

**The Morning Watch Journal Special Edition
Vol. 48 No. 1 Spring 2022**

**Student Success and Teacher Development in the North:
An Examination of Student Persistence and Teacher Development, and Teaching in Inuit
Nunangat and the Pan-Arctic**

Editors:

Kirk Anderson

Memorial University of Newfoundland

Kathy Snow

University of Prince Edward Island

Introduction and Project Background

**Editors' Note: Russia's war in Ukraine and the University of the Arctic as well as the
Morning Watch response.**

As many are aware of there is a war going on between Russia and the Ukraine, which has affected the working relationship of many good people in Russia and elsewhere. We have been struggling with an appropriate response, which respects the working relationship we have built and understands context we have been thrust in. And here are a few thoughts.

The University of the Arctic Direction with respect to Russian cooperation is that Russian Membership is paused...:

as a result of the following Board decision, the UArctic membership of 55 Russian institutions and organizations is paused. The UArctic Board condemns all acts of war. As a result of the current Russian military actions in Ukraine, the collaboration between UArctic and Russian institutions is paused until the situation allows for continuation. This decision is taken without Russian board members.

The UArctic network is strongly committed to strengthening the North through Circumpolar collaboration in higher education and research with special attention to students and young researchers. UArctic works hard for a strong, engaged, informed and dynamic north creating better lives and environment for all northerners. UArctic looks forward to a future when the entire Circumpolar North can benefit from this collaboration.

The U Arctic response also list some "Practical Actions:"

- *Organization of the UArctic Congress 2022 in Moscow is paused until further notice.*
- *Collaboration between individual researchers in Thematic Networks and educational activities for students shall continue where possible.*

- *UArctic scientists and students are asked to support the UArctic Values and to be inclusive, respectful.*
- *UArctic cooperation shall respect that our colleagues may be restricted due to sanctions and national and institutional regulations.*

As downloaded from <https://old.uarctic.org/member-profiles/russia/> on June 20 2022

With respect to the “Practical Actions” noted above, it does support continued collaboration between individual researchers, however related to this the relationship between some universities and networks are more stringent. We had one article, which is a Pan-Arctic Collaboration from Canada, the Nordic countries, and Russia, which is enmeshed in this unfortunate context. After considerable thought we really only have one option – and that is to ‘pause’ the article and when this war is resolved, then we can look to reinsert it into the journal as it was originally intended. The pause allows us to, at some point; share an article that celebrates the truly collaborative and pan-arctic nature of our work that must continue-it matters. We look forward to that day, when the Ukraine is a peace and Russia rejoins the U Arctic community.

Where we began

Initially, this special edition of *The Morning Watch* was developed to share the results of this research into four case studies within Inuit Nunangat. As such, the writing reflects a research project focused on four schools and communities in Northern Canada: Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories. The research in these four regions responds some gaps in current literature related to Inuit education. As time has moved on, additional writers and materials have been added to round out the journal discussion to better share a Pan-Arctic view of both teacher development for the North as well as Indigeneity within the Arctic region.

With few exceptions (e.g., Tompkins, 2006; Walton & O’Leary, 2015), the long-standing narrative coming from southern researchers in the North is one of deficit and failure. All of the articles presented in this edition reframe the conversation from deficit to assets-based research, which interrogates resilience and persistence in the face of challenge. As such, while not ignoring significant challenges faced by the people of the North, our aim is to (re)configure the dominant narrative of education in the North towards hope and change, therein promoting the voices of educators and stories of educational success within the circumpolar.

Project background

Inuit Nunangat is the Inuktitut term that includes land, water, and ice of the traditional homelands of the Inuit in Canada. Applying federal territories (not part of any province) and provincial geographic boundaries (within provincial boundaries), Inuit Nunangat is located over four regions including the northern coast and islands of the Northwest Territories (NWT), the territory of Nunavut, Northern Quebec, and the north coast of Labrador. These geographic regions are characterized by long distances between small populations, cultural diversity, a wealth of Inuit languages, highly variable socio-economic conditions as well as challenging levels of federal, provincial, and regional infrastructure supports.

