold a certificate-level qualification. Though increasing salary in schools is not an action that can be taken by school boards and/or ministries, it is noted here because salary and in-school experience most certainly has an impact on recruitment and retention of Inuit teachers in the territory. Ironically however, GN policy related to the incentives for hiring non-inuit teachers allows them to gain housing in communities, whereas Inuit cannot. While there might be an abundance of Inuit teachers in one community, they are not incentivized to move to another community because they may not be able to find an affordable place to live, while their southern colleagues will be provided with heavily subsidized housing as part of their employment contracts. Finally, Inuit teachers with a BEd cannot easily obtain teacher certification outside of the territory because the NTEP partnership BEd has not been formally recognized by teacher certification bodies beyond Nunavut.

All programs are informed by Inuit worldview and as much as possible taught in Inuktitut; however, with the exception of the language specialist program, courses tend to be offered predominantly in English due to a shortage of qualified Inuktitut speakers (Akulukjuk, 2019). The goal of NTEP is supporting bilingual education in the territory, stressing the importance of educating more Inuit teachers and speakers (Berger et al., 2019). A focus of NTEP has been in language acquisition and revitalization of Inuktitut wherein the Nunavut Department of Education can hire “home-grown” educators from the context their students are growing up (Berger et al., 2019; Directions, 2017; GNDE, 2006). Foundational to NTEP is a bilingual education strategy alongside highly contextualized learning from Elders, parents, family members, as well as learning from the land or animals (GNDE, 2006). The program components present Inuit knowledge which has been and continues to be passed down by informal and formal educational settings (Akulukjuk, 2019). In describing NTEP Gloria Uluqsi noted that the program aims to reflect Inuit education and values through holistic approaches, involving family, society, and community as part of the learning (Akulukjuk, 2019). Essentially, Uluqsi states, “Inuit education is beautiful as it allows individuals to feel like they belong” (Akulukjuk, 2019, 1:23–6:33).

Based on the review of NTEP (Directions, 2017) a number of strategies have been identified to support professional progression in schools. One strategy is careful consideration of the transfers and scaffolding among other post-secondary institutions as well as within NAC, which would allow educators to receive additional approved credit in recognition of prior training and thereby move higher on the Department of Education pay scales (Directions, 2017; Berger et al., 2019). Leadership training, allowing candidates to meet the requirements of the Nunavut Education Act (2008) for principal training, has been in place for more than 25 years, initially as an Educational Leadership Program (ELP) which operated through professional development modules taught by GN teaching staff and administrators. However, as an example of creating scaffolded opportunities, the GN partnered with UPEI in 2010 to develop the ELP into a Certificate in Educational Leadership in Nunavut (CELN), a program that both meets the requirements of principal certification and allows candidates to gain two credits into any Masters of Education program nationally. Additionally, two cohorts of a Nunavut specific Masters in Leadership program were also offered. The impact of these two partnered initiatives on Inuit teacher professional development and professional equity

cannot be understated (Snow et al., 2021). Some criticism of CELN indicates the opportunity for higher education has led to highly qualified teachers leaving the classroom to pursue higher paying positions elsewhere (Bell, 2019).

As outlined earlier, the rate of Inuit educators leaving the classroom in 2016 was higher than the number who entered teacher education. The complexity related to teachers' decisions to leave the profession cannot be adequately addressed in this small space. Such universal factors impact all teachers; however, in Nunavut specifically, these include pay disparity and working climate. Additionally, there is the aforementioned pressure on Inuit educators to serve as cultural ambassadors, socializing southern colleagues into the context of teaching in Nunavut and being a continual source of local knowledge.

Becoming a teacher from Inuvialuit Settlement Region - Holly's story

I began my Education journey with the Community Teacher Education Program (CTEP) located in Dogrib First Nation. I decided to become a teacher as I wanted to make a positive difference for children. CTEP at Dogrib was a three-year Aurora College program that focused on Dene culture and language. I learned the Dogrib language as it was also part of my program. There were a few Inuvialuit in the program. Even though I am Inuk, I chose this program because at the time my family and I lived there so I could attend without travelling. Directly after graduation, I moved to Edmonton to study at Grant MacEwan University, and transferred to the Education program at the University of Alberta where I completed two degrees: the first in Native Studies and the second a Bachelor of Education. For me, the process of becoming a teacher meant becoming a mentor to my children and other Inuit children. It also meant respecting my parents' wishes involving the importance of Education. My dreams of having an Inuk curriculum, a school staffed by Inuit, the language being the only language taught in full immersion—these are my dreams of the ideal Inuk school. We can do the opposite of what the residential school system promoted. We need leaders who will see the importance of having Inuk led schools.

Living in the south was sometimes a difficult situation. I felt, no, knew my identity as an Inuk was miniscule compared to the dominant culture I was living in. I always felt I had to prove myself, prove that I belonged in the University and that I could succeed. I believe the attitude and skills I developed at that time have encouraged my children watching me as a role model, so now they can succeed in any choice they make in life.

I returned to my home community and I have been teaching in different elementary levels there ever since. We use a combination of the GNWT and Alberta Provincial curricula. I feel it is important in our culturally diverse board that we follow an Indigenous Curriculum that pertains to each community. For example, in Grade 3 the students must complete Alberta Achievement Testing, but the test presents photos and questions about things from southern communities. As expected, the students did not connect with the photo therefore their writing was unsuccessful, not because of their skills but because of the bias in the questions.

Throughout my teaching I realize the importance of relevant teaching to benefit students learning. The history of the Inuit has to be in the curriculum in order for the students to have self-esteem and a sense of belonging. In order for teaching to be believable, the students have to be certain of what they are taught. Education has to be credible; the students have to see and know that education is the key to success. Part of that is seeing positive role models in teaching and managerial positions. If we teach the students that they can be whatever they want to become after graduation, we have to be the role models, i.e., they see me as an Inuk teacher, therefore it is achievable. We still do not have enough Inuit leadership in my schoolboard. I personally haven't pursued leadership because the ratio of Inuit and non-Inuit at all levels of education far exceeds the Inuit population of schools and I believe I

am of better service in the classroom. Most of the teachers in my board are from the South, and in our area there are no Indigenous people in the administration. This becomes a major issue for any Inuk wanting to become a principal or a vice-principal. The Inuit Leaders have not done enough to correct this situation and it continues; it is as though we have turned to colonialism. It can be so difficult when we observe people who are hired to work for the local Inuit but seem to have no shame in “working” in positions that should be held by local Inuit. When I speak with some it feels like they have the attitude that Inuit are not trying to get education, not trying to get these jobs, but that is not the reality.

The reality is that getting a teaching degree and moving into leadership is a difficult balance between education, culture, and family. In my experience becoming a teacher and a positive role model in my community, I was supported by family and relatives. Without the family support around me, I am not sure I would have completed my degree.

Until the Inuit corporations, who are the overseers of the Inuit, are able to instill an Inuk curriculum that pertains to the Inuit, their communities will continue to face challenges inspiring students to complete Grade 12 or to become teachers. For me, changing K–12 curricula is one of the biggest changes that will enhance Inuit learning, supporting teachers, and leadership development, and self-sufficiency in the community.

Teacher education in Inuvialuit – Aurora College

Teacher training was first established in the Northwest Territories in 1968 at Fort Smith, and, as previously mentioned, was split in 1979 into the EATEP program for the Eastern Arctic/Nunavut and ACTEP remained with NWT. Based on a community approach to teacher education learned from the Keewatin pilot, a parallel program was established in the Beaufort Delta region (Inuvialuit region of NWT) that accepted 59 candidates in its first year of operation in 1993. As Nunavut and the NWT were not yet separated, the same approaches for training through summer schools and professional development programs were offered by Arctic College. ACTEP partnered with the University of Saskatchewan to offer a third year of the program leading to a Bachelor of Education degree that paralleled the EATEP/McGill partnership. With respect to professional development opportunities for progression, a variety of programs were offered through the then Federal Government Department of Education, Culture and Training, as well as Arctic College and the divisional boards of education. However, with inconsistent funding and accreditation, some programs offered university certification while others did not, and it was challenging for students to reliably plan for progression.

Aurora College, in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan, has offered the only teacher education program based in Inuvialuit since 1974. However, in 2018 the program was paused for review and rebuilding, and at the time of writing has not yet reopened to applicants. One of the factors contributing to the suspension was the inability of Aurora College to act independently from government, leading to complex relationships and decision-making on programs (MNP, 2018). Recognizing this as part of the challenge, an independent senate was established as the first stage of the renewal process (MNP, 2018). Prior to suspension, Aurora College offered a Bachelor of Education with the objectives of promoting and supporting the progression of Inuit transition in higher education through completion of programs at other institutions (Aurora College, 2020). The essential program parameters are described in Table 4.