The history of education has been impacted in indelible ways not only by the aforementioned division of Inuit land and control factors but also critically by the residential school system and ongoing colonial influence, which has resulted in issues of trust within the education system. Additionally, current educational offerings are challenged with preparing youth for an Arctic very different than that of their grandparents as accelerated climate change,

resource development, migration, and tourism are making demands on communities and their infrastructures in ways we are only beginning to understand. Despite the many challenges educators face there are also many successes which can be shared.

In collaboration with the Finnish Chair (2017–2019) of the Arctic Council and in cooperation with the University of the Arctic’s Thematic Network for Teacher Development Diversity and Social Justice international, focus was placed on education in the Arctic. In response, members of the Thematic Network organized a Pan-Arctic research effort. One of the research projects which focused on the Canadian North with some connections to Sami teacher education in Norway is reported here. This project was completed in 2020 with Dr. Kirk Anderson (Memorial University) and Dr. Kathy Snow (University of Prince Edward Island) as principal investigators. To aid this research they received funding from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) to study Pan-Arctic teacher development and related issues. CIRNAC funding, bolstered by research methods and partnerships developed from a 2015–2019 ArcticNet (Network of Centers of Excellence Canada) project entitled “Foundations for Student Persistence and Success in Inuit Nunangat,” enabled a series of case studies with Inuit communities across the Canadian Arctic focused on student success and teacher development.

The Nunangat-based case studies focused on student success and teacher development and were conducted in each of the four traditional regions of Inuit Nunangat. Guided by our previous research in the regions, as well as at the direction of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (the national representation organization for Inuit in Canada) case study sites were selected to highlight successful practice and engage local community. In partnership with local Inuit educators and long-term Northerners the overall goal of the research project was to support greater dialogue about Inuit education, to deepen understandings of the teaching profession in the circumpolar North, and to highlight ways that pre-service and in-service teacher educators can be better supported.

Summary of special edition

While this edition of *The Morning Watch* is rooted in the above research which focus on case studies in the North (Inuit and Northern Canada) and some relatedness to the Indigenous (Nordic) context in other regions of the Arctic, by necessity it grew to include more writing from researchers involved on Northern Teacher development in both the Sami and Inuit context. As a result, the journal is more robust than our original research framework; it now includes writing and research from almost all the countries of the Arctic Circle reflecting a wide range of research and related dissemination within this special edition.

Reflective of about half the circumference of the Arctic Circle (See Figure 1 below), the outline for the edition starts with this introduction, then what we like to call “framing the Arctic context” wherein we offer a Pan-Arctic frame for the research and writing with two Pan-Arctic focused articles.

Figure 1: Arctic Indigenous Peoples Language Map



Indigenous Peoples Secretariat (2019).

The first of the Pan-Arctic discussions is an article written by Craig Peters which reviews and compares Inuit and Sami education in the North, This work looks at both historical factors and current concerns in the Pan-Arctic, and was done as part of the author’s graduate studies and recently completed research (See Figure 2 below).