Table 4

Pathways for Teacher Education in Inuvialuit

	Early Learning and Child Care Certificate	Early Learning and Child Care Diploma	Auroa College Teaching Diploma	ITEP B.Ed. Uof S – k-9
Description	Designed to prepare candidates to work with children ages 0–6	Designed to prepare candidates to teach young children in early learning settings including headstart programs daycares and kindergarten.	Candidates are prepared to teach Grades K–9 and are eligible for an NWT interim teaching certificate	Candidates are prepared to teach Grades K–9 and are eligible for an NWT standard professional teaching certificate
Duration	1 year	2 years	3 years full time	4 years full time
Location				Fort Smith
Practicum	2 field placements		3 culture camps; 3 field-based placements (16 weeks), the first of which is strictly observations	
Credits		36 credits	105 credits	120 credits, 60 transferred from Aurora College
Transferability	Possible to transfer to diploma		Possible to transfer to BEd	
Academic Pre-requisites for entry	Grade 12 graduation with completion of Grade 12 English and Grade 11 math	Completion of certificate year	Grade 12 graduation, including Grade 12 academic creds in English and mathematics with a minimum mark of 65% and at least one science credit at the Grade 11 level or higher	

The Aurora program specifically names culture camps in their published material and there is a high degree of focus on Indigenous and Northern cultures; however, as is also apparent in the previous naming of the program Indian Teacher Education program, Inuit students may not see as much of their culture reflected in course designs. Between 2007 and 2015, 269 students graduated from the ITEP program, of which 78% identified as Indigenous

(Education Culture and Employment (ECE), 2016). Noticing a decline in teacher graduation rates during the 1990s, the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment of the GNWT developed strategic priorities to increase enrollment (ECE, 1982; ECE, 1994).

According to the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC) (2018) there are over 200 administrators, teachers and support staff employed in the board. Professional development priorities for teachers most recently have focused on supporting safe and inclusive school environments for students and staff, along with literacy development initiatives (BDEC, 2016). Part of the teacher support and, by extension, retention strategy, is the employment of program coordinators who travel to communities to support teachers through sharing information related to curriculum and other developments within the board, such as the implementation of high school education within schools (BDEC, 2016). BDEC has also developed strategic community partnerships with Health and Social Services departments in an effort to increase support in community for teachers and students (BDEC, 2016). The BDEC (2016) will ensure that when employees leave they are invited to participate in an exit interview; this feedback identifies areas and practices that require improvement and which areas and practices are effective. Opportunities for new hires to be welcomed into the community include an “adopt-a-teacher” program in each community of the Beaufort Delta region, host feasts for the school staff, sewing clubs, and other organizations for staff to learn traditional activities (BDEC, 2016). Lastly, opportunities for students and staff to receive recognition through staff awards, scholarships, and funding ensure retention and progression of promising initiatives and educational projects.

An orientation program for administrators who seek long-term employment in the area ensures that they receive a context-specific enculturation to the Beaufort Delta Region (BDEC, 2016). Upon hiring, New Teacher Handbooks are provided and are made accessible online and on flash drives (BDEC, 2016). The GNWT has committed through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to supporting professional development. Within the 2020–21 NWT Teacher Association Collective Agreement, \$1,000 has been allocated annually for teacher Indigenous language development (NWTTA, 2020).

Closing reflections

The fundamental assumption we are making with this paper is that Inuit initial teacher education should be reflective of local knowledge and values, just as is found in southern programs, where dominant culture, language, values, and the approved local school curriculum determine how and what is taught to pre-service teachers. Pathways for initial teacher education within Inuit Nunangat have been built with vastly different starting points throughout each of the four regions tied to history, culture, geography, and language diversity within and among the regions. Reflecting *pilimmaksarniq* (skills development), most regions include detailed pathways for progression within teacher education offerings, including entry points from classroom assistant, language specialist, and early childhood educator to certificate and Bachelors degree certification and licensure options. This allows for multiple entry points into the education, and it also allows for multiple end points. A BEd need not be the goal for every educator. However, where the absence of a BEd becomes discouraging is in the pay disparity and professional respect in schools in relation to the various educator positions, and the possibility for progression. For example, an Elder with a first language understanding of Inuktitut and a 20–year experience as a language teacher will have great difficulty moving into a leadership position in school without a post-secondary degree. In Nunavut this is addressed with CELN supporting professional progression with open enrollment. In addition, Inuit teachers completing a certificate level teaching qualification find it is not recognized beyond their local jurisdiction; thus, for example, while they are deemed qualified in Nunavik, their certificate would not be recognized in neighboring

Nunatsiavut or Nunavut. Time to degree completion was highlighted in the literature and our experiences as both problematic and beneficial. On the positive side, part-time study allows educators to take courses at home, within their own communities while working in schools. Less attractive is the experience of educators having to repeat courses as the length of time allowed to complete a qualification expires before they meet all requirements.