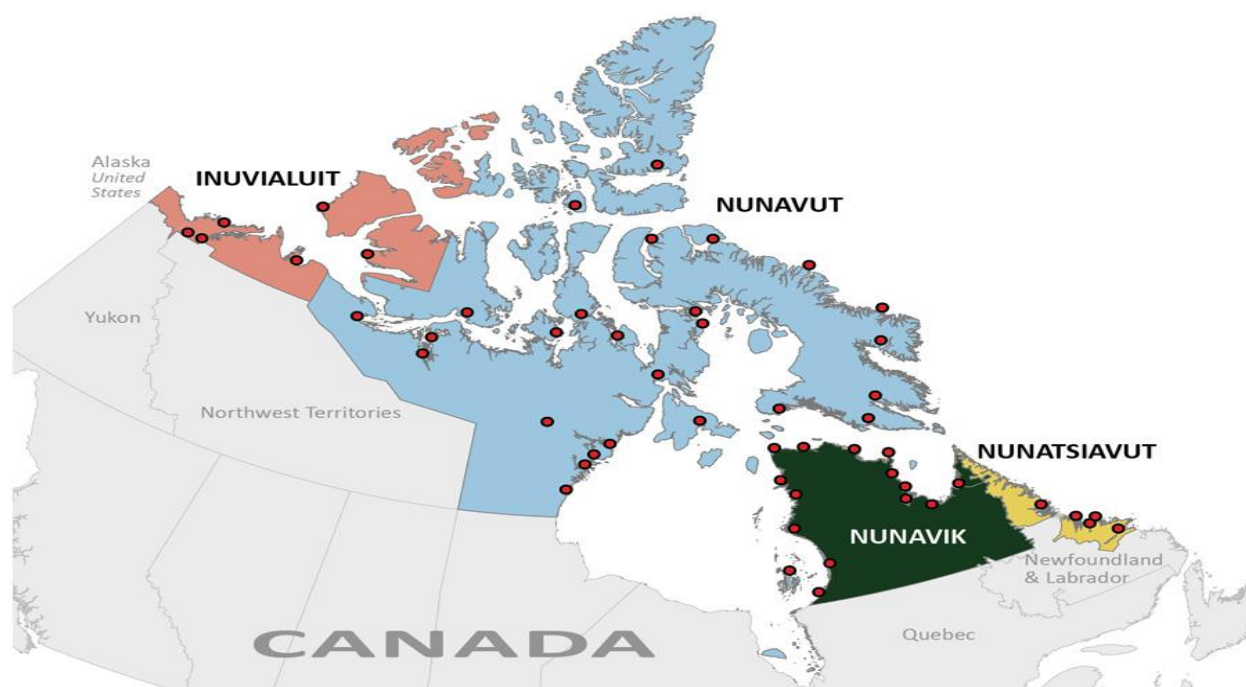
Figure 2: The Sami Regions or the Nordic countries and Eastern Russia



Spiegel, T. (2019).

After we share the Pan-Arctic context we focus on the Canadian Arctic through four case studies across Inuit Nunangat. These four articles reflect an examination of student persistence and teacher development, and teaching in Inuit Nunangat. This section includes pertinent and related writing about teacher development and student assessment which are critically important in enabling the success of students in Inuit schools.

Figure 3: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami: The four regions of Inuit Nunangat.



Government of Canada (2015).

The dynamic tension between supporting local community, culture, and language in the context of expectations from the south is evident in each article. The first, written by Jennifer Godfrey-Anderson, looks at the context of how assessment is used in Nunavut. The second is an article based on case study in Tuktoyuktak (Northwest Territories) wherein Melanie O’Gorman and Holly Carpenter provide a “snapshot” of persistence and success for education. The third in this section is a discussion of a case study by Kirk Anderson in Kangiqsualujjuaq (Nunavik) focused on important issues supporting student success as well as the diverse context seen in Quebec. The last article in this section is a community-based case study into school success by in Makkovik (Nunatsiavut) written by Sylvia Moore, Jodie Lane, and Roxanne Nochasak.

The next section, a single article, draws the reader deeper into teacher development for the North and serves as the capstone for this special edition. Herein, Pauline Copland, Alice Hill, Jody Lyall, Nancy Etok, Kathy Snow, and Ruth Kane outline and discuss the current context for Inuit teacher education and development in Canada. Lastly, we reflect on the material shared in this special edition, and offer a conclusion.

Join us as we explore northern education in both the Pan-Arctic and global contexts, examining the literature and published sources, and sharing research based on outsider positioning. In this way, we hope to frame the dialogue in a way that includes the voices of community members, thereby adding an insider or classroom-level experience to the larger systemic discussion.

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