Supporting language, culture, and IQ values were observed as critical to successful programming in all four jurisdictions both as described by the program providers and as evidenced through the teacher narratives. Below we draw attention to examples of how IQ principles are reflected in the preparation of teachers across Inuit Nunangat.

Language development, particularly in regions where Inuktitut ability has been dramatically lost was supported through community approaches to Piliriqatigiinniq (working for a common cause) by partner programming such as is found in IBED for both language and culture development. As Memorial University did not have the capacity for either language or culture, they worked in close partnership with Nunatsiavut Government who facilitated access to a pilot language program and land-based learning with Elders.

Piliriqatigiinniq, Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (respecting others) and Aajjiqatigiinniq (consensus building) was expressed through the community based programs, allowing for the development of small cohorts which inherently facilitated relationship and mutual support systems of pre-service teachers tied to both community goals and individual goals. In Inuit culture, all members of the community are responsible for the education of children; creating space for future educators to be educated in community contributes to this tradition.

Pilimmaksarniq (skills development) and Qanuqtuurniq (resourcefulness) was expressed through the community-based programming associated with schools/schoolboards such as KI, and the student-teacher models illustrated within McGill and UPEI programming. Such programs and communities approached teacher education from an assets-based position encouraging leadership and skills development from a “grow your own” position. The integration of language skills acquisition, though an important aspect of access and cultural relevance, ironically, for some became problematic. Those who excelled in courses and language, and became instructors within the programs they were enrolled in (something that was encouraged by the institutions) faced challenges in completing the programs themselves because they could not be credited for courses they had taught, and nor could they undertake courses they needed whilst they were instructing another.

The very nature of the small class sizes, with some cohorts in Nunavut communities existing with only 3–4 candidates, alongside open enrollment patterns and progression pathways reflects Tunnganarniq (welcoming and inclusive) and Pijitsirniq (serving others). However, due to the shortage of Inuit teacher education faculty, students must withstand a steady flow of “fly in-fly out” southern instructors who may or may not be sensitive to and aware of Inuit ways of knowing and doing. When instructors share values of Tunnganarniq and welcome Inuit as co-instructors or student leaders, pre-service teachers can feel empowered; however, the opposite can also be true.

The fly-in fly-out nature of most of the programs across jurisdictions is problematic in terms Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq (respect for environment). From an environmental standpoint, though, fewer flights are needed when instructors travel than when students travel. However, as integrated in programming, Aurora College and MUN took great care in structuring land-based learning through field camps in program schedules.

Ultimately it is the students themselves who bring much of the IQ values, traditional knowledge, and skills into the programs. Locally-based teacher education programs that are anchored within community are essential to allow prospective teachers to continue their study without having to leave their community, and to benefit from the support of their community.

Community-based programs also have the benefit of growing educators from within the community, educators who have established relationships, who are aware of and experienced in IQ principles, and can work with the community to enact these through an Inuit-centered curriculum. Our overview suggests that programs that allow Inuit educators to remain within community have the potential to address some of the tensions, guilt, and stress that Inuit teachers, who are predominantly parents, experience as they juggle their multiple roles of teacher, mother/father, daughter/son, niece/nephew, and seeking to be active, contributing members of their community. Inuit community-grown and supported teacher education programs are worthy of further examination.

Inuit input and co-construction of teacher education programs, including input of elders and others in the community, are essential if we are to achieve Inuit-centered teacher education. Thus it is important to consider how structures and infrastructure can be put in place that will enable Inuit input and agency in the development of programs for Inuit teacher education and ongoing Inuit educator professional development programs. Such programs need to consider how educators are recruited into teaching as a career, how they are supported through community-based teacher preparation programs that lead to certification within and outside of their region, and how to establish pathways for Inuit educators to become leaders within the education systems. Sustainable and well-resourced pathways from educator recruitment through to vice-principal and principal positions within schools (and superintendent and other roles within education systems) are required if we are to reach the critical goal of Inuit-centered education. Local control of education (and teacher education) responds to the context and community and student needs within which education is taking place. Such education is operational across all provinces of Canada and is a cornerstone in the development of Canadian identity. It is urgent that Inuit youth and their communities have the opportunity to establish education by and for Inuit.

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